

Volunteer Management Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to both the staff and volunteers on the role, responsibility and expectations of volunteers within the Centre.

2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Centre's Board of Management to ensure that this policy is implemented.

It is the responsibility of the Centre's Community Development Officer (CDO) to ensure that the procedures are implemented.

3. Principles

The Centre believes that volunteers play a vital role in the life of the Centre by:

- supporting, enhancing and expanding the management, services and activities provided by the Centre
- encouraging community involvement, decision making and the opportunity to share effort, knowledge and skills
- forming co-operative relationships between volunteers, paid staff, individuals, families, groups and local government which in turn promote social cohesion and contribute to the development of a strong, resilient and sustainable community.

The Centre recognizes, genuinely values and supports the role played by volunteers in the provision of services to the community and is committed to developing and promoting a quality volunteer management program.

4. Definitions

A volunteer is someone who:

- benefits the community and themselves by participating in a volunteer program
- provides their services of their own free will
- does not receive any monetary reward (out of pocket expenses are not regarded as monetary reward)
- complements, but does not replace or threaten the livelihood of paid workers.

To be registered as a Centre Volunteer, the individual must be participating in a core service, activity or program of the Centre as approved by the CDO or Volunteer Coordinator.

5. Policy

The Centre has developed the following volunteer rights and responsibilities based on the National Standards for Volunteers developed by Volunteering Australia with the explicit intention of protecting the volunteer, the users of the Centre and the organisation itself.

Volunteer Rights

A volunteer at the Centre has the right to:

- be made aware of the Centre's Code of Conduct, policies and procedures (and particularly the Dispute and Conflict Resolution Procedure)
- be treated fairly and with respect in accordance with the principles of Equal Opportunity legislation
- a healthy and safe working environment
- be covered by personal accident and public liability insurance
- be recognised and included as a valued team member
- receive accurate information about the Centre
- have a clearly written job description
- receive proper training, initially and on an ongoing basis
- know who to turn to with difficulties and problems
- know to whom they are accountable
- be supported and supervised in their role
- be able to negotiate
- say no if feeling exploited or if the task is inappropriate to the volunteer
- be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses
- be advised of the Centre's travel reimbursement policy
- be informed and consulted on matters which directly or indirectly affect their work
- have confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with privacy legislation and the Centre's Privacy Policy.

Volunteer Responsibilities

A volunteer at the Centre has the responsibility to:

- abide by the Centre's Code of Conduct and its policies and procedures (which include working in a safe manner in regard to themselves and others, and to maintaining the privacy, dignity and confidentiality of people and organisations that the Centre works with)
- work within the framework established by the Centre's values/goals
- be reliable and notify an appropriate person if unavailable or running late
- value, support and respect the rights of other volunteers and paid staff

- respect confidentiality
- be committed to the Centre and the role
- have a non-judgmental approach
- give feedback which will assist the development of the program or service
- carry out the duties specified in the job description
- accept feedback and direction from their supervisor in relation to performance of duties as described in job description
- respect, acknowledge and act on decisions made by co-workers and the Board of Management
- address areas of concern with the appropriate person
- undertake training when requested
- exercise a Duty of Care in areas of Health and Safety, including informing others of potential or actual hazards
- ask for support when needed
- care for the Centre's equipment and property
- carry out agreed work responsibly and ethically.

Centre's Responsibilities

The Centre has the responsibility to:

- maintain appropriate Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance cover for people engaged as volunteers
- have a budget allocation for volunteer management (including training)
- ensure that staff or volunteer leaders who manage volunteers will be allowed sufficient time and resources and given relevant training and recognition to enable them to appropriately carry out their responsibilities
- ensure that each volunteer has:
 - an up-to-date job description which clearly describes their role
 - an appropriate induction, including being given a copy of the Centre's Code of Conduct and ready access to the Centre's Policies and Procedures
 - a safe workplace with the necessary tools and equipment to safely fulfil their role
 - appropriate training and development to meet the needs of the role
 - the opportunity to participate in meetings, planning and in consultation and decision making appropriate to their role and responsibilities
 - on-going support and supervision.

