



## Thank you for volunteering with Council

Snowy Valleys Council (Council) would like to welcome and thank you for becoming a registered and inducted Council volunteer. A priority for Council is to encourage our community members to become involved in a range of activities within our towns and villages with the aim of developing stronger relationships with the community.

Volunteering contributes to the vibrancy and vitality of regional life. It also promotes civic participation, encourages individuals to be active and helps shape and contribute to our beautiful towns and villages. Council aims to provide a diverse range of opportunities for volunteers and are very grateful for the time dedicated by our volunteers.

Volunteering for Council is "the commitment of time and energy to the provision of services and programs that benefit the community and the volunteer. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without financial gain and in designated volunteer programs only. Volunteering takes many forms and can take both an informal and a more structured formalised approach".

The Council is committed to leading, engaging and supporting strong and vibrant communities. Council expects all volunteers to follow Councils values of:



**Matthew Hyde**

**Chief Executive Officer**



## PART 1 – INTRODUCTION AND EXPECTATIONS

### Introduction

Council recognises that individuals choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons and genuinely welcomes participation of those individuals. Council is therefore committed to offering a broad range of volunteering opportunities. Council identifies the need to formalise the roles and responsibilities of the volunteering process, and aims to provide consistent management in the relationship between the Council and the volunteer.

It is important the information supplied within this handbook be understood and applied at all times where relevant to volunteer activities. This will ensure compliance with Councils obligations, failure to do so may place volunteers or others at risk.

Volunteers must adhere to the *Volunteer Policy* at all times.







## Expectations.....

### The Council Will:

- Provide adequate support to volunteers
- Ensure volunteers are treated as work participants under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and associated regulations
- Provide a Volunteer Coordinator who is an employee of Council responsible for implementing and managing the volunteer process
- Provide a Council Representative who is an employee of Council (or delegate) responsible for supervising volunteers for a specific volunteer program
- Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in volunteer programs in accordance with Councils *Disability Inclusion Action Plan*
- Recognise the different roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers
- Create a climate of mutual respect
- Provide a safe and healthy work environment
- Ensure that volunteers have access to the appropriate policies, procedures and guidelines
- Provide support, encouragement and appreciation for volunteer efforts
- Provide feedback regarding performance
- Provide freedom from pressure to undertake activities that the volunteer may feel unable or ill-equipped to complete
- Provide appropriate volunteer insurance



### Volunteers Will:

- Be registered and inducted before participating in any volunteer activities
- Comply with Councils *Code of Conduct*
- Adhere to all relevant legislation, policies, procedures, and any other information provided by Council for volunteering
- Respect the confidentiality of the Council and clients at all times
- Use and maintain council approved equipment and property appropriately
- Be courteous at all times to employees, clients, the public and other volunteers
- Cooperate with other volunteers and employees
- Follow instructions given and seek clarification if needed
- Represent Council in a politically neutral manner
- Record details in attendance register on each volunteer occasion
- Provide information regarding licences and checks where required
- Promptly report all incidents, accidents, illnesses, risk and hazards via the *Incident/Accident Report*
- Update details on the online register on a regular basis, to provide Council with current and accurate contact information
- Dress appropriate to the work being undertaken
- Be responsible for own transport costs, unless specific arrangements are made in advance
- Not undertake activities under the influence of alcohol or any other drug that will prevent them from performing duties in a safe manner
- Advise Council as early as possible regarding an intention to leave the volunteer program



## PART 2 – GENERAL INFORMATION

### Record Keeping and Privacy

Any personal information that Council receives from volunteers is stored in Councils record management system in accordance with the *Records Management Policy*. Volunteer's personal information will be managed in accordance with Councils *Privacy Management Plan*.

In addition, Council has an online register that contains volunteer's personal details including emergency contact information. Only authorised employees can access this register. As the register is an online web based program, volunteers can access their own records through the Council web page.

Volunteers are given their own PIN and password when completing the online volunteer induction. Volunteers are expected to update the personal details to ensure that the information stored is accurate and up to date in order for Council to obtain contact details.

