

## POLICY REGISTER

# VOLUNTEER RISK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

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## **I INTRODUCTION**

### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to describe how Warren Shire Council will manage the work health and safety risks associated with using volunteers at Council.

(Council's name) appreciates and acknowledges the services provided by volunteers in improving the quality of services across the Warren Shire Council and aims to ensure their health and safety whilst undertaking these activities.

This procedure is specific to managing health and safety risks associated with volunteers, and is to be used in conjunction with Council's general Volunteer Management Procedures.

### **B. SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all Warren Shire Council workers who are involved and/or are responsible for volunteer coordination, including members of Section 355 committees. It includes all activities performed by volunteers including those involving:

- Recreation and Leisure Centre
- Early Years
- Community Centres
- Youth Services
- Aged Services
- Environmental Services
- Arts and Cultural Services
- Special Events

**C. DEFINITIONS**

Term	Definition
Hazard	A situation or thing that has the potential to harm, including injury or illness to people or damage to plant, property or the environment.
Hierarchy of controls	<p>A process of prioritising hazard controls in order of effectiveness as shown below:</p> <p>Level 1 controls:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Elimination</u> of the hazard. E.g. remove a piece of hazardous equipment from operation.</p> <p><i>or if this is not possible, minimise the risk by:</i></p> <p>Level 2 controls:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Substitution</u> - replace with a safer alternative. E.g. replace solvents with detergents, glass with plastic, etc.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Isolation</u> - isolate the person exposed from the hazard or the hazards from the person.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Engineering controls</u> - E.g. modify, enclose, guard, exhaust fumes, use mechanical aids, fall arrest systems.</p> <p><i>If the risk remains:</i></p> <p>Level 3 controls:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Administration</u> - E.g. development of safe work procedures, training, limiting duration of exposure.</p> <p><i>If the risk still remains:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Personal protective equipment (PPE)</u> is the least effective form of control and to be used as a last resort.</p>
PCBU	A Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking, where a person may be an organisation or individual. Council is a PCBU. Other organisations or individuals may hold shared responsibilities as a PCBU depending on the arrangement with Council.
Reasonably practicable	<p>Doing what is reasonably able to be done to ensure the health and safety of workers and others, taking into account:</p> <p>The likelihood of the hazard or risk occurring</p> <p>The degree of harm that might result from exposure to the hazard or risk</p> <p>What the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably know, about the hazard or risk</p> <p>about the ways of eliminating or minimising the risk</p> <p>The availability and suitability of controls and the cost associated with controls</p> <p>After assessing the risk and available mean to eliminate or minimise the risk, whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.</p>
Residual risk	The level of risk remaining after recommended controls have been implemented.
Risk	The likelihood of harm occurring from exposure to a hazard and the likely consequences of that harm.
Risk Assessment	The overall process of estimating the level of risk of a particular task, activity or process.
Risk control measures	Measures that eliminate or minimise a risk so far as is reasonably practicable, using the 'hierarchy of control'.
SWMS	Safe Work Method Statement
SOP	Safe Operating Procedure

Term	Definition
Worker	A person who carries out work in any capacity for (Council name). This includes an employee, contractor, subcontractor or volunteer.
Volunteer	A person who undertakes an activity on behalf of Council either directly or indirectly and is not party to an employment contract with Council in regard to that activity. The volunteer may be recruited directly by Council or by a third party which is involved with Council in undertaking the activity. Although there is no direct personal remuneration which could be considered as income for the volunteer undertaking the activity, there may be arrangements made for the payment of out-of-pocket expenses associated with the activity.
Volunteer Supervisor	A person employed by Council who has been assigned responsibility for supervising volunteers or volunteer activities
Volunteering	Time willingly given by an individual for the 'common good' and without financial gain.
Vulnerable Person	a) a Child or Children; or b) an individual aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

## **II RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibilities for managing health and safety risks and applicable to this procedure are summarised below

### **A. GENERAL MANAGER AND DIRECTORS**

- Ensure that processes are in place to manage the health and safety of volunteers
- Ensure adequate resources are available for the effective management of risks relating to volunteer activities;
- Ensure that adequate pre-requisites are in place prior to volunteers commencing duties
- Ensure the periodic review of the implementation and effectiveness of risk control measures for volunteers
- Ensure Council consults, coordinates and co-operates with other duty holders to meet their Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislative requirements in relation to the effective management of risks associated with volunteers
- Ensure that processes are in place for the review of this procedure and the processes for managing volunteer risks every two years.

