



# NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

## POLICY MANUAL

### VOLUNTEER POLICY

**Originated Date:** Adopted 16 February 2026 – Min. No. 26/066

**Amended Date/s:**

**Applicable Legislation:** *Local Government Act 1993*  
*Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*  
*Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*  
*Personal Information Protection Act 2004*  
*Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*  
*Anti-Discrimination Act Tasmania 1988*

**Objective** To assist Northern Midlands Council to strengthen community wellbeing by inspiring, valuing and celebrating volunteering. It provides direction and structure to the way the Council engages volunteers ensuring that the relationship between the Council and its volunteers is clearly defined.

**Administration:** Governance

**Review Cycle/Date:** At least every 4 years. Next review 2030

#### 1. PURPOSE

This policy will provide scope to cover volunteers participating in Council activities and projects. The policy will assist Council in meeting the National Standards for best practice in volunteer management.

#### 2. DEFINITION OF A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are defined as persons who:

- Undertake activities without monetary reward.
- Undertake activities of their own free will.
- Undertake activities of benefit to the community and Council.
- Undertake activities that complement but do not replace the services provided by paid staff.

#### 3. VOLUNTEER ROLE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDITION

##### 3.1 WHY VOLUNTEER?

- To become more physically, mentally and socially active.
- To help make our community a great place to live and work.
- To enhance and complement the work of Council.
- To foster social inclusion (that is residents feel valued and respected regardless of their differences).
- To enhance social relations, networks and trust that allow coordination and cooperation (social capital).
- To learn new skills and to teach/share skills
- To meet new people

##### 3.2 RIGHTS OF COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers have the right:



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- To a plainly written description of their role and a mutual understanding of what it means to be a volunteer.
- To be placed according to their abilities.
- To be given accurate information about the project being undertaken.
- To work within the guidelines of Council's Volunteer Policy and Associated Procedures (policy to be provided to volunteers).
- To be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.
- To have personal and confidential information dealt with in accordance with the relevant Acts.
- To make a choice about the type of involvement and time committed.
- To be supplied with appropriate training and induction, including personal protective equipment where applicable.
- To be supported and supervised.
- To have a designated supervisor to provide volunteers with instructions.
- To be acknowledged as a valued member of the Council volunteer team.
- To regularly receive constructive feedback.
- To be informed and consulted on matters which directly or indirectly affect the volunteer or their work.
- To be informed of their entitlement to out-of-pocket expenses including travel and meal allowance, if applicable.
- To have a working environment that meets all occupational health and safety requirements.
- To be adequately covered by insurance.
- Not to do the work of paid employees during industrial disputes.

### 3.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers have a responsibility:

- To be reliable and punctual.
- To notify their supervisor or activities co-ordinator if unable to attend or perform duties.
- To be accountable and accept constructive feedback.
- To undertake relevant training when necessary to perform designated volunteer tasks.
- To ask for support when needed.
- To carry out agreed duties.
- To respect decisions made by staff.
- To respect confidentiality at all times as defined in Item 2.6.
- To provide truthful and accurate information to Council, fellow volunteers and community members.
- To register with Council and complete and sign any relevant documentation.
- To comply with Council's occupational, health and safety practices to protect Council, themselves, fellow volunteers, staff and clients.
- To comply with Council's policies and procedures, particularly in regard to dangerous and emergency situations.
- To immediately report all incidents, accidents, illnesses and risks to health and safety.
- To notify Council of any potentially hazardous situations or unsafe working conditions.
- To take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others.
- To report any damage to Council or other parties' equipment or possessions.
- To provide parent/guardian consent if the volunteer is under 18 years of age.

### 3.4 COUNCIL RIGHTS

Northern Midlands Council has the right:



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- To make a decision as to where the volunteer would fit best.
- To expect acceptance of responsibilities as to policies, procedures, confidentiality, reliability and good performance.
- To expect from the volunteer open communication at all times.
- To expect volunteers to perform the given tasks to the best of their ability.
- To expect from all volunteers, respect and courtesy towards others.
- To express concerns about poor volunteer effort in a diplomatic way.
- To release an unsuitable volunteer.

