

POLICY

Policy Name	<i>Volunteer Policy</i>
Policy/File Number	ED.12.012
Review Frequency	Within Three Years
Attachments	<i>nil</i>

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Volunteer Policy is to provide a framework for the recruitment, management and recognition of volunteers involved in the Victor Harbor Horse Tram Authority (VHHTA) services and activities.

2. Scope

The policy applies to all volunteers in Horse Tram activities, programs and services and to those employees who work in Horse Tram activities, programs and services where volunteers are involved, or have management responsibility for those programs.

3. Policy Statement (Summary)

The VHHTA recognises the importance of volunteers and the valuable contribution they make to the community, and to the delivery of the Horse Tram service. The VHHTA is committed to utilising the time, skills, talents and energy of volunteers because it:

- Provides direct links between VHHTA and the community.
- Encourages social interaction.
- Enhances and extends services.
- Encourages an exchange of skills.

4. Legislation and Compliance

- Work Health and Safety Act 2012
- Volunteer Protection Act 2001
- Volunteer Protection Regulations (SA) 2004
- Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016.
- Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017

5. Definitions

Volunteer – for the purposes of this policy a volunteer is an individual who is registered with the VHHTA General Manager to undertake activities that:

- Benefit the Horse Tram, community and the volunteer.
- Complement but do not replace the activities of paid staff.
- Are of the volunteer's own free will.
- Are for no financial reward.

The following persons, for the purpose of this policy, are not considered volunteers:

- People on work placement and work experience programs.
- Students undertaking volunteering as a part of the education curriculum.
- Board Members of the VHHTA (solely by virtue of their role as Board Members).
- Persons working under the order of a court or as a condition of a bond.

Child – means a person under the age of 18.

Criminal History Assessment – involves obtaining information about relevant potential employees, volunteers, contractors or consultants on the basis that the information is deemed relevant to assessing the suitability of a person to work in a particular area. The information gathered may include details concerning previous employment and relevant experience; verification of qualifications and professional registration; criminal history information; reference checks and work history reports.

Mandated Notifier - a mandated notifier is any person directly involved in the delivery of services wholly or partly for children or holds a management position, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services.

Prescribed Position – is a position undertaken by a person that involves or requires one or more prescribed functions as follows:

- Regular contact with vulnerable people or working in close proximity to vulnerable people on a regular basis where that contact or work is not directly supervised at all times; and
- Supervision or management of above positions.

Vulnerable People – people who may be at risk of abuse or exploitation due to their dependency on others. This includes all children, people with a disability, the frail aged and people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

6. Policy Content

6.1 Principles of Volunteering

- Benefits the community and the volunteer.
- Is unpaid.
- Always a matter of choice and not compulsorily undertaken.
- A way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community.
- Promotes human rights and equality.
- Not a substitute, replacement or threat to paid work.
- Addresses cultural, environmental and social needs of the community.
- Respects the rights, dignity and culture of others.

6.2 Responsibilities of Victor Harbor Horse Tram Authority

- Provide a clearly written volunteer position description.
- Provide appropriate orientation and ongoing training.
- Give work that is matched with the volunteer's skills, abilities and availability.

- Decline or withdraw the volunteer from work the VHHTA feels is not suitable for, or is placing excessive demands, on the volunteer.
- Provide ongoing support and direction from appropriate staff.
- Provide appropriate resources to undertake volunteer duties as required.
- Provide a safe work environment.
- Treat volunteers with respect and as valued members of a team.
- Consult with and welcome ideas and suggestions for improvements of the program with which the volunteers are involved.
- Have complaints and grievances heard by an appropriate supervisor.
- Ensure that volunteers are aware of grievance procedures.
- Recognise the contribution of volunteers.
- Provide reimbursement for approved out-of-pocket expenses where applicable.
- Have personal records relating to volunteers handled in a confidential manner.

6.3 Responsibilities of Volunteers

- Fulfil the duties as specified in their position description in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- Make a realistic commitment in terms of involvement and reliability.
- Understand and acknowledge the requirements of VHHTA Code of Conduct and relevant policies and guidelines.
- Participate in appropriate induction and ongoing training as provided.
- Follow all instructions, consistent with the volunteer's role description that may be given by the nominated supervisor.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding the VHHTA business, program information or any other sensitive, private information they come across during their volunteer duties.
- Report any unsafe conditions, potential hazards or accidents to their coordinator.
- Report any injury or damage to themselves or a third party.
- When a matter or situation arises that in the opinion of the volunteer is of serious concern, the matter can be disclosed in confidence under the Whistleblower Protection Policy to either the General Manager of the VHHTA or other party including the Ombudsman, the Minister, the Police or the Auditor-General.

7. Risk Management

The Victor Harbor Horse Tram Authority will identify and assess potential sources of harm and take steps to reduce and manage the risk to the Authority, volunteers and the people who benefit from VHHTA programs and services supported by volunteers.

- The VHHTA will ensure that appropriate insurance cover is provided to protect volunteers, paid staff, the community and organisations against damage, loss and injury.
- The VHHTA will undertake an induction process to provide volunteers with information relevant to performing their role. The induction process will include:

- Corporate and Program Induction – giving an overview of Victor Harbor Horse Tram and covering relevant policies.
 - Volunteer Services Induction – outlining things such as volunteer rights and responsibilities, Victor Harbor Horse Tram Authority responsibilities, Work Health and Safety, insurances, confidentiality, principles of volunteering, training requirements and the Volunteer Protection Act.
 - Role/Site Specific Induction – including roles and tasks, worksite orientation, emergency procedures, site specific training and continuous improvement.
- Section 31 of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 requires that a mandated reporter or notifier must report or notify the Department for Child Protection if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of harm, when the suspicion is formed in the course of their employment (whether paid or voluntary). Volunteers who are *mandated notifiers* i.e. working directly with children, or who have direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of services to children will be required to undergo a *criminal history assessment* and obtain training in mandatory reporting to ensure that they are able to meet their mandatory reporting obligations.
 - Volunteers who are in *prescribed positions* i.e. working with *vulnerable people* or have access to personal records relating to children, will be required to undergo a *criminal history assessment* to determine their suitability for the role and to undertake mandatory training for the role.

The assessment of *criminal history assessments* will be based on principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, documented and consistently applied.

8. Implementation/Delegations

The General Manager of the VHHTA is provided with the delegated authority to implement this Policy.

9. Related Documents

- Volunteer Management in Local Government”, Local Government Association of SA.
- Volunteer Workforce Health and Safety Framework; A Guide for South Australian Local Government”, July 2014.

10. Availability of Policy

This policy is available on Victor Harbor Horse Tram website at www.horsedrawntram.com.au.

Document History

Version	Document	Action	Date
1.0	Approved version	Victor Harbor Horse Tram Authority endorsement VHHTA08	3/12/18
1.1	Approved version	Victor Harbor Horse Tram Authority endorsement VHHTA__	12/09/23