

# Volunteer Involvement Policy

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## 1. Document control

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Electronic version on the intranet or website is the controlled version.

## 2. Preamble

The contents of and the commitments that the council makes in this policy are not intended to be and should not be interpreted to be any more than a statement of the City of Onkaparinga's general position in relation to those matters and to facilitate its aspirations wherever it is reasonable to do so.

## 3. Policy purpose

This policy aims to provide a framework to ensure best practice in volunteer involvement through effective leadership, management, and support of our volunteers.

It is acknowledged that any legislative requirement affecting the council will take precedence over its policies and procedures.

## 4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- individuals who are registered as City of Onkaparinga volunteers to support the delivery of our programs, services, and activities
- council employees who are involved in managing, supervising, and supporting volunteers.

This policy excludes the following:

- individuals and groups undertaking acts of citizenship or informal volunteering within their communities
- volunteers of incorporated bodies in a partnership arrangement with the council
- reference, advisory, resident and business groups
- volunteers of community centres managed by independent boards
- employees of for-profit organisations undertaking corporate volunteering activities
- community forums and engagement participants
- individuals undertaking work experience, internships, or student placements
- participants of Work for the Dole initiatives (excluding Newstart Allowance volunteers)
- Elected Members in their capacity as Elected Members.

## 5. Definitions

City of Onkaparinga Volunteer	An individual approved by and registered with the City of Onkaparinga to support the delivery of our services, activities, programs, or projects.
Culture	The way a group of people engages with each other— an organisation's shared values and behaviours.
National Standards for Volunteer Involvement	Best practice standards for developing and reviewing how volunteers are involved in organisations.
Volunteering	Time is given willingly for the common good and without financial gain.
Volunteer coordinator	An employee who is delegated responsibility to coordinate volunteer activities at the operational level and provides regular supervision and support to the volunteer.
Volunteer program	The collective term describes a council service, activity, program, or project involving volunteers in its delivery model.
Volunteer Management Framework	Council's principles, policy, standards, administrative procedures and tools for effective volunteer involvement.

## 5 Strategic Context

We involve volunteers in supporting the delivery of our services, activities, projects, and programs to achieve the vision of our Community Plan; strong, vibrant communities.

Council volunteers support the strategic objective of the plan's 'People' theme; our volunteers help us to build our capacity to engage and connect closely with our communities.

## 6. Policy

We value and encourage the involvement of volunteers in appropriate services, activities, programs, and projects. In partnership with employees, volunteers participate actively in achieving our vision of strong, vibrant communities.

We recognise that volunteering is a two-way relationship. The City of Onkaparinga can enhance the delivery of our services by harnessing our volunteers' diverse experiences, backgrounds, life skills, knowledge, and expertise.

For volunteers, involvement brings a range of personal benefits, such as developing social connections, learning new skills, gaining valuable experience for future employment, and a sense of community pride and well-being.

We are committed to effective volunteer involvement through organisational leadership and a culture and structure that supports and values the role of volunteers.

Our approach to managing volunteers complies with Australian National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA), equal opportunity legislation and self-insurers requirements under the Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme.

### 6.1 PRINCIPLES

- All people have the right to volunteer regardless of their cultural or ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, physical, social and economic position.
- Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral team members.
- Volunteers are consulted in decision-making that impacts their volunteer involvement.
- We regularly acknowledge the contribution of volunteers and the benefits to the volunteer, council and our communities.
- The rights of volunteers are protected, and they are supported to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively.
- Volunteers have responsibilities and are accountable for their actions.

### 6.2 DEFINING EMPLOYEE AND VOLUNTEER ROLES

A clear delineation must be evident between the work of employees and volunteers. The tasks undertaken by volunteers must:

- complement the role of employees
- be meaningful and not exploit the goodwill of the volunteer
- enhance and extend our services
- not replace employee roles
- not threaten the security and job satisfaction of employees.

### 6.3 WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA) identifies volunteers as 'workers' for the purposes of the Act. Volunteers and council employees have the same rights and responsibilities under the Act.

We have a duty of care to ensure the safety of volunteers.

We are committed to ensuring that all volunteers are adequately trained to ensure that volunteering roles can be performed in a safe manner.