**TOP SECRET**



## Attendance

Volunteers' contribution helps to support many of Councils programs, services and activities. When making a commitment, volunteers are required to be punctual and reliable. As a volunteer the total hours of voluntary work must not exceed 20hrs per week, per program on a continuous basis.

Volunteers must record details in the *Volunteer Attendance Register* (or similar) for all activities undertaken as a volunteer. This assists Council to know where volunteers are in case of an emergency and to make sure that Council records of attendance are kept for insurance purposes.

As a courtesy, notification to the Council Representative is required, if the volunteer is running late, or unable to attend a particular shift..

## Communication

Each volunteer program has its own way of keeping volunteers up to date with anything new that is happening. This may include:

- Team meetings
- Memos, bulletins
- Morning or afternoon tea information sessions
- Email messages or letters.





## Reimbursement of Expenses

Out of pocket expenses should be pre-approved by the Council Representative. The expenses must be incurred during the performance of the volunteer's normal rostered duties and all receipts and/or records must be kept and lodged with the claim for reimbursement.

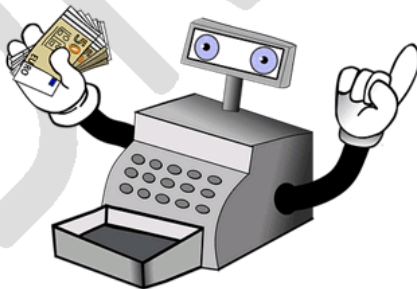
## Personal Presentation and Dress Code

Some volunteering activities may require protective clothing and/or a uniform to be worn. At all other times the volunteer is required to have neat and tidy presentation wearing appropriate clothing for the activities being undertaken. Neat presentation includes minimising accessories and having a good sense of personal hygiene, whilst not causing offense to other work participants.

## Insurance

Volunteer insurance only covers registered and inducted volunteers, between the ages of 12 and 90, whilst performing activities authorised by Council. Family members or friends are not covered if assisting or accompanying volunteers with their duties if they are not registered and inducted volunteers themselves.

All claims will be put through Councils Risk Management Officer and will need to be assessed and verified by Council and/or the insurer.







## Ceasing Volunteering

Any volunteer considering ceasing volunteering must give a minimum of one weeks notice to the Council Representative. Giving notice will enable the Council Representative to make arrangements to ensure continuity in the volunteer program so there is minimum disruption to the activities. Council may at any time dismiss a volunteer based on misconduct or breaches to Council's policies and procedures. Council may conduct an exit interview to ensure all relevant feedback is received and all property returned.





## PART 3 - LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS

### Relevant Legislation

- Child Protection (Working with Children ) Act 2012
- Local Government Act 1993
- Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998
- State Records Act 1998
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017

### Conduct

Councils *Code of Conduct* applies to all Council officials including volunteers. Volunteers must not conduct themselves in a manner that:

- is likely to bring the Council or other Council officials into disrepute
- is contrary to statutory requirements or the Council's administrative requirements or policies
- is improper or unethical
- is an abuse of power
- causes, comprises or involves intimidation or verbal abuse
- involves the misuse of your position to obtain a private benefit
- constitutes harassment or bullying behaviour, or is unlawfully discriminatory.

Volunteers must act honestly, and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence in carrying out functions under the Local Government Act 1993 (section 439) or any other Act.





## Dignity and Respect

Following Councils *Dignity and Respect Policy*, Council is committed to ensuring that volunteers have a safe and healthy work environment, which is free from discrimination, bullying or harassment and where they are treated with respect and dignity. Any form of discrimination, bullying and harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstance.

Volunteers working for Council have a responsibility to work towards creating and maintaining a workplace/area which is free from harassment and discrimination. All volunteers have a duty to stop harassment before it starts and to take appropriate action to ensure harassment stops.

Any instances of discrimination or harassment should be reported to the Council Representative either verbally or using Council's *Grievance Procedure*.

## Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Following Councils *Disability Inclusion Action Plan*, Council will provide opportunities for people with disabilities to volunteer with Council.





