



Volunteers handbook

SCENIC RIM



REGIONAL COUNCIL

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Introduction

This Volunteer Handbook aims to provide guidance in relation to Council's volunteer policies and procedures and applies to all volunteer programs within the organisation.

Scenic Rim Regional Council is committed to supporting healthy, engaged and resourceful communities. Volunteers are integral to this and make a valuable contribution to community life in the Scenic Rim, both socially and economically. Their efforts represent a significant contribution towards the successful delivery of Council programs, services, events and projects.

Rights and responsibilities of Council and volunteers

Both Council and its volunteers have rights and responsibilities to each other.

Council will ensure:

- volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to Council's purpose, goals and objectives
- volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of Council and volunteers
- volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to carry out their duties safely and effectively
- commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports Council's strategic direction
- Council leads and promotes a positive culture towards volunteering and implements effective management systems to support volunteer involvement
- the health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace
- volunteers' contribution, value and impact are understood, appreciated and acknowledged, and
- effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.

Volunteers will:

- contribute positively to the organisation and carry out tasks aligned with Council's aims and values
- be aware of and follow the relevant policies, procedures and guidelines of Council as outlined in this handbook and the area in which they are working
- be willing to take part in induction and ongoing training as required
- accept and perform the responsibilities of the role to the best of their ability and in a prompt and reliable manner
- accept support, supervision and constructive feedback on their performance
- be open and honest in all communications
- not represent themselves as a paid staff member or obligate Council in any way, and
- work as a team and respect confidentiality.



Trial period/acceptance

If a volunteer position is offered this will be for an initial trial period of up to six weeks (which may vary depending on the number of hours per week).

Consideration will be given to matching a volunteer for a particular role, their suitability and compatibility with other volunteers and paid staff and overall attitude and/or ability.

Before being offered a role, volunteers should read the Volunteer Handbook and then work through the Volunteer Induction Checklist with their Volunteer Role Supervisor.

They will then need to sign an agreement that they understand and accept all details in the handbook and onsite induction.

Depending on the role and department, further paperwork may be required such as a Working with Children Check (Blue Card) application.

Regular volunteer reviews may be conducted to determine the level of satisfaction in a volunteer's role.

Volunteers'/employees working relationship

A volunteer enhances the work of paid staff and does not replace or supplant it. Volunteer service is a privilege, not a right, and volunteers and paid staff work in partnership to achieve Council's aims and objectives, each with differing but complementary roles. This requires an understanding and respect for each other's role, responsibilities and abilities.

Involvement as a volunteer will not provide an opportunity or preference in regard to paid employment with Scenic Rim Regional Council.

Grievances and complaints

Volunteers who have a complaint or grievance should first refer the matter to their supervisor to be dealt with efficiently and in a manner that is equitable and fair to all involved. Wherever possible, all attempts will be made to informally resolve complaints or grievances through the volunteer's supervisor. If this is not possible, the matter should be put in writing and proceed to a formal stage by submitting the complaint or grievance at one of Council offices or emailed to mail@scenicrim.qld.gov.au

Any form of serious misconduct or misbehaviour will not be tolerated. This includes assault, bullying, fraud and theft as well as physical, verbal or sexual harassment.

Termination and cessation of engagement

Volunteers are entitled to cease their volunteering activities at any time, however, to assist with planning, two weeks' notice provided to their supervisor would be appreciated.



All identification and other material provided to the volunteer as part of their engagement is to be returned to Council prior to leaving.

Council has the right to terminate a volunteer engagement should the volunteer's performance or conduct fail to comply with Council's values, policy and procedures or places another person at risk or if suitable volunteer work is no longer available.

Privacy and confidentiality

A volunteer's personal records, as well as any resolution procedures, will be kept confidential at all times. Council will use these records only as they relate to a volunteer capacity, such as for offers of other volunteer roles, newsletters on volunteer activities and training, as well as invitations to volunteer thank you events.

Volunteers will respect the confidentiality of the clients and staff about whom they obtain information during the course of their volunteer work.

Volunteers will also respect the confidentiality of any privileged organisational information they may acquire through their volunteering with Council. Regardless of their personal feelings about any aspects of the way in which Scenic Rim Regional Council conducts its business, volunteers are not to express these views to a client or any other person or agency while representing Council through its volunteer program. Breaches of this confidentiality will result in termination of the volunteer's appointment.

Supervision, support and development

Volunteers will be provided with an appropriate supervisor who is a Council employee. Volunteering undertaken by a volunteer must be supervised, either directly by an onsite supervisor, or indirectly where the supervisor is aware of the voluntary work being carried out.

Volunteers will be provided with appropriate on-the-job training to enable them to undertake their duties. Council will aim, where possible, to make provision for any additional identified training and development needs of volunteers required for their role.

Council provides an opportunity for people with disabilities to participate as a volunteer and will work with applicants to explore necessary levels of support for these volunteers. Carers of people with disabilities are encouraged to be part of the process and can fill in applications on their behalf.

Personal presentation/dress code

Volunteers are required to dress in a manner that is clean, neat and safe. Comfortable clothing appropriate to their duties and enclosed footwear is essential for all roles.

Other circumstances, such as outdoor events, require a wide brimmed hat and a long sleeved shirt.



Volunteers will be issued with a badge which identifies them as volunteers. This must be worn while performing voluntary duties authorised by Council.

Health and safety

The responsibility for working safely is a shared responsibility between Scenic Rim Regional Council and those who act on its behalf.

Scenic Rim Regional Council has a duty under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and associated legislation to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers (including volunteers) and other persons.

As part of a volunteer's induction and involvement with Council, training will be provided in safe working practices for the tasks to be undertaken. It is imperative that volunteers do not undertake any tasks until they have been appropriately trained. If unsure about any task, it is important for volunteers to speak to their role supervisor for clarification.

All volunteers have a responsibility to take reasonable measures to ensure their own health and safety, to use prescribed safety equipment, to not put others at risk, and to obey all safety rules in place.

Scenic Rim Regional Council is a smoke-free workplace.

Insurance - personal accident cover

Cover under this policy applies to all hazards to which a volunteer is exposed while actually engaged in voluntary work, including necessary direct travel to and from such volunteer work. The policy applies only in respect of volunteer work officially organised by, and under the control of, Scenic Rim Regional Council.

Any injury, incident or hazard in the volunteer's work area must be reported immediately to their role supervisor.

Attendance

For legal and reporting purposes, all volunteer hours of service are required to be recorded. Signing in and out of the sign on sheet at each venue is essential.

Council acknowledges that, at times, volunteers will not be able to meet their commitment due to sickness or a prior commitment and, where possible, adequate notice will help staff to find a replacement volunteer if needed.

Voluntary hours and times performed are negotiable but volunteers will not be asked to perform voluntary work for more than seven hours in a single period.



Age considerations

To participate in Scenic Rim Regional Council's volunteer program, a person under the age of 18 must have the consent of a parent or guardian. Those under the age of 15 must also be in the care of a responsible adult, other than the Volunteer Supervisor, when participating in the volunteer program. There is a maximum age limit of 95 for volunteering.