6. Procedures

Eligibility

Clear delineation needs to be made between volunteering, work experience, work placements and Job Services Australia requirements. There are subtle differences between each one. It is useful to focus on what makes volunteering different to paid and unpaid work.

Student placements (work experience) - Placements by secondary students, TAFE and tertiary students are not freely chosen and are therefore not classed as volunteering. This type

of placement generally has an expectation of specific supervisory support and vocational or educational outcomes.

Volunteering to gain experience - The confidence and experience gained from volunteering can be a valuable pathway to employment. It is legitimate for a person to volunteer of their own free choice to gain experience through involvement in a volunteer program.

Generally this type of volunteering is for a shorter duration and may be project based. Examples include a stay at home parent seeking to familiarise themselves with a workplace again through volunteering. A TAFE or tertiary student may choose to volunteer outside of their study requirements to gain a better idea of the industry they will be qualifying for.

A specific role can be developed to cater for the needs of a volunteer seeking experience, however in most cases the individual will need to apply for an existing volunteer role. The Volunteer Coordinator will need to make an assessment of the duties to be undertaken, volunteer hours and the capacity of staff to support the volunteer. Extra care should be taken to ensure that paid staff workloads are not transferred to the volunteer.

Centrelink requirements - As part of the Australian government Job Services Australia program, a person must be seeking work, undergoing training or participating in a work for the dole program or work placement to receive Centrelink benefits. Registered Job Services Australia agencies work with individuals to tailor a plan that will help them to gain employment.

These requirements are not classified as volunteering and should be managed separately to the Centre's volunteer program.

An individual may however, be offered the opportunity by their Job Services Australia agency to choose volunteering as part of their plan. In this situation the person is eligible to be registered as a volunteer with the Centre. The agency will require an initial confirmation of the volunteer position, hours and duties, however it is not our responsibility to regularly report attendance to the agency.

Rehabilitation - We do not accept volunteer placements from work rehabilitation agencies. An individual may choose, however, to volunteer separately from the requirements of their work rehabilitation program. The appropriateness of the volunteer position and the abilities of the volunteer will need to be assessed by the Volunteer Coordinator.

Older volunteers

The social benefits of volunteering are important for healthy ageing, and many volunteers will be able to continue volunteering with modifications to their role and duties as they age.

Personal accident insurance for volunteers is available up to 90 years of age, however a volunteer does not need to stop volunteering provided they are able to take direction. As with all volunteer positions, a risk management approach applies. A review of their activities will need to be made to adapt to any changes in capacity. Mentoring and advisory roles can be created to recognise the volunteer's knowledge and experience.

Age limitations - Volunteers under 18

Volunteers are eligible to be involved in our programs from age 15. A young person benefits from volunteering by understanding the connections between communities and wellbeing. Volunteering also provides opportunities for independence and learning new skills that will benefit future career paths.

When considering opportunities for the under 18 age group, the suitability of the volunteer role, and the capacity of the program/Centre to support a young volunteer will need to be considered. Staff and volunteers who will be working closely with volunteers under 18 will be required to have a criminal history check etc. in accordance with the Centre's Prescribed Positions Policy.

An assessment of the risks and benefits will need to be conducted by the Volunteer Coordinator prior to initiating a position for a young person under 18. Additional advice may be sought from the Volunteer Development Officer at City of Onkaparinga.

The Centre can only accept a person under the age of 18 to volunteer within school hours if it is part of a formal arrangement with the school, student, parent/carer and volunteer program. Examples include SACE Flexible Learning programs such as Community Studies.

Hours

Guidelines for volunteer hours align with paid staff entitlements. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the goodwill of a volunteer is not exploited. Centre volunteers should not be required to volunteer their time for more than 7.6 hours a day. As a general rule, volunteers should volunteer no more than 16 hours per week (based on information provided by Volunteering Australia which shows that volunteering beyond 16 hours a week may reduce the volunteer's enjoyment and the associated wellbeing benefits).

