

Document Control	
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Function	People and Capability
Responsible Position	Manager, People and Capability
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a commitment to Council employees with paid volunteer leave to help create a stronger more connected community through volunteering activities that benefits the Maranoa Regional Council (**Council**) region.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time employees of Council (**Employees**) and provides those Employees two days (pro-rata) of paid volunteer leave each year. The policy does not apply to casual staff, volunteers or agency (temp) staff.

3. Statement

This policy aims to strengthen the Council region by encouraging Employees to utilise paid volunteering leave days to help support the local communities and foster social cohesion.

3.1 Policy Outline

At the beginning of each calendar year, Council will provide Employees with two paid Volunteering Days Off (**VDOs**) for the sole purpose of volunteering their time to eligible organisations/activities *that directly benefits the Council region* (outlined below).

Pro-rata rounding allocation of VDOs are apportioned by the People and Capability Manager.

Employees are encouraged to contribute and utilise allocated VDOs. However, there is no obligation on employees to volunteer – it is a personal choice.

Eligible organisations/activities for volunteering include, but are not limited to:

- Registered non-for-profit organisations

- Registered charitable groups
- Educational institutions
- Public hospitals
- Cultural groups
- Sporting clubs *including travelling outside the region (if benefiting Maranoa region)*
- Children and youth activities
- Animal welfare
- Environmental groups
- Community welfare
- Community clean-up

VDOs will not be approved for:

- Political campaigning or industrial action
- Activities that conflict with Council's Code of Conduct or may bring Council into disrepute
- Paid work (i.e. secondary employment) or that financially benefits an Employee in any other way
- For-profit organisations

Other volunteering activities may be approved if the volunteering:

- (a) Is for the public benefit/common good of Council region
- (b) Is in a nominated volunteer position
- (c) Does not conflict with an Employee's employment duties and obligations in their role at Council

3.2 Application and Approvals

To request VDOs, Employees must complete the leave form and specify the organisation and the Employee's intended involvement as a volunteer. *Hours can be taken in units of one (1) hour.* Employees must request VDOs by providing Council with at least 2 weeks' notice and must submit leave requests on the relevant leave form.

VDOs must be taken for activities that occur on a workday and at a time as agreed between the Employee and Council.

VDOs are not automatically approved and are subject to Council's operational requirements. Council may decline requests for VDOs if the requested date or time conflicts with specific organisational demand, or if the volunteering activity is not eligible.

If Employees are unclear as to whether a volunteering opportunity qualifies for a VDO, they should enquire with the People and Capability team.

3.3 Employee responsibilities

Throughout the duration of the volunteering assignments, Employees must follow the safety protocols of the volunteer organisation. Employees will have health and safety obligations when working with the volunteer organisation, in their capacity as volunteers under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Qld). Employees must not engage in high-risk work without appropriate supervision, qualifications and credentials.

3.4 Unused Volunteering Days Off (VDOs)

VDOs are not cumulative and all untaken VDOs will be cleared at the end of the Christmas/New Year close down period. VDOs cannot be cashed out or paid out on termination of employment.

Definitions

Council	Refers to the Maranoa Regional Council, including all departments, business units, and administrative functions.
Employee	Any person employed by Council on a full-time or part-time basis. For the purposes of this policy, “employee” does not include casual employees, agency (temporary) staff, contractors, or volunteers.
Volunteering / Volunteer Activity	A non-paid activity undertaken for the benefit of the community or an eligible organisation, where the employee does not receive financial gain.

4. Policies and Legislation

Council Code of Conduct
Work Health and Safety Act 2011