### **B. MANAGERS**

- Ensure the identification, assessment, control and monitoring of hazards and hazardous activities related to volunteers
- Periodically review the implementation and effectiveness of control measures to manage risks associated with activities volunteers conduct, and revise of controls if necessary
- Provide Senior Management and the WHS/HR Officer with reports on volunteer related risks and controls for the areas over which they have control
- Ensure an appropriate person (e.g. Volunteer Supervisor or Site Supervisor) is appointed to supervise volunteers
- In conjunction with the WHS/HR Officer and in consultation with the HSR/HSC, review this procedure and the effectiveness of the processes for managing volunteer risks every two years.

### **C. SUPERVISORS**

- Identify hazards associated with volunteers and their activities, assess the risks and implement effective control measures;
- Conduct risk assessments in consultation with workers and other duty holders
- Monitor and review the implementation and effectiveness of controls and revise controls where necessary
- Provide information, training and supervision to all volunteers on hazards and hazardous activities related to the work that they undertake
- Liaise with the WHS/HR Officer for assistance in managing risks associated with volunteers and the activities they undertake.

### **D. WHS/HR OFFICER**

- Oversee the system and processes for the identification, assessment, control and monitoring of risks that may arise from the activities volunteers undertake



- Consult with key stakeholders in managing risks associated with volunteers and provide information to Council management and workers as applicable
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the risk management process for volunteers and provide reports to senior management as required.

**E. HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC)**

- Participate in the identification of hazards and control measures for volunteer activities, where required; and
- Participate in reviewing the effectiveness of risk controls implemented for volunteer's activities.

**F. VOLUNTEER**

- Complete (Council's name) induction and any relevant training prior to undertaking any volunteer activities;
- Comply with the requirements of relevant (Council's name) policies and procedures;
- Comply with induction and training provided; and
- Report hazards or concerns they have in relation to health and safety to the Volunteer Supervisor or Site Supervisor.

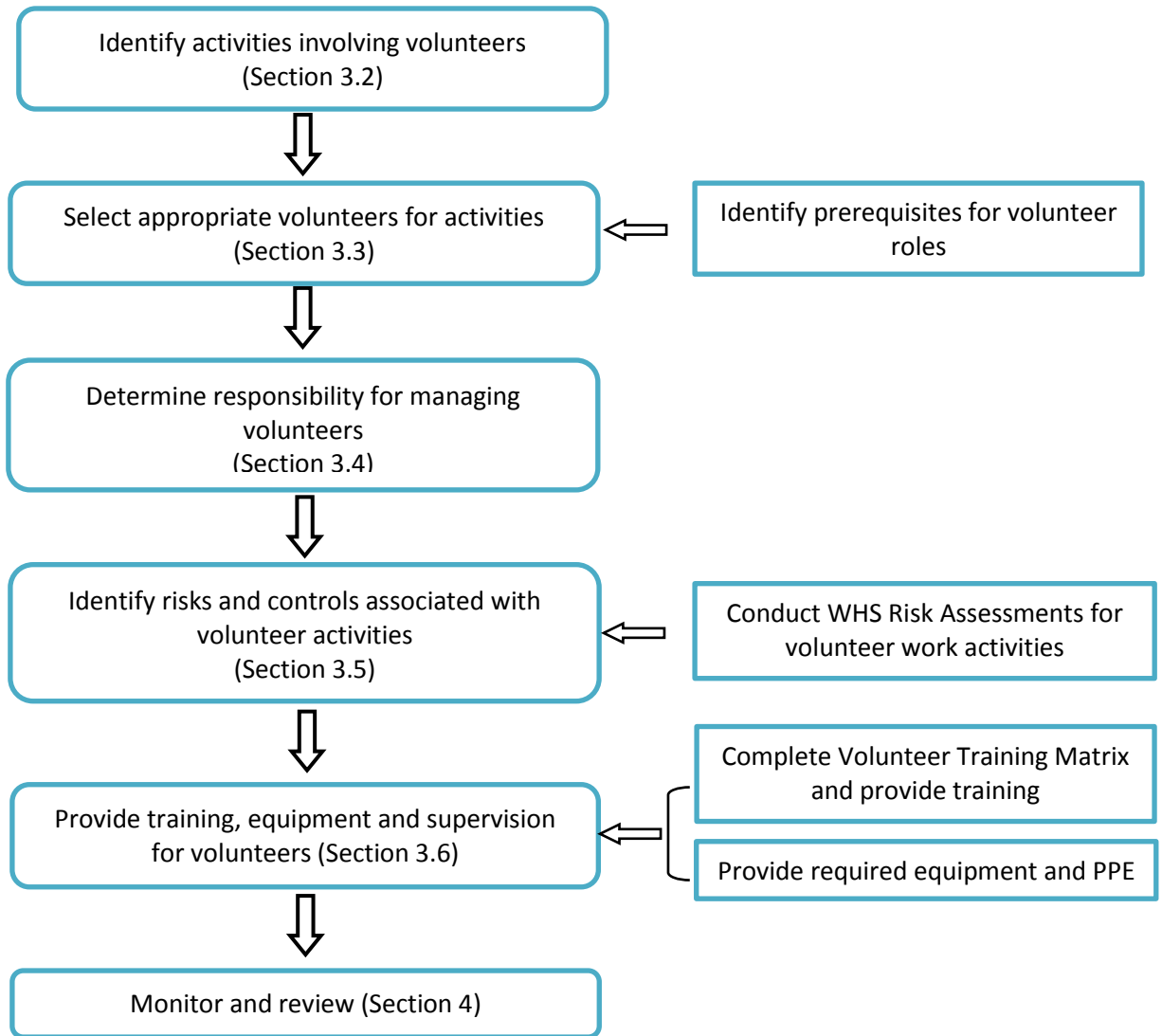
**G. VOLUNTEER SUPERVISOR OR SITE SUPERVISOR**