Breaks

The Centre aims to give its volunteers a welcoming and enjoyable experience. Work breaks need to consider the operational needs of the work that is being done, however it is important not to be rigid with breaks. Some programs may suit longer breaks without affecting the work.. Others need to be rostered at suitable times.

The minimum entitlements are a 30 minute lunch break if a volunteer will be undertaking five hours or more of continuous work and a 15 minute break per day. Situations where a volunteer is volunteering for one program during the day, and another in the evening should be limited. If such a situation does arise, the volunteer is entitled to a 30 minute meal break before commencing additional hours.

Role of the Community Development Officer (CDO)

The CDO has primary responsibility for the effective resourcing of volunteer programs. The CDO is responsible for ensuring that volunteers are managed in a structured, valued and professional environment. These responsibilities include:

- supporting the Volunteer Coordinator to implement practices in line with the National Volunteering Standards

- developing and implement organisational policies and procedures to protect and support both volunteers and the Centre
- facilitating professional development opportunities for the Volunteer Coordinator and for volunteers
- developing and monitoring volunteer engagement strategies
- promoting volunteering across the Centre.

Role of the Volunteer Coordinator/s

The Volunteer Coordinator has responsibility for the overall management of a volunteer program. These responsibilities include:

- leading the development and implementation of program specific policies and procedures
- ensuring that volunteers are recruited, supported and supervised in accordance with the Centre's Volunteer Management procedure and Volunteer Management Systems
- involving volunteers in decision making that affects their volunteer role
- ensuring that volunteers are not undertaking activities that are the role of a paid worker.

The Volunteer Coordinator, in consultation with program facilitators and others, is delegated the day to day support and supervision of volunteers.

Responsibilities include:

- recruiting, selection and placement of volunteers
- creating a welcoming and safe environment
- monitoring the work performed by volunteers
- organising training opportunities for volunteers
- recognising the effort and contribution of volunteers
- maintaining up to date, accurate records of all volunteers
- identifying and responding to issues that impact on volunteers.

Risk assessment and management

The procedures and forms that underpin the Centre's Volunteer Management System have been designed to minimise risks in volunteer recruitment, supervision and dismissal.

Each program should conduct a risk assessment of their particular volunteer involvement to identify what risks exist and what controls can be put in place to reduce or eliminate the risk. The risk assessment focuses on the duties a volunteer will be undertaking, and also examines the risks of volunteers being unavailable or a lack of resources to support the volunteer.

These risk assessments must be documented and reviewed annually.

Health and Safety

Under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012, the Centre is responsible for providing a safe working environment for volunteers. Any breaches of the Centre's duty of care towards volunteers are treated as seriously as if the person were a paid employee.

Volunteers are to be inducted to the specific work health and safety requirements of their position and provided with personal protective equipment and clothing.

Volunteers should become familiar with the hazard and incident reporting process and be assisted to complete necessary paperwork.

Relevant safe work procedures for employees are to be followed for volunteers. For example eye protection, working outdoors, home visiting. Work health and safety items should be included regularly in existing communication channels such as team meetings, memos and newsletters.

Pre-recruitment

The following points should be considered prior to recruiting volunteers.

- Have volunteers undertaken the role previously?
- Do position descriptions exist? If so, are they up-to-date? If not, will they be ready before recruitment begins?
- Is there a suitable person/position to directly supervise the volunteers and take responsibility for day to day management and direction?
- Has a budget line been allocated to plan for volunteer expenses such as recognition, out of pocket expenses, training and name badges?
- Has an assessment been conducted to determine how many volunteers are required/or can be sustained?
- Are there current program specific procedures to protect the volunteer and the Centre?

Budget

Even though volunteers are not paid for their labour, there are costs involved in successfully managing a volunteer program.

The Volunteer Management Budget may cover initiatives which support all volunteers across the Centre:

- National Volunteers Week event
- general marketing and promotional material
- Centre orientation and communication
- monitoring and evaluation
- engagement strategies
- Volunteer Coordinator network activities
- volunteer management reference and resource materials.

