

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL  
**COUNCIL POLICY**



## VOLUNTEER POLICY

Policy No.	C54	Adoption Date:	
Revision Date:			
Directorate:	Economy and Community	Department:	Community Services
<b>GOOD GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK – OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES</b>			
Supporting Pillar:	Pillar 2 - Culture & Behaviour		
Link to Pillar:	The Volunteer Policy supports Council Volunteers and staff supervising volunteers to deliver Council services to the community.		

### 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Volunteer Policy* (C54) (the Policy) is to demonstrate South Gippsland Shire Council's commitment to enabling volunteer and community participation in the delivery of Council services to the community.

This Policy has been developed to support:

- A safe, sustainable, and rewarding experience for volunteers through participation in South Gippsland Shire Council's volunteering opportunities.
- The cooperative development of new and innovative programs which add value to the South Gippsland community.
- A coordinated and targeted contribution by volunteers in the delivery of Council managed services and programs, built, natural and cultural environments, and visitor experiences.
- Council to comply with best practice in volunteer management as outlined in the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015 (Volunteering Australia).

### 2. SCOPE

The scope of this Policy applies to Volunteers involved in supporting and enhancing the delivery of South Gippsland Shire Council programs and services, including but not limited to;

- Coal Creek Community Park & Museum
- Youth Programs



- Environment / Biodiversity Programs
- Parks & Gardens
- Visitor Information Centre
- L2P Learner Driver Mentor Program

### 3. POLICY PRINCIPLES

South Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the vital role volunteers play in the delivery of services and their contribution to the health and wellbeing of the South Gippsland community.

Volunteer participation can extend and enhance the management of facilities and delivery of programs. It encourages people to engage with Council and can generate a greater sense of community spirit, responsibility, and belonging.

Participation through volunteering helps to build the capability of the community through improved relationships, skills development, networks, and sharing of resources, and gives some volunteers opportunities to develop skills to improve employability.

#### **Volunteers**

*"Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain" Volunteering Australia 2015*

Volunteering is an activity which takes place through not-for-profit organisations or projects and is undertaken:

- To be of benefit to the community and the volunteer; and
- At the volunteer's own free will and without coercion.

Volunteers are involved in supporting and enhancing the delivery of South Gippsland Shire Council programs and services, including but not limited to:

- Coal Creek Community Park & Museum;
- Youth Programs;
- Environment / Biodiversity;
- Parks & Gardens;
- Visitor Information Centre; and
- L2P Learner Driver Mentor Program.

#### **Community Participation**

Community members volunteer their time and effort to participate in the management of community assets and advise Council on programs and policy.



This includes:

- Advisory Committees, Reference Groups, Steering Committees - Established by a council to provide advice to council, but where a final decision for action or expenditure is taken by council; and
- Community Asset Committees (Local Government Act 2020) - A Community Asset Committee is a committee with powers of the council delegated by the Chief Executive Officer, subject to the terms and conditions specified by the Chief Executive Officer, for the purpose of managing a community asset in the municipal district (s 65(2) *Local Government Act 2020*).

### **Principles of Volunteering**

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer;
- Volunteer work is unpaid;
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice;
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community;
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental, and social needs;
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the not-for-profit sector only;
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work;
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers;
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity, and culture of others; and
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

### **Volunteer Participation Core Values**

South Gippsland Shire Council is committed to enabling and supporting volunteering and community participation which:

- Provides safe, meaningful and sustainable opportunities to contribute;
- Complements Council's Annual Plan;
- Are appropriate to the interests, skills, and aspirations of all parties;
- Values and encourages diverse participation and reflects community demographics;
- Establishes effective dialogue and trust between South Gippsland Shire Council and the community;

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- Encourages the development of community capability including skills, leadership, and effective decision making; and
- Recognises and promotes volunteers as part of the South Gippsland Shire Council's workforce.

#### **4. RISK ASSESSMENT**

This Policy mitigates Council's risks as described below:

##### **4.1. People**

- 4.1.1. Normal principles of personnel management apply to working with volunteers including induction, competency assessment, privacy, anti-discrimination, occupational health & safety (OH&S), equal opportunity legislation, reward and recognition, access to appropriate information and policies, grievance procedures, and opportunities for personal development.

##### **4.2. Reputational**

- 4.2.1. All volunteers are required to undergo Police Checks and Working with Children Checks on commencement. In line with the South Gippsland Shire Council Probity Policy, some nominated volunteer roles are required to regularly renew the Police Check, or provide evidence of Drivers Licence and Qualification currency.

##### **4.3. Financial**

- 4.3.1. A statement providing clarity on 'reimbursement of certain costs' reduces Council's financial risk.

##### **4.4. Governance**

- 4.4.1. Volunteer activities must meet South Gippsland Shire Council's standards and external standards regarding quality and safety, and be subject to the normal South Gippsland Shire Council approval, monitoring, and evaluation processes.

##### **4.5. Safety**

- 4.5.1. Volunteer activities must meet South Gippsland Shire Council's standards and external standards regarding quality and safety, and be subject to the normal South Gippsland Shire Council approval, monitoring, and evaluation processes.

##### **4.6. Business Continuity**

- 4.6.1. Managers and volunteer supervisors need to ensure that adequate staff time is available to support volunteer activity and that this is documented in individual staff work plans.