- Complete a Volunteer Induction Checklist prior to the volunteer undertaking any duties
- Ensure that activities are conducted in accordance with Council WHS procedures

### III PROCESS FOR MANAGING VOLUNTEER RISKS

Warren Shire Council will develop, implement and maintain a process to manage health and safety risks to volunteers arising from or associated with the activities they undertake. A flowchart providing an overview of the process is provided in Section 3.1.

### IV OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS FOR VOLUNTEER RISK MANAGEMENT



## **V IDENTIFYING ACTIVITIES INVOLVING VOLUNTEERS**

Warren Shire Council will identify activities involving volunteers by following a systematic process that involves:

1. Identifying activities within Council that involve, or are likely to involve, volunteers, including:
  - Community events
  - Non-event activities (such as park maintenance)
  - Community services and fundraising
  - Council committees (e.g. Section 355 Committees)
2. Identifying volunteer roles for these activities

Managers/supervisors are responsible for approving activities to be performed by volunteers for areas under their control.

## **VI SELECTING VOLUNTEERS FOR ACTIVITIES**

Volunteers must be deemed suitable for the activity in question. This includes identifying any specific prerequisites for a volunteer performing the activity (e.g. specific qualifications) to ensure the safety of the volunteer and/or others involved in the activity. Different volunteer positions may require different prerequisites, including:

- Prior skills or experience
- Drivers licence
- Certificates or other qualification (e.g. a first aid certificate or a trade certificate)
- Medical check
- Specific physical requirements/attributes
- Police or background checks
- ‘Working with Children’ check and/or vulnerable person checks
- Other specific competencies (See Appendix 1 for examples of specific competencies for Volunteers)

The relevant Supervisor / Manager will identify the prerequisites for each volunteer role.

Any required prerequisites must be included in the Volunteer Application Form that is completed by all volunteers and reviewed by the Supervisor/Manager before the volunteer is approved.

### **A. VOLUNTEERS UNDER 18 OR OVER 90**

When considering whether to engage a volunteer under 18 or over 90, Council must assess whether the volunteer has adequate skills and experience to fulfil the role, and whether Council can meet its increased duty of care to the volunteer. Council will also ensure that the volunteers are adequately covered under Council insurances.