Individual program budgets cover costs which specifically support volunteers of the program or service:

- recruitment
- name tags
- recognition activities
- uniforms
- equipment
- personal protective equipment
- reimbursement for out of pocket expenses
- training
- specific promotion and marketing.

Determining volunteer capacity

It is essential to determine how many volunteers a program can afford and manage.

The easiest way is to develop a roster for each position and map it out, ensure that there are sufficient volunteers to share tasks and cover gaps during sickness or holidays.

Recent trends show that although the number of people volunteering is increasing, the number of hours is decreasing and moving to short term volunteering which may require volunteer roles being divided into flexible duties or two to three hour shifts which may be more attractive to many prospective volunteers than contributing a whole day.

Position descriptions

Every volunteer position requires a position description to appropriately reflect the volunteer duties, protect the rights of volunteers and delineate between paid and volunteer positions. Job descriptions give credibility and recognition for the work of volunteers and provide the legal basis for screening inquiries and performance reviews.

A Volunteer Position Description template is available on the ONKANET Volunteer Management site.

All position descriptions require approval from the Program Coordinator and/or CDO.

Position descriptions should be reviewed and updated every 12 months. Updated position descriptions require Volunteer Coordinator approval.

Signed position descriptions should be stored in a secure cabinet in the CDO's office.

Recruiting Volunteers

The most effective way of recruiting volunteers is to ensure that the volunteer program offers interesting opportunities and it is coordinated in a professional, friendly and respectful way. Word of mouth can be the best recruitment strategy. Enquiries should be acknowledged and responded to as swiftly as possible.

Internal recruiting tools - The Centre has a newsletter which is used for promotion. Individual programs may develop a specific volunteering brochure to highlight volunteer activities.

External and other tools/strategies include:

- targeting recruitment to the person/people needed
- Seek volunteering
- using a variety of methods - guest speaker at a community meeting, service club or lifestyle village
- liaising with Southern Volunteering and Volunteering SA/NT so they are aware of new developments and opportunities for volunteers
- exploring volunteering options with students enrolled in relevant courses at TAFE or university—volunteering is a useful employment pathway
- ask existing volunteers to help recruit
- reinvigorating volunteer roles - trying shorter shifts, job share arrangements, high impact, yet shorter duration placements, rather than waiting for a long term volunteer.

(A copy of 501 ideas for recruiting Volunteers is available on the Onkanet Volunteer Management site.)

It is important to follow up volunteering enquiries promptly and in a professional and friendly manner. Research shows that the longer a prospective volunteer waits for a response, the lower the chance of transferring to recruitment stage.

The Volunteer Expression of Interest form must be used for initial enquiries if there is potential for a volunteer placement. The form provides the following benefits:

- a quick response to an enquiry—initial screening can be done face to face or via a telephone conversation. The form can be given, mailed or emailed to the person enquiring, along with the Centre's generic volunteering brochure and program information
- the form provides a record of individual consent for undertaking referee checks and criminal history checks
- information about the volunteer can be collected quickly to help you decide whether to progress to interview
- if a person is not suitable for the program or Centre and there is potential for another program or Centre, the form can be forwarded.

Equal Opportunity

Anti-discrimination legislation makes it unlawful to refuse a volunteer based on the following grounds:

- age
- sex
- chosen gender
- race
- disability
- sexuality
- marital or domestic partnership status
- pregnancy

- association with child
- caring responsibilities
- identity of spouse
- religious dress.

However, not everyone is suited to each program and Volunteer Coordinators do not have to take everyone on. It is perfectly legal and legitimate to decline an offer or request from a potential volunteer if that person poses an unacceptable risk or is unable to meet the duties/tasks of the job or if they will not complement the team environment.

Interviewing volunteers

The interview is an important part of the screening process. A tailored interview will help the Volunteer Coordinator and the prospective volunteer to make an informed decision about the role and a possible match of interests and abilities. The interview should be friendly and informal, but more than a quick chat. Two interviewers are required at all times. This ensures that the selection process is transparent, fair and equitable. The Volunteer Interview template allows coordinators to insert questions relevant to the role. Scenarios are often a more useful way of gaining an idea of the volunteer's suitability.

