

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

All you need to know about
Volunteering with the
District Council of Grant



District Council of

Grant



Developed *June 2017*
Updated *May 2019*

This document contains information applicable to new and current volunteers at Council.

Please also refer to other documents in Councils Volunteer Management Package, including policies and procedures, for further details and advice.

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Welcome

Welcome to the District Council of Grant.

Our volunteers are important to us and we value your contribution.

Your time is appreciated and we encourage you to discuss any ideas or concerns you have with us.

This manual serves as a guide and contains useful information that will assist you in your role at the District Council of Grant. The content is based on best practice, however if you have questions at any time please discuss with your supervisor.

We aim to make your volunteering experience fun and hope that you will enjoy your time with us.

Thank you for joining our team of Volunteers.



Jane Fetherstonhaugh
ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Introduction

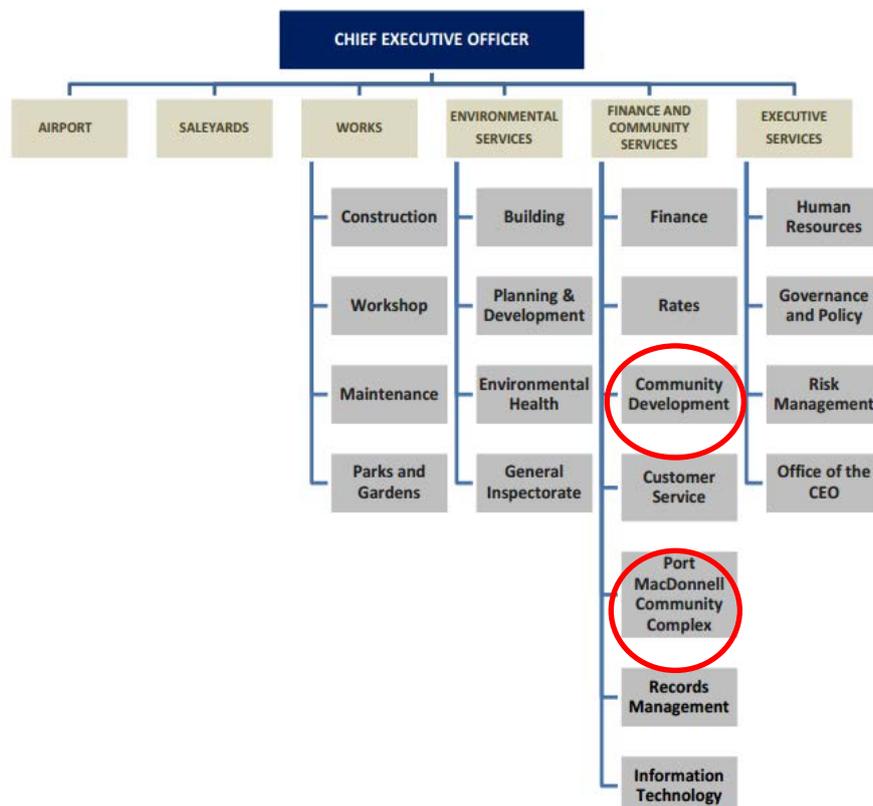
About the District Council of Grant

The District Council of Grant is the most southern local government area in South Australia. Situated on the south east coast it is bounded to the south and southwest by the Southern Ocean, the Victorian Border to the east and the Wattle Range Council to the north and northwest. The Council encircles the local government area of the City of Mount Gambier. The Council is predominantly rural with a number of small townships. Our population is 7,855 (2011 census) and covers an area of 1,898 square kilometres.

The area contains some of the richest and most productive agricultural land in South Australia. Dairying, beef and sheep production, wool, seed and grain production and horticulture are the predominant agricultural activities. The Port MacDonnell fishing industry, in particular the rock lobster industry is a significant factor in the economy of the area. Port MacDonnell is acknowledged as the "Southern Rock Lobster Capital of Australia". Forestry production and related secondary industries of logging, milling and production of paper products are major economic and employment generating activities. Industry and primary production is valued at over \$797 million per year with a further \$440 million per year generated in export income.

Features such as the spectacular coastline and the natural and built heritage, including Canunda National Park, Lake Bonney, and Piccaninnie Ponds and Ewens Ponds, and exceptional cave diving opportunities make the area a popular and growing tourist destination and a recreational playground for local, national and international visitors.

Council has implemented the following organisational structure, incorporating a management team across all departments. Community Development and the Port MacDonnell Community Complex sit within the Finance and Community Services Department.



