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|  | <b>POLICY</b>    | Version:         | 5          |
|                                                                                   | <b>Volunteer</b> | Date Adopted:    | 9 Dec 2025 |
|                                                                                   |                  | Next Review Due: | Dec 2029   |

## 1. STATEMENT

Wattle Range Council (Council) recognises the important contribution volunteers make to enhancing the delivery of Council services and strengthening the connection between Council and the community. Council seeks to ensure that it provides a rewarding experience for volunteers and that volunteers' contributions are acknowledged.

This policy sets out Council's commitment to volunteers and the principles that Council will follow in the recruitment and management of volunteers. It includes a Volunteers' Code of Conduct, which sets out the behavioural standards that Council expects from its volunteers.

The policy applies to all Council staff who supervise or work with volunteers and to all volunteers involved in the delivery of Council services and programs.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

**Employee** means a person employed by Council under a formal employment contract.

**Volunteer** means a person who has approval from Council to undertake activities:

- without monetary reward
- of their own free will
- that are of benefit to Council and the local community
- That complement but do not replace the services provided by paid staff.

**Volunteer Supervisor** means the Council employee directly responsible for the day to day management of a volunteer in their role with Council.

**Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2012** provides for the health, safety and welfare of persons in the workplace.

**Worker** is defined in the WHS Act and includes an employee, contractor, trainee and volunteer.

## 3. PRINCIPLES

The following principles apply to Council's recruitment and management of volunteers.

### 3.1 Recruitment – Access and Equity

Individuals interested in volunteering for Council are required to submit an application expressing their interest, which will be assessed for suitability against the following criteria:

- Council's needs and availability of volunteering vacancies
- the applicant's skills, interests and experience in relation to the role
- results of a National Police Check and/or Working With Children Check.

Council will ensure that equal opportunity and non-discriminatory practices are followed in the recruitment of volunteers. Volunteers will be interviewed and placed in activities that match their skills, interests, knowledge and experience.

### 3.2 Volunteers' Rights and Responsibilities

Council volunteers are classified as 'workers' under the WHS Act and have similar rights and responsibilities as paid workers.

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Volunteers must adhere to Work, Health and Safety requirements of Council and will be instructed on these as part of their induction.

Council volunteers do **not** have rights under the *Return to Work Act 2014* because they are not deemed to be employees.

Council volunteers must comply with all applicable legislation and Council policies and procedures.

### 3.3 Management/Supervision

Council will ensure volunteers receive clear direction and guidance from their Supervisor. The Supervisor will arrange regular meetings to ensure volunteers are appropriately supported and to clarify any questions about the requirements of their volunteer role.

### 3.4 Role Statements

Council will provide volunteers with role statements that outline their duties, responsibilities and time commitment. The role statement will ensure volunteers have a clear understanding of their duties and Council's expectations of them so they can enjoy their volunteering role.

### 3.5 Behavioural Standards - Volunteers' Code of Conduct

Council has established behavioural standards that volunteers are expected to demonstrate when volunteering for Council. These are set out in Council's Volunteers' Code of Conduct and are based on the principles of integrity, respect and accountability (refer to Attachment A).

Failure to comply with the Volunteers' Code of Conduct can result in the termination of a volunteer placement.

### 3.6 Training and Development

Council will ensure volunteers receive training relevant to their roles and responsibilities. This includes induction training at the time of commencing as a volunteer.

### 3.7 Work and Workplace

Council will ensure that volunteers' work environment is safe from hazards and the activities volunteers are asked to undertake are not detrimental to their health and wellbeing.

Volunteers will be treated fairly, with courtesy and respect, and the working environment will be free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

### 3.8 Insurance and Work Health and Safety (WHS)

Council will provide personal accident insurance for all registered volunteers.

Volunteers are only covered by the personal accident policy when they are carrying out Council tasks that are specific to their volunteer role.

### 3.9 Recognition

Council will recognise the contributions of volunteers and their positive impact on the organisation and community.

Volunteer recognition may take the form of, but is not limited to:

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- acknowledgement in Council's Annual Report
- an annual volunteer recognition event during National Volunteer Week and end of year celebrations
- personal letters of thanks and certificates of recognition from Council and/or the Executive Leadership Team
- morning/afternoon teas as appropriate to celebrate volunteering milestones.