It is a good idea to invite the prospective volunteer to have a look at the program prior to offering an interview. This not only enhances the interviewing process, but can save time if the prospective volunteer realises that the program was not what they thought it to be.

After interview, allow a sufficient amount of time to follow up referees and to discuss the prospective candidate with the relevant people.

The Interview form includes space for a summary of the recruitment decision, referee checks and criminal history check.

Interview forms are to be stored securely in a secure cabinet in the CDO's office.

Delegations of authority for recruitment of volunteers require the Volunteer Coordinator to approve the volunteer before they are offered a role.

Protecting Vulnerable People

The Centre's policies and procedures on protecting vulnerable people, prescribed positions and national criminal history assessments apply to all volunteer positions.

Selection process

The Centre manages the duty of care owed to the community, Centre users, other volunteers, and paid staff by having people suited to each particular role.

Thoroughness of screening should increase with the responsibilities associated with the specific role.

The Centre's approach to the selection of volunteers depends on the type of role performed. An appropriate match between the volunteer and the Centre's organisational needs must be made to avoid disappointment by both parties. A thorough recruitment and selection process will minimise future problems.

1. Confirm the position description for each role to clarify what skills, interests and abilities to look for.
2. Have the potential volunteer complete a Volunteer Expression of Interest form to determine suitability.
3. Interview if a potential match.
4. Check referees and lodge a National Criminal History Record Check if required. If the check is clear and referees confirm that the person is suitable, make a formal offer of volunteer position with a Probationary Period of three months. This is done by sending the Offer of Volunteer Position letter to confirm the placement, hours and commencement date. This provides a welcoming and professional introduction to the Centre/program, as well as documenting the probationary period and outlining the next steps. Attach the Volunteer Agreement, Position Description and Personal Information form.

If the interview does not result in the person being offered a volunteer role, advise via telephone as soon as possible and follow up with a letter or email to confirm. Where possible, provide feedback to help the volunteer find a suitable role and where appropriate advise the person that the Centre will keep their details on file in case there is an opportunity within another program.

Medical checks are only needed if the role determines it necessary, for example driving over age 70. Prior to resuming activities after an injury, the Centre requires a medical clearance from the person's general practitioner to ensure that the volunteer role will not be too demanding. A copy of the position description should be provided to assist with the assessment.

Induction Process

Before a volunteer can commence their role, the relevant documents must be given and received.

1. Once the signed Volunteer Agreement, Position Description and Personal Information forms are returned, provide a copy of each to the volunteer. The original Volunteer Agreement is to be stored in a secure cabinet in the CDO's office
2. Provide the volunteer with a copy of the Volunteer Orientation Handbook (or access to an electronic copy) and access to the Centre's Policies and Procedures. Attention must be drawn to the Centre's Code of Conduct.
3. Details from the Personal Information form are to be entered on the Volunteer database as quickly as possible and the originals stored in a secure cabinet, in the CDO's office.

New volunteers will receive both a Centre Induction and a Program Induction. The inductions should be carried out as soon as the volunteer commences to help them become familiar with their role, settle in and understand the safe way of undertaking their volunteer duties.

The Centre Induction and Program Induction checklists have been developed to cover all the relevant information required. Each checklist needs to be initialled by the person inducting and the new volunteer and recorded in the Volunteer database.

Probation

Every volunteer has a compulsory probation period of three months from their start date. During this time either the volunteer or the Volunteer Coordinator may determine the suitability of the volunteer relationship. It is important to meet with the volunteer prior to the end of the probationary period to discuss how things are going.

A Volunteer Catch-up Form has been developed for completion by the volunteer to assist with the meeting. This provides an opportunity for the Volunteer Coordinator and the volunteer to discuss and set the direction for the coming months. After the meeting, a letter must be sent to formally advise the person if the position is continuing or not.

At any time within the probationary period either party may withdraw from the arrangement.