## **VII DETERMINING RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANAGING VOLUNTEERS**

The relevant Manager will ensure that a Volunteer Supervisor or Site Supervisor is appointed to supervise all volunteers.

## **Section 355 Committees**

Where Council has delegated some of its functions to a Section 355 committee, the Committee's constitution / terms of reference must specify the Council representative that is responsible for overall management and supervision of work health and safety for the Committee's activities.

### **Volunteer Associations**

Where external organisations are engaged to provide volunteer services (e.g. through Rotary or APEX), the organisation must provide adequate information for Council to assess if the volunteers involved meet the prerequisites for the activity. Volunteers must still be individually approved by Council and complete Council's induction prior to commencing work.

## **VIII IDENTIFYING RISKS AND CONTROLS ASSOCIATED WITH VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

The Manager/Supervisor for the relevant work area must ensure that any work activities or events involving volunteers have a WHS Risk Assessment completed prior to the work commencing or the event being booked. This assessment will follow the process outlined in Council's Managing WHS Risks Procedure and will identify the hazards associated with the activity and the required control measures. The WHS/HR Officer will assist the Manager/Supervisor with the completion of the risk assessment as required.

The Manager/Supervisor will ensure that all risk control measures identified in the WHS Risk Assessment are implemented.

Volunteers are not permitted to undertake high risk work tasks (e.g. working at heights, traffic control, etc.). Where required, Council will arrange for appropriately qualified personnel to complete these tasks. (Refer to Council's Construction Safety Management procedure for details of high risk tasks.)

## **IX PROVIDING TRAINING, EQUIPMENT AND SUPERVISION FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers will be provided with the required instruction, information and training for their role.

The relevant Manager will ensure that a Training Matrix is completed that identifies the required training for the volunteer role (See Appendix 2 for an example of a Volunteer Training Matrix). Council will ensure that volunteers have received the instruction/ training indicated in the Training Matrix before commencement of work. This includes instruction in the use of any relevant plant / equipment (e.g. mowers).

All volunteers must receive Council induction prior to undertaking any activities on behalf of the Council.

The Volunteer Induction Checklist in Appendix 3 can be used to track all WHS requirements for volunteers including any pre-requisites for the role, required PPE and mandatory training/instruction.

Approved volunteers will be recorded in the Volunteer Register (see Appendix 4).

### **A. SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS**

The relevant Manager will ensure that adequate supervision is arranged for volunteers. Where practicable, the Volunteer Supervisor / Site Supervisor should be present while volunteers

undertake work activities. Where this is not practicable (e.g. remote locations, community transport), the Supervisor must consider how adequate supervision can be implemented. This may include planned or random site visits and maintaining communication with volunteers to check the progress of their activities and discuss any issues / hazards they may have identified.

## **B. USE OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT**

Where practicable, Council will supply any plant / equipment required for volunteer tasks. Volunteers must be trained in the use of plant or equipment and deemed to be competent prior to operating it. Volunteers are not permitted to use or operate equipment if they have not been authorised by Council.

Volunteers must receive prior approval if they wish to supply their own equipment. Any equipment supplied by volunteers must be checked and authorised by the Volunteer Supervisor / Site Supervisor prior to being used.

The Volunteer Supervisor / Site Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that pre-start checks are undertaken for all plant and equipment used by volunteers.

Electrical items must have a current test/tag record attached to the item.

The Supervisor is authorised to prevent the use of, or remove, any item considered unsafe or inappropriate for the task.

## **C. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

Council will supply volunteers with appropriate personal protective equipment for the tasks they are undertaking. The Volunteer Supervisor / Site Supervisor is responsible for ensuring volunteers use and maintain PPE, and for arranging the replacement of any worn / damaged items.

## **D. HAZARD/ INCIDENT REPORTING**

Volunteers must report all hazards or incidents to their Volunteer Supervisor/ Site Supervisor who will follow Council's relevant procedures including the Managing WHS Risks and Incident Reporting and Investigation procedures.

Volunteers will have the same access to post incident briefing and support as is provided to Council's workers.

Volunteers are able to raise complaints and grievances as per Council's Internal Reporting Procedure.

