



Code Number:	1. Corporate Governance
Code Name:	Code of Conduct for Volunteers
Classification:	Public – Council Code of Conduct
Adopted:	14 March 2017
Frequency of Review:	Biennial
Last Review:	March 2017
Next Review Due:	March 2019
Responsible Officer(s):	Governance Officer Manager Library & Community Services Team Leader Recreation Community Volunteer Development Officer
Policy and Code of Practice Manual File Ref:	CC10/2601
Council File Reference:	CR16/65234
Legislation Authority:	Local Government Act 1999 (SA) Work Health and Safety Act 2012 Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act (SA) (2012)
Related Policies and Codes:	Volunteer Management Policy Social Media Policy WHS Policy
Related Procedures:	N/A

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Volunteers, like paid employees, are a public face of the Council and even though they give their time freely, they are still a part of the overall workforce structure of the Council.
- 1.2 Rights and responsibilities set the standards of the volunteer program within the Council and assist both the Council and each volunteer to abide by the philosophy and ethos of the Council.
- 1.3 The Council has a significant commitment to its volunteers and has substantial responsibilities towards them including recognising the *National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations*. Volunteers also have rights which are contained in legislation.

- 1.4 Volunteers have the same level of responsibility as the paid workforce with regard to their behaviour and activities while carrying out their duties for Council.
- 1.5 Volunteering is work which is:
- of benefit to the community;
 - undertaken of one's own free will; and
 - undertaken without monetary reward.
- 1.6 Volunteers play an integral role within the community by enhancing the services provided by employed staff, without being a substitute for paid work.

2. PURPOSE

This document sets out the standard of conduct expected of all volunteers registered with the Council and the consequences for those engaged who behave in a manner in breach of this Code of Conduct.

3. SCOPE

The standards outlined in this document relate to all volunteers registered with the Council and are in addition to any statutory requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Volunteer** is an individual who is registered with and has approval by the Town of Gawler and is a person who willingly provides unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills through the Council's Volunteer Program.
- 4.2 **Volunteer Agreement** - is a document signed by the Volunteer upon completion of the Volunteer Induction process which confirms their understanding and acceptance of their role and responsibilities while engaged in a volunteer capacity at the Town of Gawler.
- 4.3 **References**
- 4.3.1 *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*;
- 4.3.2 *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012 (SA)* (ICAC Act) - <http://www.icac.sa.gov.au/>;
- 4.3.3 *Volunteering Australia National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations (2001)*'
- 4.3.4 *Volunteers Protection Act 2001 (SA)*;
- 4.3.5 **COVERING ALL BASES: A Guide to Best Practice Management of Volunteers in Local Government, Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme**;

- 4.3.6 Volunteer Management in Local Government: Creating and Implementing an Effective Volunteer Program, Australian Services Union South Australian and Northern Territory Branch.

5. GENERAL DUTY OF VOLUNTEERS

In addition to all legislative requirements and any specific directions or guidance provided by the Council, volunteers must observe the requirements of this Code of Conduct as the standards to be adopted in the performance of their role.

6. PRINCIPLES OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

There are three broad principles that underpin the ethics and standards of conduct of volunteers engaged in Local Government:

- 6.1 integrity;
- 6.2 respect; and
- 6.3 accountability.

7. INTEGRITY

7.1 Volunteers must act in a fair, honest and proper manner according to the law when carrying out their roles. This includes but is not limited to:

- 7.1.1 behaving in a reasonable, just and non discriminatory way;
- 7.1.2 acting in good faith, in the best interests of the Council, and not for improper or ulterior motives;
- 7.1.3 adhering to the guidelines that relate to the acceptance of gifts and gratuities;
- 7.1.4 being able to formally identify themselves as a registered Council volunteer at all times when in the work place.

7.2 Volunteers must act with reasonable care and be diligent in the performance of their role, ensuring they:

- 7.2.1 carry out lawful policies, instructions and decisions of their designated supervisor in a respectful manner;
- 7.2.2 in so far as is reasonably practical, based on individual experience and training, be aware of the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and services for which they are responsible;
- 7.2.3 conduct themselves in accordance with the terms of the Volunteer Agreement and all relevant Council policies, procedures and guidelines including but not limited to bullying and harassment, equity and diversity and work health and safety.

Volunteers must avoid and prevent conflicts of interest by:

- 7.2.4 abiding by Council guidelines and policies regarding receiving gifts, benefits or reimbursements;
- 7.2.5 ensuring that personal interest does not improperly influence the way in which they carry out their duties;
- 7.2.6 declaring any known conflict of interest and not participating in any decision making process where they have a conflict of interest.

8. RESPECT

8.1 Volunteers must be fair, honest and transparent in their dealings with individuals and organisations and behave in a manner that facilitates constructive communication between the Council, its staff, other volunteers and the community.

8.2 This means volunteers will:

- 8.2.1 be honest and fair with all members of the community;
- 8.2.2 demonstrate courteous and sensitive behaviour that does not discriminate against people;
- 8.2.3 not unreasonably disparage the Council, Council Members, management, employees or volunteers of Council, or any decisions made by those parties;
- 8.2.4 be aware of and disclose any situation that may create conflict between their voluntary roles and their personal interests;
- 8.2.5 guard against the misuse of a volunteer's position to gain an advantage for themselves or others;
- 8.2.6 deal with all situations consistently and equitably;
- 8.2.7 be punctual and reliable;
- 8.2.8 advise the designated supervisor in a timely manner if unable to perform the designated role for any reason.

8.3 If representing the Council in the community, volunteers will:

- 8.3.1 abide by the Council Social Media policy;
- 8.3.2 conduct themselves in a manner that will not reflect unfavourably on the Council;
- 8.3.3 only make official public comment in relation to their duties when specifically authorised to do so by the Chief Executive Officer or the appropriate Manager, and restrict such comment to factual information.