Performance review and development

Management of volunteers will occur through regular observation, performance reviews, client/supervisor/coordinator/other volunteer feedback and program evaluations.

At least once each year the Volunteer Coordinator will provide each volunteer with the Volunteer Catch-up Form for completion by the volunteer and arrange a face to face meeting to discuss their response. This provides an opportunity for the Volunteer Coordinator and the volunteer to discuss and set the direction for the coming months, including identifying training and other opportunities for development, and to discuss any issues which may have arisen.

Recognition

A variety of the following strategies may be used across the year to recognise the efforts of the Centre's volunteers:

- Smiling, greeting and thanking the volunteers regularly
- Sending welcome letters when volunteers are first recruited
- Including volunteers in the organisational charts where possible
- Writing letters and postcards of thanks to volunteers
- Writing written details of service on request
- Providing telephone references on request
- Providing a name badge
- Acknowledging and profiling volunteers in newsletters and on the websites
- Presenting volunteer awards at the annual general meeting or awards ceremonies
- Featuring volunteers at special events throughout the year
- Involving volunteering in the making of decisions which affect them
- Sending get well and birthday or special occasion cards
- Naming events or facilities after long-serving volunteer where appropriate

- Acknowledge the efforts of volunteers during committee meetings
- Hold special 'thank you' or social functions in honour of volunteers
- Present volunteers with a special memento recognising their service to the Centre
- Farewell volunteers when they leave the Centre or a program
- Present special awards for 10 and more years of service.
- Volunteer of the year award.

Retention

The Centre aims to maintain a stable group of long-term volunteers because this reduces recruiting time and costs; reduces training and education costs and provides an important sense of continuity.

However, the Centre recognises that it is inevitable (and given our community development role, desirable) that volunteers will exit for variety of reasons. How the Centre manages this replacement process is important to:

- improving how we manage our continuing and future volunteers
- improving the volunteer management program
- make the transition of volunteers have as little impact as possible on the running of the Centre; and
- make the departing volunteer feel that they can come back to the Centre if their current situation changes.

When a volunteer leaves the Centre, the Volunteer Coordinator will gather information about the volunteer's experience. Evaluating the reasons why volunteers leave an organisation will help to improve the Centre's volunteer management practices.

This will be done by providing the volunteer with an Exiting Volunteer Feedback Form and by conducting (in person or telephone) an Exit Interview using the Exiting Volunteer Interview Checklist.

Annual leave and Absences

Volunteers are required to have at least four weeks annual leave per year.

We recognise that volunteers may require greater flexibility with leave arrangements due to a change in lifestyle, for example study commitments, caring for a relative or touring during retirement.

If leave is over three months, the Centre cannot guarantee the same role upon the volunteer's return due to the need to adjust roles/responsibilities in response to community or organisational need. Wherever possible a suitable alternative will be offered.

Sometimes a volunteer may just not keep their commitment to a role. In this situation the Volunteer Coordinator will decide when it is appropriate to make contact with the volunteer and find out if they are intending to return. If the volunteer cannot be contacted after several attempts, the standard process will be to send a thank you letter to ensure that both parties know the volunteer arrangement has been discontinued.

Volunteer database and documentation

Accurate record keeping is required to meet the Centre's legal and other responsibilities. The Volunteer Management database has been developed to support the Volunteer Coordinator to keep accurate records of volunteer activity such as induction, training and supervision. The database is also used for statistical analysis and reporting.

Reimbursement

Although volunteers offer their skills and time for no remuneration, volunteers are entitled to reimbursement of pre-approved out of pocket expenses. It is important to identify situations in advance where the volunteer will be considerably out of pocket to minimize confusion and embarrassment for both parties.

The potential cost can be factored in to the volunteer expenses budget, or alternative approaches taken to minimise the likelihood of a volunteer requiring reimbursement. The reimbursement entitlements should be equitable with the entitlements of employees and should be explained during the induction process.

