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Related legislation:	Local Government Act 2020 Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) Volunteering Australia's National Standards for Volunteer Involvement Tool.		
Related strategic documents, policies, or procedures:			

Date	Version Number	Details of Version	Modified by
18/02/2020	1	Development of new policy	Executive Manager Organisational Capability

1. Purpose

Mount Alexander Shire Council respects and acknowledges the important contribution that volunteers individually and collectively make towards the success of the Shire.

This policy establishes Council's position in relation to supporting volunteers and the important role they play to assist Council in serving the community. This policy ensures volunteering at Mount Alexander Shire Council is guided by fair and consistent principles and procedures that provide a positive experience and outcomes for volunteers, the community and staff at the Council.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the Councillors and employees (including full time, part time, casual employees, agency staff and students), contractors, volunteers, and consultants of Mount Alexander Shire Council. It also includes Community Asset Committees established under the Local Government Act 2020.

3. Policy

Council is committed to supporting all volunteers in the contribution they make to the success of the Mount Alexander Shire Council and its community. Council will support volunteers in accordance with Volunteering Australia's National Standards (2015) as follows.

1. Leadership and Management

Council and senior employees lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement.

2. Commitment to Volunteer Involvement

Commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports the organisation's strategic direction.

3. Volunteer Roles

Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.

4. Recruitment and Selection

Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.

5. Support and Development

Volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties.

6. Workplace Safety and Wellbeing

The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace.

7. Volunteer Recognition

Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.

8. Quality Management and Continuous Improvement

Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.

3.1. Roles and responsibilities

It is essential that volunteers and paid staff understand and respect the needs and responsibilities of one another. Volunteers make a valuable contribution to the organisation by undertaking value-added tasks. Volunteers do not replace staff or carry out the work of paid staff.

Volunteer hours and attendance times will be negotiated between the volunteer and their supervisor based on the requirements of the role and the availability of the volunteer. The maximum regular commitment by a volunteer will be capped in line with Volunteering Australia guidelines.

Volunteers at Mount Alexander Shire Council participate in a structured volunteering program with volunteer roles and opportunities reviewed and varied as necessary.

Council will:

- Provide a supportive and safe work environment.
- Communicate clear expectations for volunteer roles.
- Undertake a formal induction program for volunteers which will provide information about the Council and the relevant programs, training, policies and procedures.
- Engage with volunteers on decisions which will substantially affect a volunteer's role and/or performance.
- Provide appropriate support to volunteers to assist them to perform their role, including training and feedback on performance.
- Provide a volunteer supervisor within each program who has the skills and knowledge to develop, support and supervise volunteers.
- Assign volunteers with tasks that are meaningful to Council, the community and the volunteer themselves.

- Ensure that volunteers enhance the work of paid staff and never replace them.

Volunteers will:

- Maintain the same standards of confidentiality, customer service, courtesy, and compliance with Council policies and procedures as are required of paid employees of Council.
- Accept and perform the responsibilities of the volunteer role to the best of their ability and in a positive and reliable manner.
- Take part in induction and ongoing training as required.
- Accept support, supervision and constructive feedback on performance.
- Not represent themselves as an employee of Council.
- Carry out tasks in accordance with the values of Council.

3.2. Recruitment and selection

Volunteering opportunities are available to people aged 18 years and over. Applicants must be permitted to volunteer in Australia under relevant visa conditions if applicable.

All volunteer applications are considered on a merit basis. Assessment of suitability include relevant experience and competencies that demonstrate the ability to achieve agreed outcomes, and capacity to attend at agreed times. Dependent on the role volunteers will be required to undergo a National Police Record Check, have a current Working with Children Check and disclose any pre-existing medical conditions that may impact on their ability to undertake the role.

The offer of a volunteer role at Council is in no way a commitment to an offer of a future paid role at Council.

3.3. Supervision, support, and development

Council is committed to continuous improvement of its volunteer support and management practices, aligned with the Standards.

Council will ensure that volunteers are provided appropriate management, supervision and communication to ensure volunteers are aware of policies, procedures and information relating to their roles. Adequate training, resources and support will be provided to allow volunteers to undertake their role in a safe and effective manner. The relevant volunteer supervisor will routinely review training requirements of volunteers and make adequate provision for ongoing training opportunities that support volunteers in Council service.

Council will reimburse volunteers for use of their own motor vehicles, approved training costs or incidentals as agreed in undertaking a volunteer role with Council.

Volunteers will be treated with respect, fairness and dignity in accordance with the Code of Conduct, National Standards and Human Rights Charter.

3.4. Recognition

Council values the role of volunteers and as such strives to recognise volunteers and the contribution they make. Council will provide an annual event for volunteer recognition and ensure acknowledgment of long term volunteer service with appropriate awards and recognition. Where possible and where appropriate volunteers will be recognised through external Council communication channels.

3.5. Health and safety

Council is committed to providing volunteers with a safe workplace.

On commencement, volunteers will be provided with relevant information and guidelines to ensure the maintenance of a safe and healthy workplace along with training and information regarding emergency procedures.

Council will maintain appropriate insurance cover for volunteers engaged in Council business.

Volunteers are expected to comply with the relevant Council OH&S policies and procedures. Volunteers are required to report all incidents to their supervisor or a member of staff as soon as possible, as outlined in any relevant Council Incident reporting procedures.

4. Definitions of Abbreviations and Terms Used

Term	Definition
Volunteer	A person who undertake activities without monetary reward, of their own free will, of benefit to Council and the local community, that complement but do not replace the services provided by paid staff.
Volunteering	Time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.

5. Human Rights Statement

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006).