



**muswellbrook
shire council**

Volunteer Policy

Policy V10/1

Table of Contents

Policy Objective.....	3
Policy Statement	3
Definitions.....	3
Responsibilities	3
Roles	4
Equity, Diversity and Respect	4
Insurance.....	4
Induction and Training.....	4
Legislation	5
Associated Council Documentation	5
Authorisation Details	5

Policy Objective

Muswellbrook Shire Council aims to;

- i. Provide, as far as reasonably practical, a safe work environment for volunteer activities;
- ii. Determine and document the range of activities to be performed by a volunteer as a handbook, list or letter provided by the volunteer coordinator or relevant manager;
- iii. Provide appropriate supervision, instruction and training to enable the volunteer to safely and effectively perform activities; and
- iv. Provide policies and procedures that effectively administer and support volunteer activities.

With the expectation that a Volunteer will;

- i. Safely perform activities required by Council;
- ii. Comply with relevant Council policies and procedures; and
- iii. Undertake induction, orientation or other ongoing training required by Council.
- iv. Ensure that an adequate induction and instructions have been provided prior to the commencement of volunteer work to feel competent of what is required.

Policy Statement

Muswellbrook Shire Council respects, supports and encourages the active involvement of volunteers in community and in the activities of the Council. Volunteers, for the purposes of this policy, choose to undertake activities for which there is no remuneration. These activities undertaken by volunteers are for benefit of Council and the broader community.

Definitions

A **volunteer** is an individual who performs activities of their own free will, without payment, excluding expense incurred from the activity, which will be of benefit to Council and the wider community. This includes, but is not limited to, people undertaking work experience, community members seeking general unpaid work, people who volunteer to work in specific areas such as the;

- Visitors Information Centre;
- Libraries;
- Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre and;
- Periodic community events etc.

The **Volunteer Coordinator** will be a paid employee of Muswellbrook Shire Council, who may have another role(s) but is responsible for the induction of the volunteer(s) at each relevant event or worksite. The Volunteer Coordinator may not necessarily be physically present at all times during the period of volunteering, although should be always contactable. Volunteers should not undertake activities outside of the agreed tasks discussed with the Volunteer Coordinator.

All volunteer activities will be conducted in accordance with this Policy and approved procedures.

Responsibilities

All activities performed by volunteers are subject to the provisions of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WH&S Act) along with any relevant regulations, codes of practice and Council safety procedures. The activities to be performed by volunteers must be covered by a previously conducted and documented risk assessment and appropriate control measures implemented.

A written procedure will apply to all volunteers performing activities directly for Muswellbrook Shire Council, including members of community organisations performing work on Council property. This may include how to become a volunteer, the type of activity involved in volunteering, policies and procedures, induction processes, use of equipment, confidentiality, attendance and safety.

Muswellbrook Shire Council has the right not to register a volunteer if there is a perceived health risk to the volunteer or the effective management of council.

In many instances, a volunteer may require a current drivers license and/or working with children check.

Roles

Volunteer activities do not replace or remove work by employees, but may complement and support work by employees. However, there should be no expectation on the part of staff or volunteers that volunteer activity leads to employment.

All activities performed by a volunteer will be described in the form of a handbook or manual, or may take the form of a letter or list.

Volunteers will be responsible to a Designated Officer.

Either Council or a volunteer may cease a volunteer arrangement at any time. Confirmation of a volunteer's intention to cease volunteering would be appreciated in writing.

Equity, Diversity and Respect

Council supports equal employment opportunity and equity principles. Discrimination, harassment and bullying are not tolerated within Council and all employees and workers of Council must not engage in discriminatory conduct for a prohibited reason. Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with Muswellbrook Council's Code of Conduct and any other policies that apply.

Insurance

All volunteers engaged by Council (between the ages of 10 and 90 years) are covered under Council's Personal Accident Insurance Policy. This insurance provides cover for volunteers whilst they are engaged in or on any authorised volunteer work directly or indirectly connected with or on behalf of Council, including whilst travelling directly to and/or from such activity (worldwide). This however, does not include every day commuting.

Induction and Training

The General Manager or designated officer is responsible for providing a basic induction for the volunteer and for the provision of any necessary training for the volunteer. The volunteer will be required to attend a WH&S information session both site specific and one coordinated through Human Resource prior to commencement.

Where computer access is required an IT induction and "New Commencement Form" should be completed.

Legislation

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Associated Council Documentation

Muswellbrook Shire Code of Conduct

Social Media Policy

Authorisation Details

Authorised by:	Corporate Policy and Planning Committee
Minute No:	23
Date:	11 July, 2016
Review timeframe:	April 2018
Department:	Community Services
Document Owner:	Manager of Community Services