

Volunteer Recognition Guide

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Volunteer Recognition Scheme Guide is to identify mechanisms for the provision of recognition to Council's volunteers. Delivery of a consistent, organisation-wide approach demonstrates Council's commitment to its volunteers.

The Volunteer Recognition Policy and Guide are drawn from Council's Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028, C1.5 support volunteers to deliver appropriate community services, with the purpose of enriching the experience of Council's volunteers.

The purpose of the Volunteer Recognition Scheme is to:

- ensure Council volunteers have avenues through which to be recognised
- to ensure Council staff who manage volunteers are aware of these mechanisms and processes
- provide equitable access and delivery of volunteer recognition opportunities across whole of Council
- improve volunteer support and satisfaction.

2. Background

Council currently has 700 volunteers who are the lifeblood of our local area, as they donate their time and energy to a range of activities that benefit the whole community. Council volunteers are people who help maintain our parks, reserves and cemeteries, manage our community halls, work in our libraries, Visitor Information Centre and the Ngioka Centre. There are also volunteers who participate in our Sports Councils and advisory groups. This Guide should be read in conjunction with Council's Volunteer Recognition Policy.

3. Aim

The aim of volunteer reward and recognition is to:

- improve volunteer motivation and satisfaction
- increase volunteer recruitment and retention
- raise the profile of volunteers within Council
- promote the importance of volunteering to the wider community.

4. Provision of Volunteer Recognition

Mechanisms for volunteer recognition may include:

Email and verbal recognition

Volunteers will often say they do not want recognition however, a quick spoken word or short email is a simple and powerful way to acknowledge the value of a volunteer's contribution, and will encourage them to continue to volunteering.

Thank You Card

Corporate Thank You cards for use by Council staff and/or committee coordinators to recognise a volunteer, committee or group for a 'job well done' or give thanks for their contribution. Cards are not linked to a voucher or monetary reward and do not have to be signed off by a Council Manager.

Council Managers should utilise Thank You cards as needed for their volunteers, and notify the Volunteers Coordinator when such recognition is given so it can be recorded in the Committees and Volunteers Register. Committee and group coordinators can contact the Volunteers Coordinator and request Thank You cards.

Letters and Certificates of Recognition

For use by Council staff who manage volunteers to recognise significant contributions made by a volunteer, committee or group, as well as projects or activities worthy of special mention. Volunteers, committees, groups or projects may be identified by staff, committees or other volunteers.

Letters are to be prepared by relevant staff and sent to the General Manager's Office for Mayoral letterhead and signature. Staff are also responsible for preparing certificates in line with Council's Style Guide, however some certificate templates are available. Letters and certificates should be presented to recipients in an appropriate setting, with the Volunteers Coordinator notified so the recognition can be recorded in the Committees and Volunteers Register.

Volunteers may use the Nomination Form to request letters and certificates of recognition for others.

Media Promotion

Print and social media advertising and promotion of volunteers, committees, groups and their activities by staff. Media promotion is initiated by the relevant Council Service Manager and the financial costs being covered by their budget.

Recognition of Years of Service

Recognition of Years of Service is available for a person who has been a Registered and active Council Volunteer continuously for at least 5 years and their contribution demonstrates the benefits of long-term partnerships between Council and volunteers.

Volunteers may receive a token gift from Council in recognition of their years of volunteering service and could include items such as a water bottle or coffee cup, engraved pen, lunch voucher, bunch of flowers, book or gift card.

Gifts to volunteers are to be guided by the following categories and amounts:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • 5 Years Volunteering Service | thank you card, letter or certificate |
| • 10 Years Volunteering Service | \$50 |
| • 15 Years Volunteering Service | \$75 |
| • 20 Years Volunteering Service | \$150 |
| • 25 Years Volunteering Service | \$200 |

Council's Volunteers Coordinator will undertake a yearly review of the Committees and Volunteers Register to identify volunteers who have met the above years of service categories and will notify the relevant staff and/or committee coordinator.

