



Code of Conduct

A Guide for Volunteers

INTRODUCTION

Woollahra Council is committed to fair dealing and high standards of ethical behavior in the care, control and management of the Woollahra Municipality. The community places its trust in Woollahra's Councillors, Council staff and Council delegates to ensure that they serve it faithfully and honestly and that they manage its resources on behalf of the community.

As a volunteer, you are required to observe a standard of professional behavior that maintains and promotes confidence and trust in the work of Council. You must avoid any form of conduct that would bring Council, Councillors, staff or Council delegates into disrepute.

The community is entitled to expect that the business of Council will be conducted with efficiency, impartiality and integrity and that the public will always have absolute priority over private interests.

Woollahra Council will endeavour to ensure that all volunteers receive the appropriate support and supervision to fulfil and enjoy their volunteer role.

A GUIDE FOR VOLUNTEERS

This Guide has been produced to provide an outline of our Code of Conduct and how this would apply to you should you choose to become a volunteer.

Why Volunteer?

Volunteering is a great opportunity to contribute to the local community, make new friends, develop new skills and have fun!

Volunteers are fundamental to the successful provision of our much needed services and programs. The vital contribution of volunteers enables us to reach out to more people. Volunteers provide an invaluable contribution to the community.



Your Responsibilities as a Volunteer

Volunteering brings with it certain commitments and responsibilities including:

- Commitment to Council's values and vision;
- Maintenance of customer/client confidentiality at all times;
- Compliance with Council's policies; and
- Compliance with Council's Code of Conduct.

As a volunteer you are a representative of Council and breaches of the Code on your behalf could jeopardise your volunteer relationship with Council and compromise the Council's reputation.

Our Values

Respect for people

Integrity and excellence performance

Professional, quality service

Open, accountable communication

Our Vision Statement

Woollahra will continue be a great place to live, work and visit where places and spaces are safe, clean and well-maintained.

Our community will offer a unique mix of urban villages with a good range of shops, services and facilities.

We will make the most of the natural beauty, leafy streetscapes, open spaces, views and proximity to the water and the city.

We will be a harmonious, engaged and connected community that looks out for each other.



General Conduct

You must avoid behavior that could constitute an act of disorder or misbehavior. Specifically, as a volunteer you must avoid conduct that:

- Contravenes the Local Government Act, associated regulations and Council's relevant administrative requirements and policies;
- Is detrimental to the pursuit of the charter of Council;
- Is improper or unethical;
- Is an abuse of power or otherwise amounts to misconduct;
- Causes, comprises or involves intimidation, harassment or verbal abuse;
- Causes, comprises or involves discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment; or
- Causes, comprises or involves prejudice in the provision of a service to the community.

You must act lawfully, honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence in carrying out your volunteering work. You must treat others with respect at all times.

Equitable Treatment

Volunteers, in carrying out Council duties must:

- Act reasonably, justly, in accordance with the law and in a non-discriminatory manner;
- Deal with all situations consistently, but treat each matter on its merits;
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the information upon which decisions or actions are based is factually correct and that all relevant information has been obtained;
- Treat all staff members, Councillors and members of the public fairly and with courtesy; and
- Refrain from any form of conduct, in the performance of your duty, which may cause any person unwarranted offence or embarrassment, or give rise to the reasonable suspicion or appearance of improper conduct or bias in the performance of your duties.

Conflicts of Interest

If Council is to keep the trust and confidence of the community, Council must ensure that the actions and decisions of Council's volunteers are free from any conflicts of interest and are also clearly seen to be free from any conflicts of interest.

The law places the onus on you to identify and declare any conflicts of interests or pecuniary interests. A pecuniary interest is an interest in a matter where there is a reasonable likelihood, or expectation, of an appreciable financial gain or loss to yourself or another person with whom you are associated.

As a volunteer, you must not allow your private interests to interfere with your volunteering duties. Any actual or potential conflict between your private interests and those of the Council are to be avoided. The onus is on you to notify your supervisor or a senior manager if a potential or actual conflict of interest arises.

Use of Information

It is important that the community has confidence that any information acquired by Council is used only for Council purposes.

As a volunteer, if you access any confidential information (commercial or personal) from Woollahra Council during the course of your volunteering duties, you must:

- Protect the confidential, commercial or personal information;
- Only access it when needed for in your capacity as a volunteer for Council;
- Not use the confidential, commercial or personal information for any unofficial purpose outside the Council work;
- Only release the confidential, commercial or personal information when you have the authority to do so;
- Only use confidential, commercial or personal information for the purpose it is intended to be used; and
- Not use Council information for personal purposes.

Gifts and Benefits

As a volunteer you must never demand or request any gift or benefit for yourself or anyone else in connection with your volunteering duties.

If you are offered or receive a gift, you must advise your supervisor who will fully explain Council's Code of Conduct requirements in relation to gifts and benefits.

Use of Council's Resources

Council equipment, facilities, property and other resources are to be used:

- Ethically, effectively, efficiently and carefully;
- For the benefit of Council and only in connection with your volunteering work for Council; and
- With no usage for private purposes and only in accordance with the details stated in Council's Code of Conduct.

Additional Standards

Some provisions you must adhere to in your role as volunteer are that:

- You must not harass, discriminate against, or support others who harass and discriminate against colleagues or members of the public;
- You must not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs whilst volunteering; and
- You must not make media comment about Council matters in your capacity as a volunteer.

All media enquiries should be referred to Council's Communications department.

Breaches

Volunteers are required to both act in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and to immediately report any breaches of the Code.

As a volunteer you should report such incidents to the General Manager. Breaches of the Code may lead to disciplinary action, sanctions and/or matters being referred to the appropriate investigative body, such as the Police, NSW Ombudsman or the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

Further Information

Please feel free to contact Council's Governance Department on 9391 7012 for further information. For a copy of Council's Code of Conduct, visit www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au.