Our Vision

“A progressive and caring Council, providing responsible leadership, sustainable development and cost effective quality services.”

Our Mission

“To provide a range of services which meet the environmental, social and economic needs of our community.”

Our Values

Council has adopted three core values that will underpin how Council approaches the delivery of outcomes of the District Council of Grant Strategic Management Plan.



Commitment to Volunteer Involvement

Activities of the District Council of Grant volunteers contribute to the delivery of Councils Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

Volunteering is highly valued at the District Council of Grant with volunteer activities contributing significantly to the positive experience of residents, businesses and visitors.

Definition of Volunteering

A volunteer is an individual who undertakes work of her/his own free will, without financial payment and for mutual benefit of The District Council of Grant, the Volunteer and the Community.

Individuals participate directly in programs organized by The District Council of Grant in a designated volunteer role.

Volunteering supports skill development, socialisation and fun and can also address human, environmental and social needs.

National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015

The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015, represent what Volunteering Australia regards as best practice in the management of Volunteer involvement.

The District Council of Grant, where possible have incorporated these standards across the following key areas of Volunteer involvement:

1. Leadership and Management
2. Commitment to Volunteer Involvement
3. Volunteer Roles
4. Recruitment and Selection
5. Support and Development
6. Workplace Safety and Well Being
7. Volunteer Recognition
8. Quality Management and Continuous Improvement

District Council of Grant Quick Stats



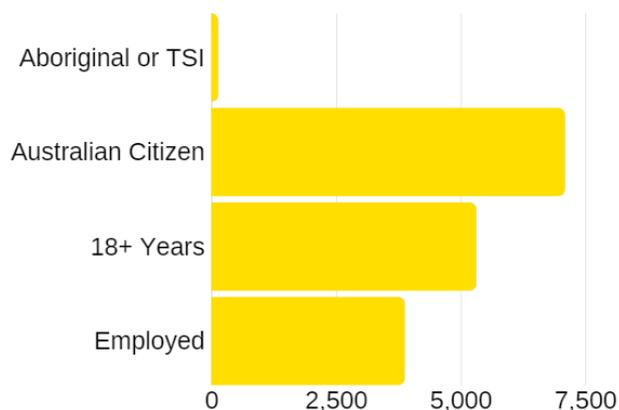
Population 8,203



55%



45%



Leadership and Management

The District Council of Grant has a long history of engaging Volunteers to assist in the delivery of its services and programs, and in 2016 reviewed its Volunteer Management Policy which states Council's commitment to its Volunteers.

Volunteer Management Framework

Council's Volunteer Management Framework describes the philosophy and systems around Council's Volunteer Program and consists of:

Volunteer Management Policy Volunteer Management Procedure Volunteer Code of Conduct

The Volunteer Handbook has been developed to complement the framework and acts as a reference and resource for Volunteers, Volunteer Program Coordinators and staff working with Volunteers.

These documents are supported by a number of internal systems, templates and procedures. Printed copies can be obtained from the Council website, intranet or by contacting the Volunteer Coordinator.

Council Responsibilities

Volunteers with the District Council of Grant will be provided with the following:

- A clearly written role statement
- Appropriate orientation and training
- Access to designated paid staff for queries relating to their volunteer role
- Work that is matched with a volunteers skills, interests and abilities
- The opportunity to decline from work that feel is unsuitable or placing excessive demands on them
- Ongoing support and direction from the program coordinator and/or other staff

- Appropriate resources to undertake their volunteer duties
- A safe work environment
- Fair treatment as a valued member of the team
- Consultation regarding ideas and suggestions for program improvements
- An opportunity to have complaints heard
- Recognition for their contribution to the community
- Receive reimbursement for any approved out of pocket expenses
- Volunteer insurance whilst engaged in any approved voluntary work on behalf of Council.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers have obligations to Council also. These include:

- Fulfilling volunteer duties as specified in their role statement
- Understand and acknowledge the requirements of the Volunteer Code of Conduct and relevant policies and guidelines
- Participate in the appropriate induction and ongoing training as provided
- Operate under the supervision and direction of Council staff
- Maintain confidentiality regarding Council business, program information and other sensitive, private information
- Report any unsafe working conditions or potential hazards
- Report any damage or injury to themselves or a third party

Volunteer Roles

All Volunteer roles have an associated role statement detailing aspects of the role, which complement existing Council work but do not replace services provided by paid staff.

The different types of volunteering duties currently include:

Youth on Wheels

Youth on Wheels is learner driver mentor program to support disadvantaged youth aged 16-25.

