



Volunteer Policy



Applicable to:	All Volunteers of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and its agencies
Document owner:	Volunteer Manager
Approval date:	August 2018
Approved by:	Chief Executive Officer
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Related document	Volunteer Induction Handbook Code of Conduct Policy Privacy Policy Grievance Policy Dress Code Policy Record Management policy Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Purpose

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland – Newcastle and its affiliated agencies (Catholic Schools Office, St Nicholas Early Education, CatholicCare, DARA and Parishes) engage volunteers in schools, programs, services and parishes. The diocese is committed to working within the national standards for volunteer involvement principles and Integrity in the Service of the Church.

- ▶ providing volunteers with a volunteer profile
- ▶ providing volunteers with appropriate induction
- ▶ ensuring volunteers' personal information is dealt with in accordance with the principles of the privacy act
- ▶ (where appropriate) providing volunteers with adequate training so that they can fulfil their volunteer role
- ▶ providing ongoing support and supervision
- ▶ providing volunteers with the opportunity to have their grievances and complaints adequately dealt with and by providing them with the opportunity to provide feedback in respect of their volunteer role.

2. Policy Statement

The diocese is committed to offering opportunities for individuals to be engaged and provide services to the community in a volunteer role.

The diocese is committed to supporting volunteers by:

- ▶ endeavouring to provide a healthy and safe work environment
- ▶ providing insurance coverage in respect of volunteering activities
- ▶ familiarising volunteers with this policy and other policies that apply to their volunteering role

3. Definitions and Explanations

Refer to the Volunteer Induction Handbook which sets out a Glossary of Terms.

Members of the diocese and affiliated agency advisory councils and boards are also volunteers.

The Volunteer Manager is a person employed by the diocese to manage the volunteer lifecycle and is the manager responsible for the oversight of all volunteer programs and engagement.

4. Scope

This volunteer policy applies to all volunteers engaged by the diocese including employees of the diocese who undertake volunteer roles.

5. Policy Context

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- a. the Volunteer Induction Handbook;
- b. applicable diocesan policies and procedures.

6. Responsibilities

- ▶ All volunteers are responsible for complying with the volunteer policy.
- ▶ The Volunteer Manager is responsible for providing adequate resources and systems to enable volunteers to be effectively inducted into the organisation.
- ▶ Principals, managers and parish priests are responsible for ensuring all volunteers have completed all relevant prescreening checks and inductions prior to commencing in a volunteer role.
- ▶ Principals, managers and parish priests will support employees working with and providing support to volunteers.

7. Legislative/Professional Guidelines

Volunteering Australia recommends use of the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement as a best-practice guide for volunteer participation, and as a means of conducting volunteer programs.

The National Volunteer Standards are:

- ▶ Leadership and management
- ▶ Commitment to volunteer involvement
- ▶ Volunteer roles
- ▶ Recruitment and selection
- ▶ Support and development
- ▶ Workplace safety and wellbeing
- ▶ Volunteer recognition
- ▶ Quality management and continuous improvement.

8. Volunteer roles

Volunteers will only be recruited for designated volunteer roles.

Volunteer roles for each service or parish will be identified in consultation with the principal, manager or parish priest.

Volunteer roles will be clearly outlined in the volunteer profile.

9. Employees and their family members as volunteers

The diocese accepts employees as volunteers provided that the volunteer service is "not within the course of their employment" i.e. their volunteering activity is outside the scope of their position of employee. This will usually mean that their volunteering activity will not be at the usual place of paid employment and during their usual working hours.

Family members of employees may volunteer for volunteer positions within the diocese providing they are not under the direct supervision of other members of their family or close friends of the family.

10. Volunteer exit

A volunteering arrangement between volunteers and the diocese may be terminated by the volunteer or the diocese at any time. Should a volunteer wish to cease volunteering they are requested to submit a volunteer exit form to the Volunteer Manager.

The diocese may elect to cease the services of any volunteer as a result of any breach of diocesan policy or procedure.

All diocesan property must be returned without delay upon cessation of a volunteer's service.

11. Volunteer records

Volunteer records are stored electronically. Refer to the Records Management Policy.