## Conflicts Of Interest

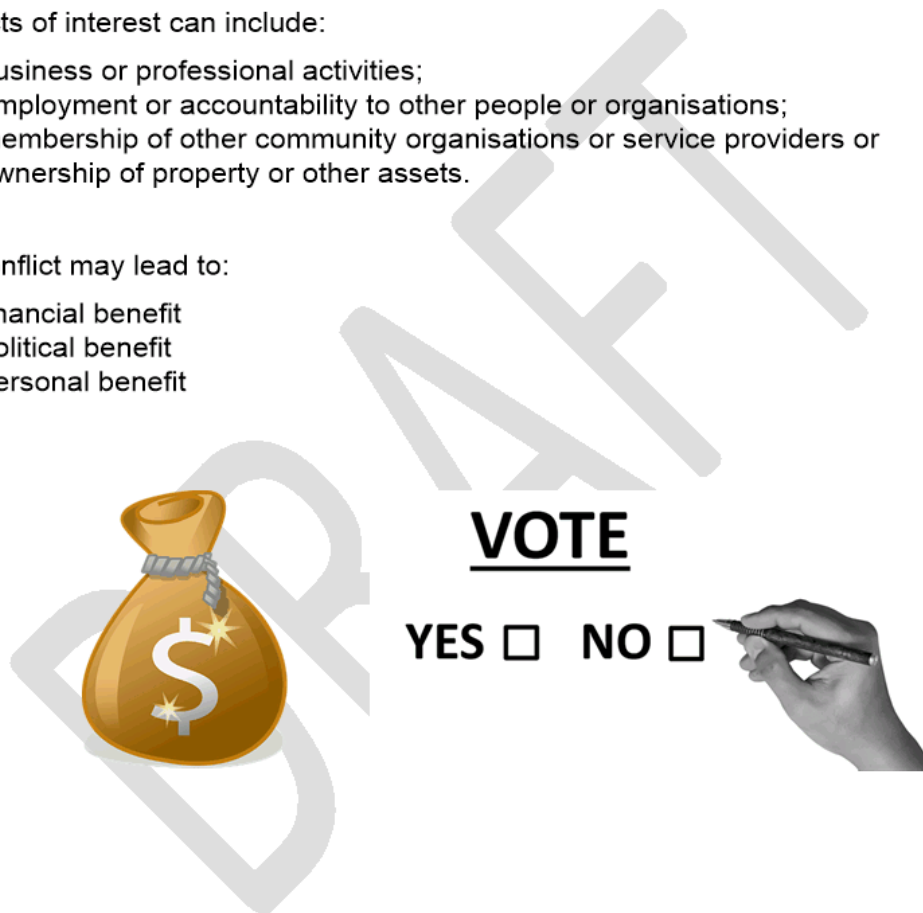
As a member of the local community, it is inevitable that at some point a volunteer will have a conflict of interest in a matter that is being dealt with. What is important is that volunteers are able to identify there is a conflict of interest and that the conflict is disclosed to the Council Representative and managed appropriately.

Conflicts of interest can include:

- business or professional activities;
- employment or accountability to other people or organisations;
- membership of other community organisations or service providers or
- ownership of property or other assets.

The conflict may lead to:

- financial benefit
- political benefit
- personal benefit







## Gifts and Benefits

A volunteer must never seek or request any gift or benefit. A gift or benefit is something offered to or received by the volunteer or someone closely associated with the volunteer for personal use or enjoyment.

Council's *Gifts and Benefits Procedure* fully outlines the requirements for accepting gifts.

Remember volunteers MUST NOT:

- seek or accept bribes
- seek gifts or benefits of any kind
- accept a gift or benefit that may create a sense of obligation
- accept any gift or benefit worth more than \$50
- accept tickets to major events with a ticket value more than \$50
- accept cash or cash like gifts (voucher or lottery tickets etc)
- personally benefit from reward points (flybuys etc)

If volunteers are offered a gift or benefit that is worth more than \$50 that can not be reasonably refused, contact the Council Representative.





## Use of Information

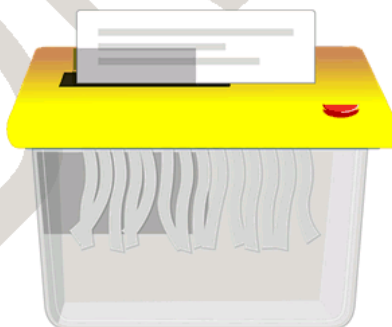
It is important that the community has confidence that any information acquired by Council is used only for Council purposes.