The program has been running since the 2012 pilot and offers an opportunity for youth to obtain the 75 hours of driving required to obtain their P1 licence.

The program is overseen by the Community Development Officer and managed on a day to day basis by the Customer Services Team at Council.

Volunteer Roles

- Volunteer Mentor Driver

Port MacDonnell Community Complex (PMCC)

The Port MacDonnell Community Complex is owned, managed and staffed by the District Council of Grant, providing modern facilities to support social and business activities for locals and visitors to Port MacDonnell.

The Coordinator is employed to manage both facilities and the volunteer management program.

Volunteer Roles:

- Library support
- Tourism support

Community Projects

Council coordinate community projects, and on occasion Volunteers come on site to assist in these projects. These are one off projects with a specific time frame.

Volunteer Roles (Examples)

- Construction and building assistance
- Landscaping / gardening
- Events

Other

Within Council's district, there are a number of groups which provide opportunity for volunteering. Please approach these groups if you are interested.

Volunteer Groups

- Port MacDonnell Maritime Museum
- Port MacDonnell Tourist Association
- Baytown Group
- Riding for Disabled
- Bayside Festival Committee
- Local CFS Brigades
- Port MacDonnell Land Care
- Port MacDonnell Meals on Wheels
- Various Local Progress Associations
- Various Local Service groups
- Sporting groups

Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

Equal Opportunity Employment

The District Council of Grant recognizes that people are its most important resource and is committed to equal employment opportunity for all volunteer members.

Council supports the objectives of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)* and its purpose to promote equality of opportunity for all South Australians. It aims to prevent discrimination against people and to give them a fair chance to take part in economic and community life.

Recruitment

The Council's Volunteer Management System provides a guideline for the recruitment of volunteers.

The process begins with a potential volunteer completing an expression of

interest form. Where a volunteer position is available, volunteers attend an interview.

Selection

The District Council of Grant believes that volunteers should be appointed on suitability, taking into account factors such as the applicant's qualifications and experience appropriate to the volunteer position. Factors that are taken into consideration are their skills, knowledge and abilities, their potential, and their overall suitability for the position and the organisation.

Screening and Safe Environments

Applicants for Volunteer roles with the District Council of Grant will be screened for suitability and compatibility which may include a referee check.

The District Council of Grant is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and other vulnerable people who access our services. We support the rights of the child and vulnerable persons in the community and will act without hesitation to ensure a safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all children, young people and other vulnerable people.

The District Council of Grant has a requirement for Volunteers working with children or vulnerable persons to undertake and provide a satisfactory DCSI Screening. This is the process of obtaining information about potential volunteers where it is deemed to be relevant to volunteering in a prescribed position.

The District Council of Grant will advise volunteers of the procedures required to apply for the identified clearance/s and will meet the normal costs associated with obtaining the required clearance/s.

The District Council of Grant retains the right to require volunteers to renew the

required clearance/s at least every three years.

Letter of Engagement

A Volunteer Agreement will be provided with a copy of the Role Statement to successful volunteer applicants. This will include the expectations and responsibilities of both Council and the volunteer.

Induction of New Volunteers

The District Council of Grant places importance on the induction of new volunteers. A Volunteer Site Induction and Induction Check List is available to assist the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure that all aspects of the District Council of Grant's operations, policies, programs, procedures and volunteer responsibilities are understood.

If required the IT Coordinator will provide access to appropriate systems and password establishment as part of the corporate induction

The supervisor will introduce new volunteers to staff and other volunteers.

Volunteer Records

The District Council of Grant establishes and maintains personnel files for each individual volunteer on commencement of volunteering with Council.

The personnel file consists of an electronic file and a hard copy file. Both copies are managed by Councils Records Coordinator with access to the files available to the Volunteer Coordinator and Manager Organisational Development.

The terms of Councils Privacy Policy GOVPOL13 will be observed in respect of information stored on a volunteer's personal file.

Attendance

Each volunteer must sign on when they arrive to undertake their duties and sign off at the end of their roster. This assists Council in knowing where as volunteer is in the case of an emergency and to ensure records for insurance purposes.

Hours of Duty

The District Council of Grant offers a flexible working environment for volunteers and endeavors to accommodate volunteer requirements. The core hours of operation are 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday, with some variance in regard to the Port MacDonnell Community Complex.

Volunteer Resignation

Should a volunteer wish to resign from their role they are requested to give their Supervisor or Volunteer Services Coordinator as much notice as possible. A resignation period of one month would be appreciated. The volunteer supervisor will arrange an exit meeting.

