

LAST UPDATED JUNE 2021

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

A guide for volunteers of the Northern Midlands Council



WELCOME

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

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

This handbook provides you with the information you will 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 we can offer to our community;
- Enable members of our community to have an active role in the Northern Midlands municipality.

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.

The landscape changes from mountainous country on its eastern and western boundaries to extensive grazing lands renowned for fine wool production, the rich agricultural river flats of the Esk, Lake and Macquarie Rivers; historic towns and villages; and from small businesses to multi-million dollar enterprises.



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 prior to commencement, and return this to Council;
- Adhere to all Council policies that apply to your position;
- Adhere to all applicable legislation relevant to your role as a volunteer;
- 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 as and 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 and applicable 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.

The Northern Midlands covers an area of 5,130 square kilometres, extending from Liffey Bluff in the west to Mount St John in the east (150kms) and from Relbia in the north to Tooms Lake in the south (95kms).



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.

All volunteers are required to undertake a Work Health and Safety induction prior to commencing duties with the Northern Midlands Council.

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.

WORK HEALTH AND 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;

*Did you know?
Northern Midlands
Council has over 130
volunteers that assist
with running
community facilities,
preparation and
preservation of
reserves and
recreation grounds,
planting and watering
of plants, to name
just some of the
areas volunteers
assist.*



WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY CONTINUED

- 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. These will be updated by Council Officers when required.

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.

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.

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, all applicable legislation and Council's policies and procedures;

The Northern Midlands Estimated Resident Population for 2020 is 13,598, with a population density of 0.03 persons per hectare.



CODE OF CONDUCT CONTINUED

- 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 of this policy, 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.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- Issue Resolution Policy
- Issue Resolution Procedure
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Work Health & Safety Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure

Council's Policy Manual can be found under the documents section on our website.



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.

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:

- ✓ Completed your Volunteer Induction?
- ✓ Completed your Volunteer Registration Form?

Thank you! We look forward to having you volunteer with us.

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*Our volunteers
are vital to
Council, they
allow us to
achieve so
much and to
offer amazing
facilities to the
community.*

*- Mayor Mary
Knowles OAM*



NEED TO CONTACT US?



Phone: (03) 6397 7303



Email: council@nmc.tas.gov.au



Located at: 13 Smith Street Longford Tasmania
7301



Mailing address: PO BOX 156 Longford
Tasmania 7301



Opening Hours: 8:45am - 4:30pm



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