Volunteers must maintain the integrity and security of confidential information in their possession, or for which they are responsible. Confidential information may include, but not limited to, names, addresses, contact details and monetary amounts.

In addition to the general obligations relating to the use of Council information, volunteers must:

- only access confidential information that have been authorised to access and only do so for the purposes of exercising official functions
- protect confidential information
- only release confidential information if they have authority to do so
- only use confidential information for the purpose for which it is intended to be used
- not use confidential information gained through their official position for the purpose of securing a private benefit for themselves or for any other person
- not use confidential information with the intention to cause harm or detriment to the Council or any other person or body
- not disclose any confidential information

Any written material, photographs and activities developed as part of a volunteers work at the Council is copyrighted and remains the property of Council.





## Media Protocol

Volunteers are not permitted to make any comment to the media on behalf of Snowy Valleys Council. All media enquiries should be referred to the Council Representative or Council's Communications Officer.

## Environment

Council has an obligation to protect the environment from harm. Environmental harm includes the pollution of waterways, the contamination of soil, air pollution, the release of pest species, and activities that threaten the integrity of endangered ecological communities or the survival of threatened species.

Where an activity has the potential to impact the environment, a risk assessment must be conducted before the activity is undertaken.

## Use of Council Resources

Council equipment, facilities, property and other resources are to be used:

- ethically, effectively, efficiently, economically and carefully
- for the benefit of Council and only in connection with your volunteering work for Council
- with no usage for private purposes and only in accordance with the details stated in Council's *Code of Conduct*.





## Volunteer Checks and Licences

As a legislative requirement volunteers may be required to provide, possess, hold or maintain some of the following:

- Working With Children Check
- Drivers Licence
- Responsible Service of Alcohol
- Criminal history check

Any volunteer position requiring contact with unsupervised children aged 16 or under require a Working With Children Check.

Council Representatives will collect copies of licences etc. at the Induction Interview.

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to obtain and provide these checks if necessary.



## Risk Management

Effective risk management aims to mitigate any uncertainty surrounding Council being able to achieve its strategic goals and operational objectives. Risk to volunteers and risk to Council from the engagement of volunteers is managed following Councils *Risk Management Policy*.

Council is guided by the Local Government Act 1993, the Civil Liability Act 2002, as well as Australian Standards and Statewide Mutual's Best Practice Manuals for the management of risk.

Risk assessments will be undertaken for volunteer activities following Councils *Enterprise Risk Management Framework*.





## Complaints Management

Council has a *Complaints Management Policy* that ensures Council handles complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively. It is intended to enable Council to respond to issues raised by people making complaints in a timely and cost-effective way and enhance public confidence in Council's administrative process.

## Internal Reporting System

Council has an *Internal Reporting Policy* to encourage the reporting of wrongdoing within the Council. Council has no tolerance for corrupt conduct, maladministration, serious or substantial waste of public money, government information contravention or local government pecuniary interest. If a volunteer suspects any of these behaviours, the volunteer should report the wrongdoing to the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Grievance Procedure

Following Council's *Grievance Procedure*, a grievance is a problem, concern or complaint a volunteer may have about work or the work environment. This could include grievances about areas such as duties, recruitment processes, training, rosters or hours of work, leave allocation, the work environment, safety in the workplace, the nature of supervision, performance appraisal, discrimination or harassment. It is desirable that volunteers are able to resolve issues without having to lodge a formal grievance wherever possible. This could be achieved through the following process:

1. The volunteer is encouraged to approach the person directly related to the issue if they feel comfortable doing so.
2. The volunteer can approach the Council Representative for a discussion and advice on how to best resolve the issue.
3. If the issue remains unresolved, then the issue should be progressed to the Volunteer Coordinator in writing using the *Grievance Form*.



## PART 4 - WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Council Commitment

Council is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors to its workplaces and worksites. Council is proactive in providing rehabilitation, injury management and taking all practical and reasonable steps to ensure a safe and healthy environment. Volunteers must follow the Councils *Work Health and Safety Policy*.