### 3.5 COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

Northern Midlands Council has the responsibility:

- To assess volunteer skills to match tasks with expectations, interest and time commitments.
- To recognise the different roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers.
- To provide appropriate induction, training and support.
- To provide written job descriptions and procedures for volunteer jobs when appropriate.
- To provide a safe work environment free from discrimination with an environment of mutual respect.
- To ensure volunteers are appropriately registered and have access to insurance cover for Personal Accident and Public Liability (cover arranged by Council's insurers).
- To require volunteers to work under the supervision of staff and/or appointed co coordinators
- To address areas of conflict between volunteers and others.
- To ensure volunteers are not used to permanently replace paid staff.
- To respect the confidentiality of both volunteers and customers.
- To formally and informally recognise the contribution of volunteers.

### 4. CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteers working with Council must keep privileged information in relation to Council, other employees and clients confidential. Volunteers are expected to maintain the same standards of confidentiality as Council's paid employees. This includes privileged information held by the Council; information shared between volunteers and the designated managers; and information about particular circumstances.

Any written and verbal communication that is privileged must be treated as confidential by volunteers. Volunteers are required to read and sign the Northern Midlands Council Confidentiality Agreement for Volunteers. If in any doubt as to the confidentiality status of any information, volunteers should seek the guidance of the Council Manager or Project Coordinator responsible for their role.

Any breach of this confidentiality may lead to:

- The termination of the volunteer's services.
- Any other action deemed necessary by the General Manager and Council

### 5. WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND POLICE CHECKS

Council may require the volunteer to undergo the Working with Children Check or relevant Police Checks for certain activities as appropriate. If a Police Check is required, Council will provide the volunteer with a Police Check form and pay for the check to be processed. If the Police Check confirms a criminal record, the relevant Council Manager will assess the suitability of the volunteer for the role in question. If a volunteer does not consent to a Police Check where required, they will not be eligible to work in this area of Council.



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### **6. INSURANCE**

All registered Council volunteers who have attended an induction session are covered by the Council's insurance policy whilst undertaking approved duties on behalf of Council, unless otherwise arranged (eg. work experience students). Council will maintain appropriate insurance cover for volunteers engaged in Council activities as outlined in their written job description. Council may require volunteers to undergo a medical examination, dependent upon the nature of the volunteers' work.

### **7. DRIVING COUNCIL AND PRIVATE VEHICLES**

Volunteers are generally not permitted to operate Council vehicles as part of their volunteering duties. In the unlikely event that they are required to drive any Council vehicle; the volunteer must provide Council with proof of their current driver's licence. The driver's licence must be sighted by the appropriate Council Manager or Project Coordinator and a copy taken for Council records. Volunteers must notify Council should the conditions of their licence change for any reason.

Council does not provide insurance for volunteers' private motor vehicles when used for transport to and from volunteer projects or when parked. If using a private vehicle, the volunteer must provide evidence of their motor vehicle comprehensive insurance details by 1 July each year. Volunteers are responsible for any parking or traffic offences and/or fines incurred either in their own vehicle or when driving a Council vehicle.

### **8. TRAVEL ALLOWANCE**

Council recognises that travel to and from the place of volunteering is a substantial cost to the volunteer. Council will pay a travel and meal allowance to volunteers on condition that the appropriate Council Manager has pre-authorised this expense. This travel allowance will be paid upon the production of a completed mileage claim form signed by the Council Manager.

### **9. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OH&S)**

Volunteers are entitled to work in an environment that is safe. OH&S requirements will be made clear to volunteers during induction and training. Further OH&S training will be provided as required. Volunteers shall follow all safe work procedures as defined in the Job Risk Assessment or other assessments made by Council staff and seek instruction when required.

### **10. UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE**

If a volunteer's work is not up to standard, deviates from principles and goals of the service, contravenes the rights and responsibilities of volunteers or places a client, employee or any other person at risk, the appropriate Council Manager will issue a verbal warning. Such warnings are to be placed on file for Council records. If the volunteer's actions cause an immediate and/or significant danger, or harm to others, or is regarded as significantly inappropriate, the volunteer arrangement may be terminated immediately.

### **11. CESSATION OF VOLUNTEERING ARRANGEMENT**

In the case of a volunteer's resignation, all materials, files and equipment are to be returned to Council prior to leaving. Council asks that volunteers intending to resign give as much prior notice as possible to their supervisor.

### **12. IMPLEMENTATION**

The Procedures for Implementation of Volunteer Policy document provides guidelines for the correct procedure to implement Council's Volunteer Policy.

### **13. REVIEW**

The Council will review this policy at least every four years.