12. Privacy

Personal information is information or an opinion about an identified individual or an individual who is reasonably identifiable whether information or opinion:

- ▶ is true or not; and
- ▶ is recorded in a material form or not

From time to time the diocese needs to collect personal information concerning volunteers. Volunteer personal information is held in a secure area and is dealt with in accordance with the Privacy Act. Refer to the Privacy Policy.

13. Payment

Volunteers will not be given payments, allowances or benefits in return for their volunteering but may be reimbursed for approved out of pocket expenses. Refer to reimbursement form.

14. Confidentiality

Volunteers are not to directly or indirectly reveal any confidential dealings or affairs of the diocese or the dealings or affairs of any of the people who access the services of the diocese which may come to their knowledge during their period of volunteering.

Volunteers are not to disclose confidential information to any other volunteer or employee not authorised to receive such information. A volunteer's obligations in this regard continues to apply after the cessation of their role without limit as to time.

15. Grievance

A grievance can be about a range of matters including bullying, discrimination, harassment or any matter which makes a person unhappy or angry. The grievance process to be followed is set out in the Grievance Policy.

16. Dress code

Volunteers will need to be appropriately dressed to carry out their volunteer role. Any required dress regulations for specific roles will be explained to the volunteer prior to commencing in their volunteering role. Refer to the Dress Code Policy.

17. Work, Health & Safety

Volunteers will be provided with information, policies and procedures relating to Work Health and Safety (WH&S) and any training they will be required to attend at their initial induction. Information may be provided to the volunteer on:

- ▶ Infection Control
- ▶ Safe food handling
- ▶ Accidents and incidents
- ▶ Hazards
- ▶ Duty of Care
- ▶ Signing in and out of facilities and service buildings.
- ▶ Harassment and Grievance Management

18. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Volunteers will promote and protect the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults with whom they work.

Volunteers will do this by:

- ▶ acting in accordance with Diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures;
- ▶ maintaining a duty of care for all children and vulnerable adults for whom they have responsibility;
- ▶ reporting any concerns that they have for a child or vulnerable adult or the conduct of another worker, to their volunteer supervisor, the Volunteer Manager or to the Office of Safeguarding; and

- ▶ assisting external authorities or the Office of Safeguarding, in conducting inquiries into alleged issues of concern for children and vulnerable adults.

19. Volunteer screening

Volunteers who work in child-related areas are subject to Safeguarding legislation.

Volunteers with direct unsupervised access to children and young people under the age of 18 years of age must apply for a working with children check number. If you are exempt from obtaining a working with children check number a declaration must be completed.

Volunteers must undergo background checks prior to commencing at the diocese.

Screening includes:

- ▶ Reference check
- ▶ National criminal history check
- ▶ Working with children check number or declaration

Volunteers are required to inform the diocese if they are charged with any criminal offence as soon as possible.

National criminal history checks are paid for by the diocese and do not result in the volunteer incurring a cost.

20. Training

During the initial development phase of a volunteer program or volunteer role, the skills and qualifications required for the role are identified in the volunteer profile. Volunteers will need to possess the required skills to undertake a specific volunteer role. The diocese recognises that for certain roles training for volunteers is essential to ensure volunteers have the skills and knowledge to safely undertake their volunteer roles

In some circumstances specialised training may also need to be provided to volunteers participating in specific programs. Any training required to be undertaken by the volunteer will be discussed with the volunteer prior to the volunteer being offered the role.

21. Insurance

Volunteers who provide volunteer services and act within the course and scope of their volunteering role may be covered by insurance.

Volunteers can request information in respect of this insurance coverage. Such a request should be made to the Volunteer Manager.

Volunteers should ensure that they have adequate comprehensive insurance when using their own private vehicles in the course of volunteering.

A volunteer who is involved in an accident or is injured whilst volunteering must complete an incident report form.



Volunteer Policy Declaration



This form is to be completed by all workers of the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Name:	
Department:	
Home Address:	
Date of Birth:	

Declaration

I declare that:

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the Volunteer Policy for workers of the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle;

I am aware of the guidelines contained within this policy document and its implications for my conduct as I carry out my duties as a worker of the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Signed:		Date:	
Witness Name:			
Home Address:			
Witness Signature:		Date:	

Original signed declaration to be returned to Human Resources for placement in personnel file.

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