- 8.3.4 dress appropriately in accordance with the uniform requirements of the program (where applicable) and to the safety standard for their role.
- 8.3.5 Volunteers will seek to achieve a team approach in an environment of mutual respect, trust and acceptance of their different roles in achieving the Council's objectives by:
 - 8.3.6 seeking to develop a relationship with fellow volunteers and staff that is cooperative, productive and constructive and based on mutual trust and respect;
 - 8.3.7 conducting the relationship with courtesy and respect;
 - 8.3.8 acknowledging the value of diversity and the right of all points of view to be heard and considered;
 - 8.3.9 contributing to a working environment that is free from harassment or bullying.

9. ACCOUNTABILITY

- 9.1 Volunteers understand that:
 - 9.1.1 information obtained by a volunteer as a result of his or her role is not to be wilfully disclosed for any purpose which is unauthorised or which may result in an adverse impact on the Council or individuals;
 - 9.1.2 they will not make comments to the media unless authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or the appropriate Manager as outlined in the Social Media policy;
 - 9.1.3 they must respect and maintain the confidentiality of information that volunteers may gain access to as a result of their role at the Council (not being information that is generally available to the public) and acknowledge this obligation extends beyond the term of their engagement;
 - 9.1.4 upon leaving the Council, they have no right to any files, information, electronic data, physical items, or intellectual property which will always remain the property of Council.
- 9.2 Volunteers must use Council resources in a proper and responsible way by:
 - 9.2.1 being mindful of the way in which resources of all kinds are deployed;
 - 9.2.2 giving consideration to budget provisions and avoiding and preventing wasteful practices;
 - 9.2.3 ensuring that resources are used efficiently and appropriately in the Council's interest and not for personal or private use;
 - 9.2.4 avoiding and preventing the wilful damage of Council property including information technology systems.

10. COMPLIANCE WITH THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

- 10.1 Volunteers are personally responsible for ensuring their compliance with this Code of Conduct.
- 10.2 Council staff supervising volunteers are responsible for monitoring volunteer compliance with this Code of Conduct.
- 10.3 Questions of compliance raised by other volunteers, staff, Council Members and members of the community regarding this Code will be considered by the Chief Executive Officer or his or her nominee, in accordance with the Council's complaints handling process.
- 10.4 Volunteers may be public officers for the purposes of the ICAC Act. Conduct which breaches this Code may be misconduct under the ICAC Act.
- 10.5 Volunteers are entitled to representation in the consideration of an allegation of noncompliance against them and investigation and management of the matter will have regard to the principles of fairness, equity and natural justice.
- 10.6 Investigations undertaken by the Council regarding compliance with this Code of Conduct will be kept confidential except where there is a legislative requirement to report information relating to the investigation.
- 10.7 The consequences of breaching the Code may result in a verbal or written warning, suspension, or termination of volunteer engagement. If a volunteer is found to have committed serious misconduct it may result in 'termination effective immediately'. (as defined in Section 11 of this code)
- 10.8 Volunteers should report any concerns regarding Council administration to their supervising staff member/s or, if this is not appropriate, to the Chief Executive Officer. Additionally, volunteers should report any reasonably suspected corruption (being criminal activity) and/or serious and systemic misconduct or maladministration to the Office for Public Integrity.

11. SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

Volunteers should be aware that behaviours viewed as constituting serious misconduct could result in instant dismissal subject to the principles of fairness, equity and natural justice. These behaviours are but not limited to:

- 11.1 Any deliberate unsafe act which results in, or could lead to, an injury to self, another person or damage to Council property;
- 11.2 Any intentionally misleading or untruthful statements made to Council in the course of an investigation;
- 11.3 Any criminal act committed whilst engaged with Council or not disclosed to Council at the time of engagement in accordance with Criminal History Assessment Procedures;
- 11.4 Deliberate vandalism, sabotage or damage to Council property;
- 11.5 Any physical or verbal abuse against any volunteer staff or member of the community;

- 11.6 Accepting commission or rewards from a person to show an advantage to that person in their business dealings with Council;
- 11.7 Gross insubordination or failure to comply with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*;
- 11.8 Theft or fraud involving Council property or stealing from others engaged with Council or its programs;
- 11.9 Suspension or loss of driver's license – only applicable to those engaged whose role is dependent upon them holding a current driver's licence and are therefore unable to meet the obligations of their role;
- 11.10 breaching private work guidelines by using a Council vehicle, facilities or equipment inappropriately and without approval.

12. CODE PROVISION & REQUIRED AUTHORISATIONS

Council is committed to providing relevant information to its volunteers to ensure that they understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct.

All volunteers are required to sign the Volunteer Agreement, complete all relevant induction and screening processes and sign this Code of Conduct prior to commencing any volunteer duties for the Town of Gawler.

13. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

The effectiveness of this Code will be reviewed a biennial basis.

The Chief Executive Officer will report to Council on the outcome of the evaluation and if relevant make recommendations for amendments, alteration or substitution of a new Code.

The Code will not be altered or substituted so as to affect a process already commenced.

14. FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about this Code can be obtained by:-

Telephone: 8522 9211
Fax: 8522 9212
Email: council@gawler.sa.gov.au
Appointment: Town of Gawler Administration Centre, 43 High Street, Gawler East
Letter: PO Box 130, Gawler SA 5118

15. AVAILABILITY OF CODE

The Code is available for inspection during ordinary business hours at the Council principal office, Town of Gawler Administration Centre, 43 High Street, Gawler East or is available on the Council website at www.gawler.sa.gov.au.