## 5. IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

### 5.1. Human Rights Charter

This Policy has considered the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* in its development.

### 5.2. Gender Equality

This Policy has considered the *Gender Equality Act 2020* in its development.

### 5.3. Roles and Responsibilities – Volunteer Management Code of Practice

- 5.3.1. Volunteer participation is a core part of South Gippsland Shire Council's business;
- 5.3.2. Volunteer activities and projects should be collaboratively planned to align South Gippsland Shire Council's priorities and capacity, with the interests, skills, and aspirations of volunteers;
- 5.3.3. Volunteer activities must meet South Gippsland Shire Council's standards and external standards regarding quality and safety, and be subject to the normal South Gippsland Shire Council approval, monitoring, and evaluation processes;
- 5.3.4. South Gippsland Shire Council will provide adequate and appropriate insurance cover for volunteers undertaking approved activities;
- 5.3.5. South Gippsland Shire Council will provide clear definitions of volunteer roles which differentiate between paid and unpaid work;
- 5.3.6. Normal principles of personnel management apply to working with volunteers including induction, competency assessment, privacy, anti-discrimination, occupational health & safety (OH&S), equal opportunity legislation, reward and recognition, access to appropriate information and policies, grievance procedures, and opportunities for personal development;
- 5.3.7. All volunteers are required to undergo Police Checks and Working with Children Checks on commencement. In line with the SGSC Probity Policy, some nominated volunteer roles are required to regularly renew the Police Check, or provide evidence of Drivers Licence and Qualification currency;
- 5.3.8. Volunteers need a level of supervision or direction appropriate to the activity; and
- 5.3.9. Managers and volunteer supervisors need to ensure that adequate staff time is available to support volunteer activity and that this is documented in individual staff work plans.

### 5.4. Roles and Responsibilities – Volunteer Rights



Unlike paid staff, volunteers are not covered by award conditions or workplace agreements. Volunteers however do have rights, some of which are enshrined in legislation and some of which are the moral obligations of an organisation involving volunteers. These include:

- 5.4.1. To work in a healthy and safe environment in accordance with OH&S, equal opportunity, and antidiscrimination legislation;
- 5.4.2. To be adequately covered by insurance for public liability and personal injury;
- 5.4.3. To be given accurate information about the organisation in which they volunteer;
- 5.4.4. To be given a copy of the organisation's Volunteering Policy and other policies that effect their work;
- 5.4.5. Not to be engaged in work which displaces employees;
- 5.4.6. To be provided with a volunteer role description that clearly outlines the purpose, responsibilities and boundaries of their volunteer role;
- 5.4.7. To be given clear instructions about work requirements and have agreed work hours;
- 5.4.8. To be provided with orientation to the organisation and induction to the work site;
- 5.4.9. To have confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Federal Privacy Act 1988 and the Victorian Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- 5.4.10. To be provided with sufficient training to do their allocated tasks; and
- 5.4.11. Being reimbursed for authorised out-of-pocket expenses.

## **6. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

- 6.1. This Policy will be reviewed and adopted by Council on a four-year cycle;
- 6.2. All Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff understand and comply with this Policy;
- 6.3. Council staff with volunteer supervision roles and the Volunteer Development Officer is responsible for ensuring effective relationships with Council managed volunteers;
- 6.4. All staff are responsible for implementing this Policy when working with volunteers;
- 6.5. All staff should ensure their volunteers are aware of this Policy and provide access to the Policy at their request; and
- 6.6. Council will formally and publicly acknowledge the contribution of volunteers at every opportunity and by participating in celebrations such as National Volunteers Week.



## 7. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislative Provisions	Local Government Act 1989 Local Government Act 2020 Freedom of Information Act 1982 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Australian Federal Privacy Act 1988 Victorian Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 Victorian Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 Victorian Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2015 (Child Safe Standards)
Council Supporting Documents	Council Plan 2020 – 2024 Community Strengthening Strategy 2018-2022
Related External Documents ( <i>optional</i> )	National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015 (Volunteering Australia)

## 8. DEFINITIONS

Volunteering	<p>Volunteering is an activity which takes place through not-for-profit organisations or projects and is undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;</li> <li>At the volunteer's own free will and without coercion;</li> </ul> <p>Volunteers are involved in supporting and enhancing the delivery of South Gippsland Shire Council programs and services, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coal Creek Community Park &amp; Museum,</li> <li>Youth Programs</li> <li>Environment / Biodiversity</li> <li>Parks &amp; Gardens</li> <li>Visitor Information Centre</li> <li>L2P Learner Driver Mentor Program</li> </ul>
Definition 2	<p>Community members volunteer their time and effort to participate in the management of community assets and advise Council on programs and policy.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advisory Committees, Reference Groups, Steering Committees - Established by a council to provide advice to council, but where a final decision for action or expenditure is taken by council.</li> <li>Community Asset Committees (Local Government Act 2020) - A Community Asset Committee is a committee with powers of the council delegated by the Chief Executive Officer, subject to the terms and conditions specified by the Chief Executive Officer, for the purpose of managing a community asset in the municipal district (s 65(2) Local Government Act 2020).</li> </ul>

## 9. REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Sections Modified	CM9 Ref#

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