### 3.10 Refusal or Cessation of a Volunteer Placement

Council has discretion to refuse or discontinue volunteer appointments.

Reasons include but are not limited to:

- suitable volunteer duties are not available or are no longer available
- the volunteer does not comply with Council's Volunteers' Code of Conduct
- the volunteer does not qualify for Council personal accident insurance
- the volunteer does not comply with any reasonable direction from the designated Council Supervisor.

### 3.11 Dress Standards

Volunteers are required to dress in clothing that is suitable for the activity they are carrying out. Volunteers must wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when instructed to do so by Council.

### 3.12 Rights and Responsibilities

Council and volunteers have rights and responsibilities to each other and the wider community.

Volunteers have the right to:

- be treated fairly and respectfully and as an important member of the team
- receive orientation and induction training relevant to their volunteering role, including in relation to WHS
- appropriate insurance coverage whilst undertaking volunteer duties
- a safe and healthy work environment
- recognition and acknowledgement of the contribution that volunteers make to Council and the wider community
- decline or withdraw from their volunteer role at any time.

Volunteers have a responsibility to:

- comply with Council's Volunteers' Code of Conduct
- carry out their role according to their volunteer role description
- participate in training (e.g. induction and orientation) relevant to their volunteering role as required by Council
- accept direction and supervision from their Council Supervisor
- be reliable and accountable for their actions
- as a worker under the WHS Act, take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions
- provide notice before ceasing as a Council volunteer.

### 3.13 Records Management

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Council will maintain personal contact details and training records for each volunteer.

#### 4. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every four years (or on significant change to legislation or aspects included in this policy that could affect the health and safety of volunteers).

Upon review, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), Council, staff and volunteers may be consulted.

#### 5. AVAILABILITY

This policy is publicly available on Council's website: [www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au](http://www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au).

A printed copy may be purchased from Council offices upon payment of the relevant fee in Council's Fees and Charges Schedule."

#### 6. REFERENCES & FURTHER READING

|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| References                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVERING ALL BASES: A Guide to Best Practice Management of Volunteers in Local Government, Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Relevant Legislation:                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Local Government Act 1999</i></li> <li>• <i>Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012</i> (SA)</li> <li>• <i>Volunteers Protection Act 2001</i> (SA)</li> <li>• <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i></li> <li>• <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> (SA)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteering Australia National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations (2001)</li> <li>• Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)</li> <li>• Children and Young People (Safety) Regulations 2017 (SA)</li> </ul>    |
| Relevant Policies/ Procedures/ Guidelines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliments and Complaints Handling Procedure</li> <li>• UVR and Inclement Weather Procedure</li> <li>• WHS Hazard Management Procedure</li> <li>• Hazardous Manual Tasks Procedure</li> </ul>                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gifts and Benefits Guideline</li> <li>• Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure</li> <li>• Fit for Work Drug and Alcohol Procedure</li> <li>• Volunteering with State and Local Government authorities, ICAC Factsheet, Feb. 2024</li> </ul> |

#### 7. ADOPTION & AMENDMENT HISTORY

The table below sets out the adoption, review and amendment history of the policy.

| Version No: | Issue Date:     | Authorised by: | Description of Change:  | Minutes Reference:      |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1           | 18 January 2011 | Council        | Adopted                 | Folio 4507; Item 11.4.3 |
| 2           | 6 July 2017     |                | Adapted into new format |                         |
| 3           | 14 August 2018  | Council        | Amended                 | Folio 7851; Item 13.2.  |

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| 4 | 28 April 2022   | ELT     | Minor amendments to References & Further Reading                                                                      | Item 5.2                 |
| 5 | 9 December 2025 | Council | Policy updated to include content from the Volunteer Procedure. Volunteers Code of Conduct included as an attachment. | Folio 11389; Item 15.2.2 |

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## **Volunteers' Code of Conduct**

### **General Duty of Volunteers**

The general duties of volunteers are to act honestly and with all reasonable care and diligence in the performance of their duties and functions.

Council volunteers must not make improper use of information acquired in their role as a volunteer or improperly use their position as a volunteer.

### **Principles of this Code of Conduct**

There are three broad principles that underpin the standards of the conduct that are expected of Council volunteers:

- a) Integrity
- b) Respect
- c) Accountability.

