



NORTHERN
MIDLANDS
COUNCIL

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Version 1: September 2015

Welcome

Thank you for contributing your time and services to the Northern Midlands Council.

Volunteers are an important part of our organisation and it is our obligation to ensure you have an enjoyable and safe volunteering experience.

This handbook provides you with the information you need to enhance your volunteering experience, ensuring it is safe, productive and enjoyable.

Being a volunteer

A volunteer is a person who is acting on a voluntary basis.

The Northern Midlands Council supports volunteering to:

- ◆ Develop and strengthen the links between Council and our community;
- ◆ Provide personal development opportunities for individuals;
- ◆ Utilise the knowledge and experience of individuals within our community;
- ◆ Extend and expand the services to our community;
- ◆ Enable members of our community to have an active role in the Northern Midlands Council.

Your rights as a volunteer

As a volunteer you have the right to:

- ◆ Be respected and valued as a volunteer;
- ◆ Be appreciated and recognised for your contribution;
- ◆ Be managed within a structured volunteer management framework;
- ◆ Receive training to undertake your volunteering tasks (if required);
- ◆ Have your ideas welcomed and acknowledged;
- ◆ Be able to raise any grievance or issue;
- ◆ Work in a healthy and safe environment;
- ◆ Be supported by the Council;
- ◆ Have your skills, experience and qualifications acknowledged;
- ◆ Have your confidential and personal information managed in a sensitive manner that is in line with the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and the *Personal Information Protection Act (Tas) 2004*;
- ◆ Have the equipment and resources to complete your duties; and
- ◆ Be adequately covered by Council's insurance policies.

Your responsibilities as a volunteer

A volunteer is a worker as defined in the *Work Health & Safety Act 2012*. Accordingly, there are certain responsibilities you must meet in your role.

As a volunteer you have a responsibility to:

- ◆ Complete a Council Volunteer Registration Form;
- ◆ Adhere to all Council policies that apply to your position;
- ◆ Adhere to all legislation relevant to your duties;
- ◆ Immediately notify your Council Supervisor if you sustain a work related injury;
- ◆ Immediately report any unsafe working conditions and potential hazards to your Council Supervisor;
- ◆ Maintain confidentiality regarding Council business or any private or sensitive information you have access to during your volunteering duties;
- ◆ Undertake training (if required);
- ◆ Be punctual and reliable;
- ◆ Inform your Council Supervisor or other nominated person if you are unable to undertake your duties;
- ◆ Raise issues with your Council Supervisor when they arise;
- ◆ Communicate openly and honestly with those you volunteer with.

Council's rights and responsibilities

Council has the right to:

- ◆ Make decisions regarding volunteer placement;
- ◆ Review volunteer performance according to organisational policies and procedures;
- ◆ Expect volunteers to perform their tasks to the best of their ability;
- ◆ Expect volunteers to conduct their duties with respect and courtesy towards all customers, paid and voluntary staff;
- ◆ Release a volunteer who is deemed inappropriate for the volunteer role.

Council has the responsibility to:

- ◆ Ensure volunteers are covered by adequate insurances;
- ◆ Provide orientation and necessary training;
- ◆ Establish clear lines of communication about complaints and conflict resolution procedures;
- ◆ Provide safe and healthy working conditions;
- ◆ Include volunteers in relevant decision making processes;
- ◆ Provide supervision and support;
- ◆ Provide emergency procedure guidelines;
- ◆ Provide required documentation relating to the volunteer work to be undertaken.

Volunteering at the Northern Midlands Council

Organisational structure for volunteers

General Manager



Council Supervisor



Volunteer

Orientation and Training

When you commence your volunteering role with Council any specific requirements of your role and Council procedures will be conveyed to you.

If you have any questions about your role or Council's policies or procedures you should refer these to your Council Supervisor.

If you are a member of a Facility Management Committee you will need to undertake a brief Work Health & Safety and Governance induction. These are conducted annually, you will need to make yourself available for the training if required.

If you are a volunteer at a museum or information centre you will need to participate in an orientation process with the Chairperson of that Committee, or a nominated delgate.

Personal Information and Privacy

Any information collected by Council in the course of your volunteering about you will be kept private and confidential in accordance with Council's Privacy Policy Statement, a copy of which can be obtained from your Council Supervisor.

Resignations

Should you wish to end your volunteering service please notify the Chairperson of the committee you are volunteering for (if applicable) and/or your Council Supervisor at your earliest convenience. Any ID badge, keys and Council property is to be returned to Council prior to your departure.

Work Health & Safety

As a Volunteer you must ensure you adhere to all Work Health & Safety requirements of the Council. This includes:

- ◆ Taking reasonable care for your own health and safety;
- ◆ Taking reasonable care that your acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others;
- ◆ Complying, as far as you are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction given by the Council;
- ◆ Cooperating with any reasonable policy or procedure of Council;
- ◆ Making yourself familiar with any emergency procedures in the facility in which you are volunteering;

- ◆ Having adequate experience with, or having received training in the operation of any plant you are required to use in the course of your volunteering duties; and
- ◆ Reporting any risks or hazards you may identify at the facility at which you are volunteering to your Council Supervisor.

At every Council owned facility there is an Emergency Evacuation plan clearly identifying the location of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, exits and an Emergency Assembly Point. A list of emergency contact numbers is also provided at each facility.

Equity

The Northern Midlands Council aims to ensure all Councillors, Staff, Volunteers and Customers are treated fairly and equally.

Volunteers are not to participate in any discriminatory behaviour at the facility at which they are volunteering, or, in connection with their role as a volunteer.

If you identify discriminatory behaviour you should report the same to your Council Supervisor, or the General Manager.

Insurance

Council has in place Public Liability and Personal Accident insurance to cover volunteers in the event they are injured in the course of their duties as a volunteer under the direction

of Council. Personal accident insurance cover is to ensure volunteers are not out of pocket in the event they are injured, it is not a substitute for private health cover.

Council does not insure personal vehicles owned by a volunteer. If you have your own vehicle it must be registered and insured by you personally.

Code of Conduct

Council has in place an Employee Code of Conduct Policy. Pursuant to the policy an employee of Council, including its volunteers must:

- ◆ Act with honesty and integrity;
- ◆ Act with professionalism;
- ◆ Act in accordance with the law and policies and procedures;
- ◆ Declare and avoid conflicts of interest;
- ◆ Respect privacy and do not misuse information;
- ◆ Strive to be good citizens and achieve community respect.

For full details please refer to the Northern Midlands Council Employee Code of Conduct, a copy of which can be provided by your Council Supervisor.

Unacceptable behaviour

The Northern Midlands Council has a responsibility to ensure its staff and volunteers maintain a high standard of

conduct in the performance of their duties. Unacceptable behaviour will be managed in a fair, reasonable and timely manner according to Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, a copy of which can be provided by your Council Supervisor

Grievances and complaints

The Northern Midlands Council will make every effort to solve a grievance in a manner acceptable to all parties. If a grievance cannot be resolved informally you may make a formal complaint in writing according to Council's Issue Resolution Policy and Procedure, a copy of which can be provided by your Council Supervisor.

Thank you

Thank you for your time donated to volunteering for the Northern Midlands Council. We hope this booklet answers any questions you may have about your volunteering role. If you have further queries please contact your Council Supervisor.

Volunteer Checklist

Have you:

- Read this handbook and agree to its terms?
- Completed your Volunteer Registration Form?

Thank you! We look forward to working with you!