Volunteers who feel that their role is no longer fulfilling should discuss this with their Volunteer Supervisor who may be able to match them to another position.

Exit Interview and Checklist

When a volunteer ceases employment with the District Council of Grant their Volunteer Coordinator may conduct an exit interview. A record of the interview will be retained on their volunteer file.

Our wish is to obtain information that may help

- To establish the reasons for leaving
- To analyse any trends in the reason for leaving
- To provide departing volunteers with the opportunity to discuss any issues of concern which may have contributed to their leaving
- To gain constructive feedback on the best and worst aspects of the

volunteer's job and their time at the District Council of Grant

During the exit interview arrangements will be made for the return of all The District Council of Grant's property including office keys and fobs.

Support and Development

Feedback forms

The District Council of Grant values your contribution to the organisation. The Volunteer Coordinator will review the volunteer program on an annual basis.

Please speak with your supervisor at any time you have a concern.

Training & Development

All Volunteers will be appropriately trained to perform their role/s as specified in their role statement.

Training provided by Council will take the form of both informal and formal training programs.

Informal training

An orientation is provided to all first time volunteers and is aimed at introducing them to the organization and to the policies and procedures governing work practices at the District Council of Grant. Volunteers will be taken through the work procedures that they will be performing.

During the orientation, a specific work health safety induction will be provided.

Formal training

If a Volunteer is selected for a role and does not have all the necessary skills to undertake the role, the Volunteer Program Coordinator or designated staff may conduct a training needs analysis with the Volunteer. This will be used to inform the development of a training plan to address identified skill gaps.

Quality Management and Continuous Improvement

Ongoing Support & Supervision

Each Volunteer Coordinator will provide ongoing support and supervision to the volunteers.

They do this in the following ways:

- Giving encouragement and feedback
- Offering training and development opportunities
- Sharing feedback from customers and clients
- Considering your interest in decisions that affect you
- Inviting you to social functions
- Celebrating your achievements and successes
- Where appropriate provide a reference or act as a referee to your prospective employer.

Annual Support & Supervision

It is envisaged that on an annual basis a review will take place to determine training requirements and review performance to support progress and to recognize Volunteers for good performance.

Workplace Safety and Wellbeing

Insurance

The District Council of Grant is committed to providing an attractive and beneficial volunteering experience for its volunteers. In meeting this commitment Council considers it important to ensure that should Volunteers injure themselves or cause a loss or damage to a third party they are provided with the protection of insurance in order to minimise any personal financial impact.

Council approved volunteers will be covered by the insurance policies of the District Council of Grant for the following

types of liability whilst acting in their (volunteer) role:

- *Public liability*
- *Volunteer Personal Accident*

Volunteers can request to see a copy of the District Council of Grant insurance policy. This can be arranged through the volunteer's supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteers will be advised to check with their own insurance company that their comprehensive cover for loss/damage to their own vehicle includes cover while driving to and from the place of volunteer work.

Injury to the volunteer or other persons caused through a road accident to and from the place of volunteering will be covered by the vehicle owner's registration and compulsory third party insurance. There are conditions that apply to Third Party Insurance. The conditions and warranties are written on the back of vehicle registration papers.

Safety in the Workplace

All staff members and volunteers are encouraged to regard accident prevention as a collective and individual responsibility. Should a safety hazard or incident be identified it is imperative that the problem be reported immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator to enable immediate action to be taken.

The District Council of Grant's ***Incident Report Form*** is to be completed and filed along with any accompanying documentation.

Any volunteer who has a medical issue which may require urgent medical treatment should make the Volunteer Coordinator aware of the possible action required.

Smoke Free Work Place

Under the ***Work Health and Safety Act 2012***, Council has a legal commitment to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, visitors and customers.

Smoking is banned in enclosed public places, workplaces or shared areas including motor vehicles under the ***Tobacco Products Regulation Act 1997.***

Risk

The District Council of Grant recognises that the effective management of risk is a fundamental component of good business practice. Council undertakes an integrated approach to risk management to protect its employees, assets, liabilities and community against potential exposure, to minimise uncertainty in achieving its goals and objectives and to maximise opportunities to achieve Council's Strategic Plan.

Alone in Office

When alone in the office outside of hours a volunteer should, to ensure their own safety, lock the front and back doors and park their vehicle in a well-lit, easily accessible place. Under no circumstance should persons other than Council employees be admitted into the office or Port MacDonnell Community Complex.

Discrimination, Bullying and Sexual Harassment

The District Council of Grant believes that providing a workplace free from unlawful discrimination, bullying, victimisation and sexual harassment can deliver advantages to our business, people and workplace. Treating people fairly has a positive impact on employees and customers and enhances our reputation as an employer of choice.