## 6.4 RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

Our Risk Management framework includes volunteers to ensure the council manages exposure to liabilities resulting from volunteer involvement.

Workers' compensation does not cover volunteers as they are not paid employees. We provide public liability and personal accident insurance for volunteers whilst undertaking approved volunteer duties.

## 6.5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective volunteer involvement requires an organisational approach. We have clearly defined lines of authority for the involvement of volunteers.

### 6.5.1 DIRECTORS GROUP

- Create and lead a culture and structure that values the role and impact of volunteer involvement.
- Establish the council's commitment to safe and effective volunteer involvement by providing relevant workplace policies and procedures.

### 6.5.2 MANAGERS

- Manage and lead a supportive environment and culture for volunteer involvement across their section.
- Integrate volunteer involvement in annual business plans and allocate appropriate resources (financial/human/technology).
- Review volunteer involvement regularly in line with organisational safety, risk, and quality management frameworks to assess, manage and mitigate potential risks to volunteers, council, employees, customers, and participants.
- Ensure volunteer involvement is planned and resourced appropriately to achieve our Community Plan vision.

### 6.5.3 TEAM LEADERS

- Lead a supportive environment and culture for volunteer involvement across their team.
- Ensure the requirements of the council's Volunteer Management framework are consistently applied across all activities and services involving volunteers.
- Identify and secure appropriate resourcing for volunteer involvement.
- Provide support and supervision to volunteer co-ordinators to ensure successful outcome for both volunteers and volunteer programs
- Ensure responsibility for supervision and support of volunteers is assigned to employees with the appropriate classification level, skills, knowledge and experience.
- Provide sufficient time and training opportunities to enable volunteer coordinators to carry out their additional responsibilities adequately.
- Monitor volunteer involvement to ensure the safety and quality of service delivery to customers and participants.

### 6.5.4 VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS

- Run a fair and equitable process for attracting new volunteers
- Provide volunteers with a welcoming, supportive, and safe environment.
- Provide instruction and assistance to ensure the safety of the volunteering activities.
- Operate within the requirements of the council's Volunteer Management framework.

- Ensure that volunteers are involved meaningfully, reflecting their skills, interests, and backgrounds.
- Contribute to planning and evaluation of volunteer involvement.

#### 6.5.5 HUMAN RESOURCES

- Lead a strategic approach to implementing best practice volunteer management across the organisation.
- Monitor compliance with the Volunteer Management framework.
- Advocate for volunteer involvement to ensure the value and impact of volunteers are understood, appreciated, and acknowledged across the organisation.
- Identify new approaches and initiatives to volunteer management to address emerging trends and increase the participation, quality and diversity of volunteering experiences.
- Continually review the Volunteer Management framework and associated tools to ensure that opportunities to improve the system are identified and implemented.
- Develop and maintain working relationships with the volunteer sector and appropriate stakeholders.

#### 6.5.6 VOLUNTEERS

- Fulfill the requirements of a council volunteer through understanding and adhering to the relevant organisational policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Respect our values and practices.
- Participate in all relevant volunteer activities, including onboarding, training, and reviews, to ensure ongoing alignment with the expectations of a council volunteer.

### 6.6 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT TO ENSURE BEST PRACTICE

For volunteers to conduct their activities, the Council acknowledges that volunteer programs require a commitment of adequate financial, human, physical and time resources. These resources will be allocated in line with Council requirements and the National Standards for Volunteers.

Council's volunteer programs are regularly appraised by compiling feedback from volunteers and volunteer coordinators through regular surveys and reviews. The Volunteer Management system and its documented processes will be reviewed regularly to ensure its sustainability, relevance, and alignment with Council requirements and the National Standards for Volunteers.

## 7. Relevant legislation and references

*Children's Protection Act 1993*

*Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

*Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)*

*Volunteers Protection Act 2001*

*Work Health and Safety Act (SA) 2012*

*Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme 2015, Covering all Bases: An information Guide for Managing Volunteers in Local Government*

*Local Government Volunteer Managers Network 2012, Volunteer Management in Local Government*  
*Volunteering Australia 2015, National Standards for Volunteer Involvement*

## 8. Additional information

It is also available for inspection, downloading or printing from our website [www.onkaparingacity.com.au](http://www.onkaparingacity.com.au).