General Policy
Burke Shire Council
Council Volunteers Policy

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Version History

Date	Person Reviewing	Reason / Comments

1. Purpose

Burke Shire Council recognises and values the contribution volunteers make to the delivery of Council services, programs, events and community initiatives.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent framework for the engagement, support and management of volunteers and to ensure volunteers operate in a safe, respectful and well-managed environment. Volunteers are required to support and complement Council services and not replace paid employment positions.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Council volunteers and employees involved in the engagement, supervision or management of volunteers.

It does not apply to employees undertaking paid duties, contractors, consultants, work experience students, trainees, apprentices, volunteers engaged by another organisation or members of the public participating in ordinary Council activities.

3. Date of Policy

This Policy will commence from 28 October 2026. It replaces all other volunteer policies of Council.

4. Definitions

Volunteer	A person who willingly contributes their time, skills and experience to Burke Shire Council without receiving wages or salary in return. This includes individuals engaged in approved Council volunteer activities.
Volunteer activity	An approved activity, event, program or service undertaken on behalf of Council by a volunteer.
Volunteer supervisor	The Council employee responsible for providing direction, support, induction and supervision to a volunteer.

5. Policy Statement

Burke Shire Council is committed to:

- encouraging community participation through volunteering;
- providing meaningful volunteer opportunities where appropriate;
- ensuring volunteers are treated fairly, respectfully and inclusively;
- providing appropriate induction, information, training and supervision;
- maintaining a safe and healthy environment for volunteers;
- recognising volunteer contributions; and
- managing volunteer programs in a manner consistent with legislative and organisational requirements.

6. Policy Provisions

6.1 Volunteer Engagement

Council may engage volunteers where there is an identified community or organisational benefit and the proposed volunteer role is considered appropriate.

Prior to commencing a volunteer role, volunteers may be required to complete Council's volunteer onboarding requirements, including an application form, induction, acknowledgement of relevant policies and a Volunteer Agreement.

Volunteer arrangements are entered into freely and do not create an employment relationship, entitlement to wages or guarantee future employment with Council.

6.2 Engagement Responsibilities

Council will, so far as reasonably practicable:

- provide appropriate induction, information, training and supervision;
- provide a safe and respectful volunteering environment;
- communicate relevant Council policies and requirements;
- support volunteers in undertaking their approved role; and
- recognise and value volunteer contributions.

Volunteers must:

- comply with Council policies, procedures and lawful directions;
- perform only approved volunteer duties;
- act honestly, ethically and respectfully;
- take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others;
- report hazards, incidents and concerns;
- maintain confidentiality and protect Council information and property; and
- comply with the Volunteer Agreement and applicable Council requirements.

6.3 Code of Conduct

The Burke Shire Council Code of Conduct applies to Council volunteers. Volunteers must be familiar with and comply with the spirit and content of the Code while undertaking activities on behalf of Council.

Consistent with the Code of Conduct, volunteers must:

- act honestly, ethically and impartially;
- treat all people with dignity and respect;
- declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest;
- protect confidential and personal information;
- use Council property and resources only for authorised purposes;
- not make public comments or represent themselves as speaking on Council’s behalf unless authorised;
- use social media responsibly; and
- conduct themselves in a manner that does not adversely affect Council’s reputation.

6.4 Workplace Health and Safety

Burke Shire Council is committed to providing volunteers with a safe and healthy environment.

Volunteers are expected to comply with Council's workplace health and safety requirements and participate in any required induction, training or safety processes.

Volunteers must immediately report hazards, incidents, injuries and unsafe work practices.

Council's workplace health and safety framework applies to volunteers.

6.5 Respectful Workplace

Council is committed to providing an environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation.

Volunteers are expected to contribute to a respectful, inclusive and safe environment and must not engage in inappropriate conduct.

6.6 Complaints and Concerns

Volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns regarding their volunteer role, safety, treatment or workplace conduct.

Complaints involving volunteers may be managed under Council's existing workplace complaint framework and related policies.

6.7 Ending a Volunteer Arrangement

A volunteer may cease volunteering at any time.

Council may discontinue a volunteer arrangement where:

- the role is no longer required;
- operational requirements change;
- safety concerns arise;
- Council policies are breached; or
- the arrangement is otherwise considered unsuitable.

Upon cessation, all Council property must be returned.

7. Key Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Mayor	To lead councillors in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy.
CEO	To lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy.
Directors	To communicate, implement and comply with this policy.

Managers and Supervisors	To implement this policy and related procedures.
All Council staff	To comply with this policy and consider its implications for related projects and programs.
Volunteers	To comply with this policy, the Volunteer Agreement and applicable Council policies.

8. Related Documents

Legislation/Regulations	**Volunteer Documents**	**BSC Policies**	**Procedures**
Work Health and Safety Act 2011 Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 Local Government Act 2009	Volunteer Agreement	HRM-POL-002 Workplace Complaint Policy WHS-POL-001 Workplace Health and Safety Policy WOR-POL-001 Vehicle Policy Code of Conduct	HRM-PRO-004 Workplace Complaints Procedure WHS-PRO-291 Managing Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace