



COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS POLICY 4.50

COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS

DIVISION: WORKS AND SERVICES

PILLAR: ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FILE / BINDER: n/a

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- provide a framework to enable equitable management of Camden Council volunteers;
- ensure requests for volunteering at Camden Council are considered within the constraints of Council's operational requirements;
- ensure approved volunteer work is undertaken to the benefit of both Camden Council and the community.

VALUE STATEMENT

Council values and encourages the involvement of volunteers within all appropriate programs and activities. Volunteering is consistent with the principles of community development within Local Government, including community participation and capacity building. Volunteering is also consistent with Camden LGA community visions for the future, especially with developing and maintaining a "sense of community" as highlighted in the Camden Community Strategic Plan 2040.

NATIONAL STANDARDS IN VOLUNTEERING

Camden Council Volunteer Programs will comply with National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-for-profit Organisations, as defined by Volunteering Australia in 1997.

DEFINITIONS

1.1 Volunteers

Volunteers are people who are engaged in Camden Council's services and programs and who undertake such activities of their own free will and without monetary reward.

The activities undertaken are of benefit to Camden Council and the local community and compliment, but do not replace, the services and programs provided by paid staff.

The following people and positions are not considered volunteers for the purposes of this policy:

- The Mayor and elected members of Camden Council who carry out activities as part of their duties;
- Community organisation representatives who participate in Council committees and/or working parties as part of their paid employment, unless they engage in duties and/or activities outside of and separate to meeting structures;
- Secondary and tertiary students fulfilling work experience requirements as part of their studies as they participate within their own program guidelines and are covered by that program's insurance.
- Work for the Dole or similar participants fulfilling Centrelink requirements as they participate within their own program guidelines and are covered by that program's insurance

1.2 Examples of Council Volunteer Positions

Examples of Council activities and events in which volunteers could participate include:

- **Library:** Home Library Service, Local Studies, Computer Tutoring
- **Employee Relations:** Visitors Information Centre, Camden Festival; Australia Day, Light up Camden, Light up Narellan
- **Community Planning and Development:** Narellan Rhythms Festival, Family Fun Day, Seniors Week, Youth Week, Town Farm Community Garden, Camden Youth Council, Access Committee, Cohesive Communities Group, Aboriginal Residents Group
- **Family Day Care:** Administration Assistant
- **355 Community Management Committees** – Camden Town Farm Community Management Committee, Bicentennial Equestrian Park Community Management Committee, Camden International Friendship Association; Camden Seniors Program Committee.
- **ESD:** Bushcare Program

All positions must be accompanied by a position description and be approved by relevant Unit Managers after consideration of resources, prior to advertising on Council's website.

1.3 Sensitive Positions

A sensitive position is one where a volunteer may:

- be working (at times alone) with vulnerable clients such as elderly and frail, young children and individuals with a disability.
- have cash handling responsibilities.

Due to the high risk associated with sensitive positions, Camden Council volunteers will not be placed in such positions, with the exception of the responsibilities delegated to Section 355 Committees.

1.4 Age Limits for Volunteers

Volunteers can be aged 14 years and over. Persons aged 16 or under will need parent or guardian consent before participating. Additional upper and lower age limits may also be imposed due to the nature of the program and the kind of work involved.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Due consideration will be given to the costs and benefits of involving volunteers in any particular Council program or activity at any given time.
2. The work of volunteers will compliment, but not undermine or replace the work of paid staff.
3. Volunteers will not be placed in roles that were previously held by paid staff or identified as paid jobs.
4. Volunteers will not be required to take up additional work during industrial disputes or paid staff shortage.
5. Volunteers can expect clear delineation of their duties, responsibilities and working environment and will be provided with up-to-date role descriptions that clearly set out their duties, time commitment, responsibilities and reporting requirements.
6. Volunteer opportunities at Council will be actively promoted to residents of Camden LGA via the Camden Council website and community newsletter.
7. Application forms for volunteer positions will be made available to the public via the Camden Council website and Customer Service counters.
8. Applicants will be short listed and selected in accordance with Council's policies.
9. Council's Risk Management Officer will maintain a central register of all volunteer applications received and volunteers placed.
10. Volunteers will be provided with appropriate insurance coverage whilst they are identified and registered as volunteers of Camden Council and are working in clearly defined activities that are approved of and controlled by Council.
11. Volunteers will be provided with a healthy and safe workplace compliant with Work Health and Safety legislation.
12. Volunteers will be provided with appropriate levels of support and management.

13. Volunteers will be provided with induction and orientation that outlines Council operations, policies and safety requirements.
14. Volunteers will be provided with information on Council's Volunteer Code of Conduct as well as grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures.
15. Where appropriate, budget provision will be made to cover the reimbursement of approved and out of pocket expenses in some programs.
16. Volunteers will be treated as valuable team members and advised of opportunities to participate in decision making.
17. Council will recognise the valuable contributions of volunteers annually during Volunteers Week and by facilitating various awards and certificates where appropriate.
18. Council has the right to both refuse or terminate a volunteer placement if:
 - a. there is a perceived risk to a customer's or volunteer's health or welfare
 - b. suitable volunteer duties are not available or are no longer available.
 - c. the volunteer does not comply with Council's policies and procedures or Code of Conduct.
19. Policies and procedures for recruiting and managing Council volunteers will be clearly documented and placed on Council's intranet for all staff to access

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- a. Procedures for recruiting and managing Council volunteers
- b. Volunteer position description
- c. Volunteer application form
- d. Handbook for Volunteers

RELATED COUNCIL POLICIES:

Work Health and Safety Policy
 Code of Conduct
 Community Well Being
 Protection of Children in the Workplace
 Respect and Dignity in the Workplace

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Work Health & Safety Act 2011;
 NAPSA 2005;
 Workers Compensation Act 1987
 Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998

DELEGATIONS:

N

SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT:

N

STAFF TRAINING REQUIRED?

Y