Council will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying in the work place or any other venue from which its programs are being delivered.

Abusive Behaviour

Abusive behavior will not be tolerated by the District Council of Grant. It is imperative that the views of others are respected and

any abusive behavior may result in counselling or dismissal.

Drug and Alcohol in the Workplace

The District Council of Grant is committed to providing volunteers with a smoke, drug and alcohol free work place during designated work hours.

Alcohol is permitted to be served at designated staff, volunteer and District Council of Grant social occasions.

Grievance

The District Council of Grant recognises that open communication and feedback are essential elements of a satisfying and productive work environment.

Every effort will be made to solve problems cooperatively and informally before presenting them in writing as a formal grievance.

Any concerns should be made to the Volunteer Coordinator in the first instance.

General Operations

Code of Conduct

The general duty of volunteers representing the District Council of Grant is to act honestly and with reasonable care and diligence and behave in a way that upholds the values, integrity and good reputation of Council.

A copy of the Volunteer Code of Conduct will be provided at the induction session and volunteers are required to familiarize themselves with this document.

Confidentiality in the workplace

It is paramount that volunteers maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings they have with people they provide services to and any District Council of Grant business.

Volunteers should maintain the confidentiality of any information they

obtain and under no circumstances should this information be shared on social media.

Lunch Breaks

The District Council of Grant recognises the importance of volunteers taking a lunch break and encourages volunteers to take a lunch break of up to either 30 minutes or up to 60 minutes (dependent on the hours worked).

Public Holidays, School Holidays & the Christmas Period

The District Council of Grant observes all gazette South Australian public holidays however the Port MacDonnell Community Complex may provide services on these occasions.

Dress Code

Volunteers are required to demonstrate a neat and responsible standard of dress. Name badges may be provided on request, please discuss with Volunteer Supervisor / Coordinator.

Keys and Fobs

For security reasons within the Port MacDonnell Community Complex (PMCC), volunteers are not able to have access to individual fobs and keys. Access to the building is to be gained through PMCC staff.

Leave

Holidays are considered an importance part of wellbeing. Volunteer's supervisors should advise their Volunteer Coordinator preferably one month in advance so a replacement can be found during this time.

Council is supportive of those occasions where leave is required for undertaking family matters – please liaise with your supervisor.

Children in the Workplace

The District Council of Grant provides a caring work environment for all volunteers and is supportive of family values but it is not considered appropriate for children to be in the work place for an extended period of time.

Presentations and Gifts

Occasionally volunteers may be offered a thankyou gift from a customer.

If this situation does occur, the Volunteer is to inform the Volunteer Coordinator in order to determine a response to the offer.

A Volunteer for the District Council of Grant must not ask for or otherwise solicit any gift, hospitality and/or entertainment or any other benefit from any organisation or individual that could in any way be related or reasonably construed as related to their role with that Council.

Internet and Email Access

The primary purpose for access to the internet and email is to assist The District Council of Grant volunteers carry out their duties of employment.

Volunteers may use the internet and email access provided by The District Council of Grant for any work-related purpose.

Telephone System

The Council telephone system is provided for business users, however it is recognized that the need may arise for volunteers to make brief phone calls of a personal nature.

Personal Mobile Phone Use

When using personal mobile phones in the District Council of Grant's office, volunteers are requested to ensure that the calls are of a short duration and the ring tones are at a level that does not adversely impact on the working environment.

Communication with the media

Volunteers should refrain from making any comments regarding Council or Council projects and initiatives with the print, radio, digital or social media.

If you are approached by the media please ask them to contact Councils Executive Services Team who will assist them with their query.

Volunteer Recognition

The District Council of Grant will both formally and informally recognize, acknowledge and affirm the value of volunteers who are involved in the delivery of the District Council of Grant programs. This recognition may take the form of, but is not limited to the following:

- Acknowledgement in reports, newsletters and other written communication materials
- Media Releases
- Personal thankyou's
- Participation opportunities in events, conferences and seminars
- Leadership and training opportunities
- Provision of references
- Acknowledgement during volunteers' week.

Policies and Procedures

The following documents guide Council's volunteer management system, and are available with this document:

HRPOL03 Volunteer Management Policy

HRPR03 Volunteer Management Procedure

HRPOL04 Code of Conduct for Volunteers

HRPOL01 Safe Environments Policy

HRPR09 Mandated and Prescribed Positions Procedure

HRPR08 Relevant History Assessment Procedure



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