### Obligations as a Volunteer

Volunteers must take reasonable care of their own health and safety. This includes:

- Taking steps to ensure volunteers don't affect the health and safety of themselves or others in the workplace
- Performing tasks safely and communication with others about safety where it may affect someone else
- Following reasonable instruction and direction when directed given by your Council Representative or Council employee
- Cooperating with policies and procedures established by Council



## Legislation

Volunteers performing work on Council's premises or workplaces are required to comply with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, the Work Health & Safety Regulation 2017, Councils *Work Health and Safety Policy* and associated procedures of Council to ensure the health and safety of people on its workplaces

The WHS Act 2011 imposes duties on all persons who may affect the health and safety of others by their actions or lack of action. The Council, as the employer, must ensure the health, safety and welfare of each Council work participant and others who may be affected by the way the Council conducts its' business and work activities. This includes contractors, volunteers, committee members, visitors, ratepayers, sales representatives and passing pedestrians and motorists. The law does this by;

- Protecting workers, including volunteers, from harm by requiring duty holders to eliminate or minimise risks associated with work
- Requiring fair representation, consultation and cooperation occurs in relation to health and safety in the workplace
- Promoting the provision of advice, and education about health and safety
- Providing a framework for continuous improvement and increasing standards of health and safety in workplaces





## Incident and Accident Reporting

Incidents or accidents whether to volunteers or members of the public, must be reported to Council as soon as possible using the *Incident/Accident Report Form*. This may include reporting of:

- Slips, trips or falls
- Cuts, burns or abrasions
- Environmental exposures
- Motor vehicle accidents
- Near misses

When completing the Incident/Accident Report Form, it is important to:

- Provide accurate information and complete all fields thoroughly
- Where possible include photographs or video evidence
- Submit the report to the Council within 48 hours of the incident







## Work **NOT** to be performed by Volunteers

There are various tasks that volunteers are not authorised to perform due to their inherent risk. Tasks volunteers are not approved to perform include but not limited to:

- Traffic control
- High risk work; working in confined spaces, working at heights, operating forklifts, hoists or cranes, dogging, trigging, use of pressurized equipment, diving works etc.
- Operating heavy plant
- Hot work; grinding, welding, soldering, explosives, fireworks etc.
- Construction or demolition
- Trades work; electrical, carpentry, building, plumbing, mechanical, concreting, painting, tiling, landscaping etc.
- Asbestos removal
- Engaging or managing contractors

If a volunteer is assigned a task not approved during the initial induction, approval must be sought from the Council Representative before proceeding with the job.





## First Aid And First Aid Kits

For a serious injury '000' should be called immediately. First aid kits are supplied by Council where identified. If determined that first aid kits need to be supplied they will be supplied and serviced by Council.

Any injury or first aid must be reported using the Council's *Incident /Accident Report Form*.



## Working in Extreme Weather Conditions

Working outdoors exposes volunteers to risk of exposure to adverse weather conditions including:

- Extreme heat or cold
- Storms with strong winds, rain and lightning
- Fires

If working in extreme weather conditions, volunteers can manage risk by:

- Postponing the task to a more suitable time of day
- Moving the job to a sheltered location
- Using a shade structure
- Taking frequent rest breaks
- Break jobs up into smaller tasks

Consultation with the Council Representative is required before performing any activities if extreme weather conditions are forecast or they arise.





## Sun Exposure Safety

Working in the heat can be hazardous and cause harm to volunteers.

Bodies need to maintain a body temperature of 37°C. If bodies have to work too hard to keep cool, they overheat and begin to suffer from heat-related illness.