### **Integrity**

- a) Volunteers must act in a fair, honest and proper manner according to the law. This includes but is not limited to:
  - i. behaving in a reasonable, fair and non-discriminatory way
  - ii. acting in good faith and not for improper or ulterior motives
  - iii. adhering to the guidelines that relate to the acceptance of gifts and benefits
  - iv. being able and prepared to identify themselves as a volunteer at all times whilst working with Council.
- b) Volunteers must act with reasonable care and be diligent in the performance of their duties, ensuring they:
  - i. carry out lawful policies, instructions and decisions of their designated supervisor in a respectful manner
  - ii. (based on individual experience and training) be aware of the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and services for which they are responsible.
- c) Volunteers must use Council resources in a proper and responsible way:
  - i. being mindful of the way in which resources are deployed
  - ii. giving consideration to budget provisions and guarding against wasteful practices
  - iii. ensuring that resources are used in the community's interest
  - iv. avoiding the wilful damage of Council property including information technology systems.
- d) Volunteers guard against a conflict of interest by:
  - i. abiding by Council policies and guidelines regarding receiving gifts, benefits or other forms of payment
  - ii. ensuring that personal interest does not improperly influence the way in which a volunteer carries out their duties
  - iii. declaring any known conflict of interest and not participating in any decision making process where they have a conflict of interest.

## **Respect**

- a) 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. This means volunteers will:
  - i. be honest and fair with all internal and external customers and members of the community
  - ii. demonstrate courteous and sensitive behaviour that does not discriminate against people
  - iii. be aware of and disclose any situation that may create conflict between their voluntary roles and personal interests
  - iv. guard against the misuse of a volunteer's position to gain an advantage for themselves or others
  - v. avoid unnecessary physical contact
  - vi. be punctual and reliable
  - vii. advise the designated supervisor if unable to perform the designated role for any reason.
- b) If representing Council in the community, volunteers will:
  - i. provide an accurate and fair representation of Council decisions
  - ii. abide by Council's media policy;
  - iii. conduct themselves in a manner that will not reflect unfavourably on Council;
  - iv. only make public comment in relation to their duties when specifically authorised to do so and restrict such comment to factual information and professional advice
  - v. dress appropriately for their role, ensuring that required safety standards are met.
- c) Volunteers will work to achieve the Council's objectives by:
  - i. seeking to develop a relationship with Council staff and fellow volunteers that is constructive, productive, collaborative and based on mutual respect
  - ii. being courteous, trusting and non-judgemental
  - vi. acknowledging the importance of diversity and the right of all points of view to be heard and considered
  - vii. contributing to a working environment that is free from harassment and bullying.

## **Accountability**

Volunteers understand that:

- a) information obtained by a volunteer as a result of his or her role must be used in a prudent manner and not wilfully disclosed for any purpose that results in an adverse impact on Council's business
- b) they will not make comments to the media unless authorised by the Chief Executive or appropriate delegate
- c) they must respect and maintain the confidentiality of information they have access to as a result of their role at Council (not being information that is generally available to the public) and acknowledge that this obligation extends beyond the term of their engagement as a volunteer

- d) upon leaving Council, they have no right to retain any information contained in the Council's records including email or network file systems.

### **Compliance with this Code of Conduct**

- a) Volunteers are personally responsible for ensuring their compliance with this Code of Conduct.
- b) Council staff supervising volunteers are responsible for monitoring volunteer compliance with the Code of Conduct.
- c) Questions of compliance raised by other volunteers, staff, Elected Members and members of the community regarding the Code of Conduct will be considered by the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Council's complaints handling process.
- d) Volunteers are entitled to representation in the consideration of a question of non-compliance with this Code of Conduct and management of the matter will have regard to the principles of fairness, equity and natural justice.
- e) In certain circumstances, volunteers may be public officers for the purposes of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Act 2012*<sup>1</sup>. In those situations, conduct that breaches this Code of Conduct may be misconduct under the ICAC Act.
- f) Investigations undertaken by 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.
- g) Breaches of this Code of Conduct 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 immediate termination.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to ICAC Factsheet 'Volunteering with State and Local Government authorities' (Feb. 2024) for information about the circumstances in which a volunteer may be a public officer under the ICAC Act.