Transport

As with paid staff, mileage and transport costs to and from the place of volunteering are generally not eligible for reimbursement. In situations where a volunteer is required to use their own vehicle regularly, or outside their normal volunteering hours, the volunteer should be reimbursed at the same rate as paid staff.

Clothing

Volunteers are not entitled to reimbursement for items of clothing. Personal protective equipment, footwear and uniforms (if required) will be provided by the Centre.

Provision of references

The Centre does not provide written references, however a statement of service can be provided outlining the key duties undertaken by the volunteer, as outlined in their volunteer position description/s.

The Volunteer Coordinator is authorised to provide verbal/telephone references for volunteers. Only verifiable information can be provided, the volunteer's privacy must be protected, and unsolicited information must not be given.

Training

There are two purposes for volunteer training. The first is to manage risk and health and safety responsibilities, ensuring that we have equipped volunteers with the skills and knowledge they need to perform their role. The second purpose is to provide our volunteers with personal development opportunities.

The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for identifying and sourcing relevant training for volunteers.

Keeping track of hours worked

As part of risk management and volunteer personal accident insurance arrangements it is essential to know exactly what volunteers are doing and when they are doing it. Volunteers working at the Centre are required to sign in and out.

If volunteers work externally a different system will be developed by the Volunteer Coordinator to record hours of work.

Managing poor performance and unacceptable behaviour

The Centre has a responsibility to ensure that its volunteers maintain high standards of conduct and performance. Unsatisfactory performance or unacceptable behaviour should be managed in a fair, reasonable and timely manner. If a situation is not addressed, it will have an impact on volunteers and the Centre, program or service in the longer term.

Unacceptable behaviour by a volunteer includes:

- behaviours that could attract disciplinary action
- failure to comply with Centre policies and procedures
- performing outside of the volunteer position description, unless specifically directed by the Volunteer Coordinator
- failing to comply with the Code of Conduct
- theft of Centre property or stealing from staff, clients, other volunteers
- physical, psychological or verbal abuse by a volunteer against any other person during the course of duties
- threatening behaviour towards another person during the course of duties
- undermining other volunteers' work or the work of paid staff
- breaching confidentiality
- persistent negative attitude towards volunteer role
- deliberate vandalism, sabotage or damage to Centre or Council property
- being under the influence of alcohol or using illicit substances whilst undertaking volunteer work
- unauthorised private use of Centre equipment or facilities.

The Volunteer Coordinator will be responsible for investigating the matter and determining the appropriate actions to deal with the situation in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The CDO must be advised.

Before undertaking any action, an investigation of the circumstances must be made by the Volunteer Coordinator to determine if the issue has occurred due to misinformation, lack of understanding of the expectations of a volunteer role, or personal matters.

The key tools for managing poor performance are:

- position description
- Volunteer Agreement
- Code of Conduct
- Grievance and Conflict Resolution Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Policy and Procedures.

Episodic or event volunteering

Volunteering does not need to be a regular commitment - a one off activity or event is appealing to people who are unable to fit set hours into their schedule. Event or 'episodic' volunteering is also a useful recruitment tool to introduce potential volunteers to a new program or service.

The Event Volunteer Form must be completed to register the volunteer, record their contact details and emergency contact information. Recruitment, screening and selection will still apply, however this will be a shortened version and is dependent on the nature of the volunteer role. Event or episodic volunteer positions should involve low level tasks and responsibility. For example planting tree seedlings, giving out promotional material at a family friendly concert.

Prior to the event, the volunteer must be advised of the relevant safety issues, who to report to, refreshment breaks and specific information for the event. This should be supplied in a separate information briefing sheet. For more complex activities, it is advisable to invite volunteers in for a briefing session. This provides the opportunity for volunteers to meet other volunteers and staff.

At times a volunteer's partner may offer to help for a few hours with a particular task. This is still considered volunteering, and the person must complete the Event Volunteer form on arrival.

External volunteer groups

External volunteering groups who support a Centre event are not considered volunteers of the Centre and are fully responsible for their own actions. These types of groups are required to provide evidence of their own insurance.