The symptoms of heat-related illness include:

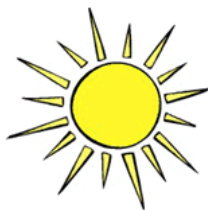
- Nausea, dizziness, exhaustion and unconsciousness
- Rash, burns, cramps and reduced concentration
- Dehydration

Sun protection is essential to protect volunteers from heat-related illnesses, sun protection consists of:

- Postponing the task
- Moving the job to a sheltered location
- Using a shade structure
- Having frequent breaks
- Break jobs up into smaller tasks
- Keeping hydrated by taking frequent sips of cool water

And remember always to **Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek & Slide**

1. Slip on sun-protective clothing that covers as much of the body as possible.
2. Slop on SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, at least 20 minutes before sun exposure. Reapply every two hours when outdoors or more often if perspiring or swimming.
3. Slap on a broad-brimmed hat that shades your face, neck and ears.
4. Seek shade.
5. Slide on sunglasses





## Smoking

Following Council's *Smoke Free Workplace Policy*, all Council premises and work places are smoke free and applies to all forms of ignited smoking products as well as electronic smoking products. Work places include any building, structure, plant, vehicle, depot or worksite for which Council is responsible and where a volunteer goes or is likely to be, while performing duties for Council.

## Drugs and Alcohol

The inappropriate use of alcohol and/or other drugs is a significant problem that can affect a volunteers performance and jeopardise their health, safety and welfare as well as that of other volunteers and people in the workplace.

Volunteers and other workers who present themselves on Council worksites under the influence of alcohol or other drugs are breaching their work health and safety obligations and Councils *Drug and Alcohol Management Policy*, as putting themselves and colleagues at risk, particularly volunteers who operate plant and vehicles. This is viewed by Council as a serious breach of conduct and health and safety obligations.





## Guidelines for Working Alone

Activities carried out by volunteers can be diverse and occasionally may require volunteers to work alone. Volunteers who need to work alone must ensure that they notify their Council Representative. Volunteers will need to have a reliable form of communication in place and carry a mobile phone at all times.

Volunteers must sign in and out of the attendance register each time they undertake volunteer activities.

## Manual Handling

Many of the tasks volunteers perform require some type of manual handling which covers a wide range of activities, such as lifting, pushing, pulling, holding and throwing, to name a few.

Proper posture and lifting technique can help to reduce the risks, but making changes to the workplace design is the most effective way to prevent manual handling injuries

Things to remember

- If it is a new task or there is a change to the job, complete a risk assessment
- Explore if there are safer ways to complete a job, this may include using lifting aids, altering how tasks are performed or workplace layout





## Hazardous Substances

All hazardous substances used in the Council are to be recorded on a hazard substances register as set out by the WHS regulations. Prior to using any hazardous substance, approval from the WHS team must be sought. A Safety Data Sheet (SDS) is to be provided and reviewed; a SDS must not be older than 5 years from the date of issue.

All chemicals are to be used and stored in accordance with the applicable SDS.

## Needle Stick Injuries

Volunteers encountering hypodermic needles should immediately notify their Council Representative or Customer Service on 1300 ASK SVC (1300 275 782) for an immediate response and plan of action.

Council has trained staff who will correctly dispose of needles in public places. The after-hours duty officer can be contacted by calling 1300 ASK SVC.

If a trained staff member is not available immediately, make the area safe by restricting access or cover the needle with a suitable temporary barrier until it can be collected for disposal.



## Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE)

All volunteers are expected to comply with Council's procedures including personal protective equipment.

Council will supply PPE following the *Personal Protective Equipment Policy* were identified as a requirement during the volunteer induction interview. Once PPE is issued to volunteers they are responsible for ensuring it is stored and appropriately used.



## Asbestos

Asbestos was a widely used product in Australia and was manufactured in many products in a variety of ways and can be hard to identify.

There should be no circumstances where general work activities should expose a volunteer to asbestos. Still it can be discovered in a variety of places from roof tops to buried in gardens.

Any discovery of asbestos must be reported to the Council Representative immediately for assessment.



## Emergency and Evacuation

All volunteers will ensure they are familiar with the emergency and evacuation procedures for their areas as outlined during the volunteer induction interview.

In an emergency please call 000.

Do not put yourself at any risk and notify the Council when safe to do so, of an emergency.

Access to all firefighting equipment such as extinguishers and hose reels must be kept clear. Emergency exits must be kept clear at all times.



