

<b>POLICY LOCATION</b>	Community Development	<b>POLICY TITLE</b>	Volunteer Policy
<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	CA39	<b>DATE ADOPTED</b>	August 2023
<b>REVISION NUMBER</b>	1	<b>REVISION DATE</b>	August 2027

## Purpose

This Policy acknowledges Council’s commitment to supporting and encouraging community volunteering within the Buloke Shire Council.

This Policy defines Council’s adherence to the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and best practice.

Volunteering provides valuable opportunities for participants to contribute to their community through one of Council’s services. Volunteering provides a variety of benefits for participants such as social inclusion and community connection, physical and psychological wellbeing, along with demonstrating appealing traits relevant to professional opportunities. The economic benefits of volunteering are an additional and admirable benefit to Council and the broader community.

Volunteering strongly supports the development of a diverse, vibrant, cohesive, and sustainable community and Council is committed to supporting a council wide volunteer program.

## Scope

This Policy guides Council’s efforts in the promotion, recruitment, engagement, and recognition of volunteers across Council’s many services.

The Community have provided volunteer resourcing to Buloke Shire for the benefit of the broader community for many years. Traditionally volunteering is in the areas of:

- Community
- Arts, Culture and Events
- Recreation, and
- Environment.

The Community is now looking for additional opportunities to provide Council that volunteering support. New opportunities for volunteer engagement may exist in the following areas:

- Infrastructure and Delivery
- Parks and Gardens, or Nature strip Management

The benefits of volunteering for Council and the broader community include:

- Enhancing Council’s service delivery to the wider community
- Strengthening communities through inclusiveness and connection

- Expanding an individual's skills and experiences
- Improving an individual's health and wellbeing

## Definitions

In this Policy –

**“Volunteers”** is defined as time willing given, for the common good and without financial gain.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/resources>

## Policy Statement

Volunteering contributes to community wellbeing through social connection, inclusive participation, and supported community services facilitated by the Council. Volunteering can provide a sense of purpose and fulfillment whilst also supporting job readiness and various further opportunities to acquire valuable workplace skills to participants.

Council commits to the promotion, recruitment, engagement, and recognition of volunteers across Council's many services.

The following principles have been developed to facilitate Council's role in supporting, engaging, and protecting Council volunteers and to support the integrity of the Council's Volunteer Program.

Council will:

- Ensure all Council volunteers are provided with appropriate volunteer insurance.
- Support the involvement of volunteers in the development and delivery of a range of Council services and programs.
- Provide leadership, support, and advocacy to increase volunteer participation within Council.
- Raise the profile of volunteerism through positive promotion, education and recognition.
- Celebrate the contribution volunteers make to the broader community of Buloke Shire through their contributions to service delivery.
- Facilitate access to information, advice, and volunteering opportunities within Council.
- Protect volunteers through its duty of care to provide a safe environment to undertake their community volunteering.
- Provide volunteers with supporting documentation relevant to the role and service being undertaken.

## Volunteering Standards

The National Standards provide a framework for the development and implementation of volunteer programs within Council. These standards address eight key areas of volunteer governance and implementation which Council supports and encourages.

Council supports and encourages volunteering by:

### **Leadership and Management**

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer. Volunteering is a matter of choice, of one's free will and without coercion.
- Council will promote a positive culture towards volunteering.

### **Commitment to Volunteer Involvement**

- Volunteering is a legitimate way for individuals to participate in supporting their community through Council services and programs.
- Council's commitment to volunteering is set out within the Council Plan and Community Wellbeing Plan and supports the organisation's strategic direction.

### **Volunteer Roles**

- Volunteering is a means for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs.
- Council will promote the engagement of volunteers in meaningful roles which contribute to Council's overall purpose, goals, and objectives.

### **Recruitment and Selection**

- Volunteering is time willing given, for the common good and without a financial gain.
- Council will promote volunteer recruitment and selection strategies that are planned and consistent with service and program requirements. Volunteer opportunities are available to people aged 16 years and over.
- Volunteering does not take the place of paid staff.
- In accordance with Federal and State Legislation, and Council policy, Council embraces diversity and values the individual contribution of all members of our community. Council is committed to providing an environment free of harassment and discrimination.

### **Support and Development**

- Volunteers are treated with respect, consideration, and awareness of the culture of others.
- Council ensures volunteers understand their roles and engagement to carry out their duties safely and effectively through induction, position descriptions and training programs.

### **Safety and Wellbeing**

- Protection for volunteers has been afforded through legislation and public policy. For example, national workplace health and safety legislation recognises the importance of protecting volunteers in the workplace, and through its duty of care to provide a safe work environment and the need to provide appropriate volunteer insurance coverage for active volunteers.
- Volunteers will participate in volunteer orientation and training programs that provide information and resources to carry out volunteer roles safely and competently.

- Council supports practices that ensures the health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers are protected.

### **Volunteer Recognition**

- Recognition of volunteer involvement is an important aspect of Council's Volunteer Program.
- Council will continue to ensure the value, contribution, and impact of the role of volunteers is understood, recognised, and promoted within the organisation.

### **Quality Management and Continuous Improvement**

- Council will promote effective volunteer management strategies by implementing good practice, reviews, and continuous improvement.

### **Guidelines**

Volunteers are under the direction, supervision, and control of the Council and Council is to ensure that each Volunteer properly carries out Council's functions.

The engagement of volunteers should be for a set purpose or period. The Volunteer Role Description should include the start and completion dates.

Each Volunteer will be required to sign a Volunteer Role Description, which explains the tasks to be undertaken and sets out in simple terms the Council's safety and compliance requirements.

Prior to the volunteer/s undertaking any tasks, the Council will conduct a risk assessment of each task to identify controls and mitigations that will reduce the likelihood and consequence rating to acceptable level. Once controls and mitigations are identified they need to be developed and once implemented must be signed off by the Manager Governance and by the Director in whose area the tasks will be undertaken.

Council's Public Liability, Professional Indemnity and Personal Accident insurance extends to volunteers undertaking tasks on behalf of Council.

Council will reimburse reasonable out of pocket expenses provided prior approval has been received by the relevant Council Officer responsible for the Council function and that any expenditure is supported by receipts.

Council may terminate the engagement of a volunteer, should a volunteer breach the terms and conditions of their engagement.

### **References**

This policy was developed in accordance with the following legislation:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*

- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- *Child Safe Standards 2022*

This policy was developed in accordance with the following documents:

- Risk Management Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Social Media Policy
- Bullying Equal Opportunity Discrimination Sexual Harassment Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Community Support Policy
- Buloke Shire Council Advocacy Plan
- Buloke Shire Council Inclusiveness Plan
- Buloke Shire Council Gender Action Plan