Staff who manage volunteers that reach 5 years of service are responsible for delivering the non-monetary card, letter or certificate to the volunteer. For volunteers who reach 10 years of service and above, a Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form is to be completed by the appropriate Council Service Manager, or committee coordinator, and sent to the Volunteers Coordinator for review.

The environment in which these awards should be presented includes those at which both staff and volunteers are present, such as the thank you function, a morning tea or meeting.

Recognition of Retirement

To recognise the achievements of a long term Council Volunteer (in excess of 5 years continuous service) who 'retires' from volunteering with Council, AND who has made valuable, on-going contributions to Council and the community. 'Retirement' may include situations where a volunteer can no longer continue with their involvement with Council due to age, health, moving away or other factors.

Identification of a retiring volunteer worthy of special recognition is the responsibility of the relevant Council Service Manager and/or committee coordinator. A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form is to be completed and forwarded to the Volunteers Coordinator for review.

The volunteer should be presented with a token gift in line with the Years of Service recognition outlined above. The gift should be chosen by the Council Service Manager and presented to the volunteer at an appropriate setting and timeframe.

Condolences

Council Service Managers have discretion to offer condolences to the family if a long term and engaged Council Volunteer passes. The timing and method of condolence will depend on the situation.

National Volunteer Week (May)

Avenues to promote and recognise Council volunteers should be investigated and delivered during National Volunteer Week.

Volunteer Thank You Event

A high quality annual event for our volunteers, Councillors and staff. Generally held towards the end of November, this event is considered one of the most important on Port Stephens Council's calendar. As much as possible, it is important to consider volunteer needs and offer a variety of functions, held at different locations and time of day over the years.

Port Stephens Annual Awards

The Port Stephens Annual Awards are presented on Australia Day each year and provide an opportunity for Council to formally recognise the efforts of exceptional people within our community. Council staff are to be encouraged to consider Council volunteers and the work they do in our community for suitability for this award program, and to write or seek others to write nominations. These awards are a separate, but compatible, to the Volunteer Recognition Scheme. For information visit Council's website.

5. Nomination and Assessment Process

Who can be nominated?

Nominees are limited to Port Stephens Council volunteers, committees and groups, as well as volunteer projects and activities delivered.

Who can nominate?

Nominations can be submitted by volunteers, committees, groups, Councillors and Council staff.

When and how to nominate?

Nominations can be made throughout the year using the Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form and submitted to the Volunteers Coordinator.

How will nominations be assessed?

A panel of relevant Council staff will meet to consider submissions received for the Years of Service (10 years and above) and Retirement (10 years and above) categories. The Port Stephens Annual Awards are a separate process and assessed under those guidelines.

6. Presentation of Recognition and Awards

Nominees will be made aware of their nomination prior to any public announcements being made by Council. Council's Volunteers Coordinator and/or relevant Council Service Manager will work with the Nominator to determine an appropriate method of recognition and event to deliver same.

7. Contact

Volunteers Coordinator, Port Stephens Council.
Email volunteers@portstehens.nsw.gov.au
Phone 4988 0202



Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form

Nominations can be made at any time throughout the year.

NOMINEE (If a group nomination, please list key contact person for the group)

Name			
Committee, Group or Council Service			
Address			
Email address			
Phone number		Mobile number	

NOMINATOR

I / We wish to nominate the above for Volunteer Recognition from Port Stephens Council.

Name			
Committee, Group or Council Service			
Address			
Email address			
Phone number		Mobile number	
Signed			Date:

Is the Nominee aware of this Nomination?

Yes

No



Supporting Information

The following questions can be used as a prompt for providing information about the nominee.

In what part of Council does the nominee volunteer?

How long have they been a Council volunteer?

Why are you nominating this volunteer, committee/group and/or project?

(eg describe outstanding service or contribution given; committee positions held; how Council and/or the community has benefited; significant project delivered; how they have gone above and beyond; excellent teamwork; high standards; personal qualities; and/or what they might feel is their greatest achievements....)

What mechanism of recognition do you feel the nominee would value?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter of Recognition | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition of Retirement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of Recognition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition of Years of Service | |

Any additional information

Return form to Volunteers Coordinator

Email volunteers@portstephens.nsw.gov.au
Phone 4988 0202