Examples include:

- a church group removing graffiti for a day
- Land Care Australia group supporting a re-vegetation project
- service clubs assisting with an Australia Day BBQ.

The Centre is responsible however, for ensuring that external groups comply with the Centre's health and safety requirements and that our facility, land or equipment that external groups will be accessing is in a safe condition.

External volunteer groups are required to complete a written agreement that outlines the areas of responsibility for both parties.

Insurance

Public liability - Volunteers are offered the same cover as Centre employees subject to the rules of the LGA Mutual Liability Scheme, which is underwritten by the state government. Any liability claim made as a result of the actions of a volunteer would be treated as a claim against the Centre and therefore managed by the LGA Mutual Liability Scheme.

Volunteers have a duty of care to themselves and to the people they are working with. They must have an awareness of risks and hazards within the environment that they are operating in and report them immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Personal accident - Personal accident insurance covers volunteers for out of pocket, non-medical expenses they may incur from being injured whilst performing their duties. This cover is extended whilst travelling directly to and from voluntary work and whilst engaged in authorised voluntary duties on behalf of the Centre. There is no lower age limit for personal accident insurance however volunteers over 90 are not covered (see age limits).

Personal accident insurance provides a schedule of benefits for:

- death or permanent disablement
- out of pocket expenses
- modification benefit (disablement)
- rehabilitation benefit for wage earners

In the event of injury, treatment would still be sought under Medicare or the volunteer's own private health cover. The gap between Medicare payment and the Medicare bill is not insurable under the National Health Act. However, any medical cost that is not claimable by Medicare such as physiotherapy, chiropractic and dental could be claimed as a non-medical expense. Pain and suffering is not claimable.

Volunteers who elect to use their own vehicles for Centre activities should only do so with the consent of the Volunteer Coordinator and on the clear understanding that their motor vehicle is not covered by the Centre's insurance. No liability is accepted by the Centre for any costs incurred as a result of a vehicle accident.

Volunteers who use their own private vehicle do so at their own risk and must provide prior confirmation that the vehicle is fully registered and roadworthy if transporting clients. In the event of an accident involving the volunteer's private vehicle, the volunteer would be required to make a claim on their own vehicle insurance.

The Centre may, at its own discretion, agree to reimburse the volunteer for any excess or loss of no-claim bonus.

Bodily injury for passengers and third parties are covered by the Compulsory Third Party insurance cover, which is incorporated in the vehicle registration fee. Excess is payable by the Centre.

Reporting damage or injury - There is an obligation on the part of the volunteer to report any incident involving injury or damage to third parties to the Volunteer Coordinator immediately.

Property owned or belonging to the volunteer remains the responsibility of the volunteer and is not covered by the Centre's insurance.

Volunteers' cars in car parks are not covered by the Centre's insurance.

Volunteers are not covered by personal accident insurance when leaving their place of volunteering for meal breaks.

Extent of Cover - Volunteer insurance only applies when volunteers are undertaking approved, supervised activities of the Centre.

The Volunteer Protection Act (2001) SA shifts any liability incurred by a volunteer in the course of their duties to the organisation, as long as the volunteer was performing under the direction of, and in the spirit in which the organisation intended.

Improving and developing

The Centre aims to meet the National Standards for Volunteering to ensure it is providing safe and satisfying volunteering opportunities. It appreciates volunteers making suggestions for improvement and innovation and welcomes formal and informal involvement by volunteers in decision making that affects their volunteer roles.

7. References

- Volunteer Protection Legislation 2001 (SA)
- National Standards for Volunteers
- City of Onkaparinga's Volunteer Management Handbook

8. Forms or Attachments

- Volunteer Expression of Interest Form
- Volunteer Interview Template
- Offer of Volunteer Position Template Letter
- Volunteer Agreement Form
- Personal Information Form
- Centre Induction Checklist

- Program Induction Checklist
- Volunteer Catch-up Form
- Event Volunteer Form

9. Approvals

	Policy	Procedure
Approving Authority	Board of Management	Board of Management
Approval Date		
Next Review Due		