## **E. INSURANCE AND LIABILITY FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Council will carry appropriate insurance policies to cover volunteers (e.g. public liability). In some cases, volunteers will be required to demonstrate that they have their own insurances (e.g. comprehensive car insurance if using their own car). Any insurances required by the volunteer will be determined prior to starting work.

## **X MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The effectiveness of this procedure will be reviewed at least every two (2) years, including a review of:

- Compliance with the requirements of the Volunteer Risk Management procedure;

- The suitability and effectiveness of volunteer risk control measures

In addition, this procedure will be reviewed if:

- It becomes apparent that the volunteer risk management process is not adequate to protect volunteers
- There are legislative changes that affect the management of volunteer health and safety

The WHS/Risk Officer will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this procedure and include any issues in their monthly WHS reports to Senior Management.

## **XI RECORD KEEPING**

The Volunteer Supervisor /Site Supervisor will keep records for this procedure in accordance with Councils procedures for document management and control.

The types of records to be kept include:

- Completed Volunteer Application Forms
- Completed Volunteer Induction Checklists
- Completed Volunteer Training Matrix
- Completed WHS Risk Assessment Forms
- Volunteer Register

## **XII RELATED DOCUMENTS**

*Policy XXX – WHS Policy*

*Procedure XXX – Managing WHS Risks*

*Procedure XXX – WHS Consultation*

*Procedure XXX – Incident Reporting and Investigation*

*Procedure XXX – Record Management*

*Procedure XXX – Document Control*

*Procedure XXX – Record Keeping*

*Procedure XXX – Complaint and Grievances*

*Procedure XXX – Corrective Actions*

*Form XXX – Hazard Report Form*

*Form XXX – WHS Risk Assessment Form*

*Form XXX – WHS Risk Register*

*Form XXX – Corrective Action Report*

*Form XXX – Minor Incident Report*

*Form XXX – Serious Incident Report*

*Form XXX - WHS Consultation and Communication Register*

*Form XXX - Work Inspection Checklists*

*Form XXX - Volunteer Induction Checklist*

*Form XXX - Volunteer Training Matrix*

*Form XXX – Volunteer Register*

*Form XXX – Volunteer Application Form*

### ***XIII REFERENCES***

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW)
- Code of Practice: How to manage work health and safety risks 2011 (SafeWork NSW)
- The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015 (Volunteering Australia)
- The Essential Guide to Work Health and Safety for Organisations that Engage Volunteers 2012 (Safe Work Australia)

## **APPENDIX 1 – EXAMPLES OF ROLE-SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

The following provides suggestions for training and competencies for different volunteer roles:

- ‘Armed Holdup Procedures’ for volunteers handling cash (e.g. in cafes and kiosks, at special events or in some administration roles.)
- ‘Driver Safety Awareness’ for volunteers who transport others, drive to in-home visits or transport goods for special events
- ‘First Aid – Basic Awareness’ so volunteers are aware of the steps they should take during an incident as well as what NOT to do. This is relevant for any volunteer working without direct supervision
- ‘Apply First Aid’ for settings such as cafes or ‘Men’s Sheds’ where the degree of harm from an incident could be higher
- ‘Food Handling Safety’ for those working in cafes and kiosks, transporting prepared foods, cooking barbeques or serving food
- ‘Infection Control – Sharps Awareness’ for volunteers working in an immunisation clinic, child care, recycling centres, parks, gardens, cemeteries, sporting grounds, cleaning or maintaining buildings, removing graffiti or setting up special events in outdoor settings.
- ‘Venomous Animal Awareness’ for those volunteers working in outdoor environments or around buildings (e.g. home gardening or cleaning services)
- ‘Working Alone Awareness’ for volunteers at sites where assistance is not readily available in case of injury or illness
- ‘Fire Prevention’ for volunteers working in grounds maintenance or environmental field work.
- ‘Dealing with Aggressive Behaviours’ for volunteers dealing with the public on sensitive issues such as Justices of the Peace.
- ‘Understanding Dementia’ or ‘Managing Challenging Behaviours’ for volunteers working in Aged Care support.

### **Specific Competencies for Volunteer Supervisors**

In some settings, volunteers work in a supervisory capacity (over other volunteers). Some role statements include titles with terms such as ‘co-ordinator’, ‘team leader’, ‘facilitator’, ‘café supervisor’, ‘organiser’ etc. These roles may be common in kiosks, crèches, playgroups, tutoring, mentoring, tourism guides, walk groups and special events.