## Slips and Trips

To reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls volunteers are required to:

- Wear appropriate footwear
- Clean all spills immediately
- Keep floors and walkways free of stock, boxes, cartons, equipment, electrical cords and rubbish
- Maintain clear visibility when carrying loads





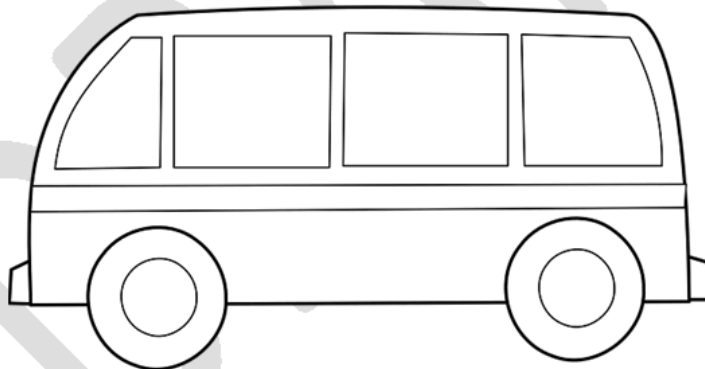
## Motor Vehicles

Approval is required from the Council Representative prior to use of a Council or private vehicle to undertake the volunteer position.

Council vehicles are to be used following Councils *Use of Council Vehicle Policy*.

Volunteers using private vehicles for approved volunteer activities must:

- Provide Council with a copy of their current drivers' licence
- Provide proof of insurance coverage for the vehicle being used, (Third party insurance is a minimum requirement, Council recommends full comprehensive insurance to ensure no financial loss is suffered by a volunteer)
- Maintain registration and road worthiness of their vehicle
- Drive responsibly and to road conditions
- Drive in accordance with the *Road Traffic Act 2013* requirements.
- Adhere to parking rules and speed limits
- Accept responsibility for fines and penalties incurred







## More Information

Volunteers wanting further information may refer to:

- Volunteer Policy
- Volunteer Induction Procedure
- Council Representative
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Council policies and procedures
- Council website [www.snowyvalleys.nsw.gov.au](http://www.snowyvalleys.nsw.gov.au)
- Council email [info@svc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@svc.nsw.gov.au)
- Phone Council on 1300 ASK SVC
- Visit a customer service centre
  - 76 Capper St Tumut
  - Corner Bridge and Winton Street Tumbarumba





## DOCUMENT CONTROL

- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012
- Local Government Act 1993
- Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998
- State Records Act 1998
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017

## ASSOCIATED COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

- Code of Conduct SVC-RP-STY-001
- Complaints Management Policy SVC-COR-PO-037
- Dignity and Respect Policy SVC-HR-PO-030
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan SVC-CorPlan-Pln-001
- Drug and Alcohol Management Policy SVC-WHS-PO-011
- Enterprise Risk Management Framework SVC-RM-Pln-002
- Gifts and Benefits Procedure SVC-COR-PR-057
- Grievance Form SVC-HR-F-047
- Grievance Procedure SVC-HR-PR-012
- Incident/Accident Report Form SVC-RM-F-007
- Internal Reporting Policy SVC-EXE-PO-039
- Personal Protective Equipment Policy SVC-WHS-PO-015
- Privacy Management Plan SVC-CorPlan-018
- Records Management Policy SVC-Cor-PO-062
- Risk Management Policy SVC-RM-PO-003
- Smoke Free Workplace Policy SVC-WHS-PO-048
- Volunteer Induction Procedure SVC-GOV-PR-051
- Volunteer Policy SVC-GOV-PO-25
- Work Health and Safety Policy SVC-WHS-PO-051

## SUPERSEDING POLICY/PROCEDURE NUMBER AND TITLE

- Volunteer Handbook CorpPlan18 (former Tumut Shire Council document)
- Volunteer Coordinator Manual CorpPlan17 (former Tumut Shire Council document)
- Volunteer Safety Management TSC-WHS-M-0142 (former Tumbarumba Shire Council policy)

## HISTORY

Date	Action	Name	Policy Number	Resolution Date	Resolution Number



# **VOLUNTEER INDUCTION & SAFETY HANDBOOK**

April 2020

P: 1300 ASK SVC (1300 275 782)

Tumut Office  
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Tumut NSW 2720

Tumbarumba Office  
Bridge Street  
Tumbarumba NSW 2653

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