In such cases, consideration should be given to whether these volunteers require additional training or should be trained to a higher level. For example:

Training in ‘Apply First Aid’ (the former Senior First Aid certificate) rather than ‘Basic Awareness’

A higher level of understanding of ‘Due Diligence’ and ‘Duty of Care’

Higher level of training in ‘Bullying and Harassment Awareness’

Training in ‘Dealing with Aggressive Behaviours’



**XIV APPENDIX 2 – SAMPLE VOLUNTEER TRAINING MATRIX**

	<b>Volunteer Role</b>	Administration	Committees	Child Care	Elderly Support	Environ. Field Work	Graffiti Removal	Grounds People	Guides	Hospitality	In-House Services	Justice of the Peace	Library Shelving	Maintenance	Marketing	Retail	Social Support	Special Events	Transport	Tutoring	Youth Mentoring	
<b>Core Competencies</b>	Council Induction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Bullying & Harassment Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Emergency Management Response (General)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Hazardous Manual Tasks	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	WHS Risk Management Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Office Ergonomics Awareness	✓	✓									✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	
	Heat Stress/Inclement Weather/ Sun Safety			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
<b>Role-Specific Competencies</b>	Armed Holdup Procedures	✓							✓		✓					✓	✓	✓				
	Driver Safety Awareness				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓			
	First Aid – Basic Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Food Handling Safety			✓	✓				✓	✓	✓					✓		✓				

	<b>Volunteer Role</b>	Administration	Committees	Child Care	Elderly Support	Environ. Field Work	Graffiti Removal	Grounds People	Guides	Hospitality	In-House Services	Justice of the Peace	Library Shelving	Maintenance	Marketing	Retail	Social Support	Special Events	Transport	Tutoring	Youth Mentoring
	Hazardous Chemicals Awareness			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓			
	Infection Control / Sharps Awareness			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓			✓
	Minor Plant Operation					✓	✓	✓	✓					✓				✓	✓		
	PPE Use			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓							
	Venomous Animal Awareness					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓			
	Fire Prevention	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Working Alone Awareness		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓			✓		✓		✓
	Dealing with Aggressive Behaviours	✓								✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓			✓
	Managing Challenging Behaviours			✓	✓						✓						✓				✓

**XV APPENDIX 3 – VOLUNTEER INDUCTION CHECKLIST**

This Checklist will assist in identifying and tracking risk management and training requirements for volunteers

<b>Council Name:</b>			
<b>Name:</b>			
<b>Role title &amp; description:</b>			
<b>Location of position:</b>			
<b>Hours of the position:</b>			
<b>Commencement date:</b>			
<b>Responsible person:</b>			
<b>Under 18?</b>	Y / N	<b>Over 90:</b>	Y / N

	Y	N	N/A	Comments/Action(s) To Be Taken	Date Completed
<b>1. Prerequisites for the Role</b>					
Drivers Licence					
Medical assessment completed?					
Police Check completed and attached?					
Working with Children Check completed and attached?					
Vulnerable Person Check completed and attached?					
Adequate physical requirements to undertake duties? (e.g. Is the role physically demanding? Does it place particular requirements on a person (sitting, typing, walking, lifting, bending etc.)?)					

Prior skills or experience required for the role?					
Certificate or Trade required? (E.g. First Aid)					
<b>2. Equipment Required</b>					
Uniform or Dress code Is this supplied by the Council?					
PPE Required? (e.g. safety glasses, ear muffs, gloves, etc.)					
Other?					
<b>3. Training and Induction</b>					
<i>What specific training is required for the Volunteer to undertake their duties? Refer to the Volunteer Training Matrix for guidance.</i>					
<b>Course</b>	<b>Comments/Action(s) To Be Taken</b>				<b>Date Completed</b>
Council General Induction					
Site-Specific Induction					
<i>Insert other training requirements from the Volunteer Training Matrix:</i>					
•					
•					
•					
•					

**XVI APPENDIX 4 – VOLUNTEER REGISTER TEMPLATE**

<b>Volunteer Register</b>			
<b>Department / Committee:</b>	<b>Volunteer Supervisor:</b>		