



clarence  
VALLEY COUNCIL



# Volunteer Handbook Clarence Valley

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Your guide to volunteering with Clarence Valley Council

Learn more about volunteering at [www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/volunteer](http://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/volunteer)

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## Acknowledgment of Country

Clarence Valley Council acknowledges the Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work. We honour the First Nations peoples culture and connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

# Introduction

**Clarence Valley Council recognises people volunteer for a variety of reasons. Volunteering is a lifestyle choice and our volunteers are a diverse group of people including parents, retirees, students and community groups.**

Volunteers play a key role in the success of many Council programs, services, facilities and venues, events and projects.

Volunteering benefits communities, the economy, and increases social cohesion.

Research reveals that volunteering also benefits volunteers themselves. It reduces symptoms of depression, improves self-reported health and lowers mortality. Volunteering expands people's social networks, provides opportunities to gain valuable experience, and enables people to develop new skills which can lead to employment.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help guide you in your journey as a volunteer with the Clarence Valley Council.

Volunteers are vital to council services and valued by employees and community members alike. Whether you volunteer for a few hours or many, we thank you for the gift of your time.

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***Almost 4.9 million people in NSW volunteer, contributing more than 1.5 billion hours which is valued at approximately \$127 billion.***

- *State of Volunteering Report, 2020.*



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# The benefits of volunteering

- Personal satisfaction and enhanced well-being.
- A sense of contributing to the local community.
- Skill and knowledge development.
- Work experience.
- Personal growth and development.
- Friendship and fun.
- Help organisations that support your community.



## Clarence Valley Council volunteer opportunities:

If you're interested in volunteering with Clarence Valley Council you can apply by visiting [www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/volunteer](http://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/volunteer)

## Other volunteer opportunities in the community:

- You can find more volunteering opportunities at the NSW Volunteering website, [www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au](http://www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au)
- GoVolunteer, an initiative of Volunteer Australia, makes it easy to find a volunteer role that suits your interests, motivation, availability and location, go to [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au)
- To become a volunteer visitor as part of the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS) go to [www.health.gov.au/acvv](http://www.health.gov.au/acvv)

# How you can volunteer

**Volunteers play a vital role within the Clarence Valley. At Council, we have many ways you can volunteer with us. Below are just a few examples:**

- Assist at one of our libraries or the Clarence Valley Home Library Service.
- Administrative support.
- Assisting at the Grafton Regional Gallery.

**Besides volunteering with us, there are also many community groups in our region that need volunteers. Some examples of opportunities include:**

- Helping with Meals on Wheels service.
- Helping disabled people with various activities.
- Conservation work.
- Helping the Rural Fire Service.
- Working at OP Shops.
- Helping local sports clubs.

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*“I have a tremendous connection to community, I love people and I’m trying to create, along with a lot of other volunteers, the best community that we can”*

- Judy Bradey, 2018 Volunteer of the Year Award, The Centre for Volunteering.

# Volunteer journey

As a Council volunteer, you are part of a community working to realise the Council's vision. You will make a positive difference in the lives of people, you will be supported to enable you to carry out your volunteer activities, and your work will be recognised and appreciated.



## 1. Express Interest

Go to [clarence.nsw.gov.au](http://clarence.nsw.gov.au) 'Volunteer With Us' page



## 2. Connect

A Council officer will contact potential volunteers to arrange an interview



## 3. Attend Interview

This is a great time to ask questions about Council and the volunteer opportunity



## 5. Background Checks

Some volunteer positions will require background checks:

- a. Working With Children Check (WWCC) - Issued by the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) should be submitted prior to engaging in voluntary activities. The check is free for volunteers and can be undertaken via the OCG website [www.ocg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ocg.nsw.gov.au)
- b. National Police Check (NPC) - Council will initiate this process via our preferred service provider.
- c. Details of two referees



## 4. Successful Volunteer Position Filled



## 6. First day of volunteering with Council

- a. Complete volunteer induction
- b. Complete role specific training
- c. Collect Induction pack



## 7. Enjoy volunteering with Clarence Valley Council

# Recognising our volunteers

**Clarence Valley Council acknowledges the contribution our volunteers make to Council services and programs and the community members who use them.**

## Celebrating our volunteers

Each year celebrations are held throughout Australia to recognise volunteers; events such as National Volunteer Week and International Volunteer Day are a chance for Council to celebrate and recognise the contribution of our volunteer workforce.

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## Volunteer awards

Each year volunteer managers, staff and volunteer peers are encouraged to nominate outstanding volunteers for local, state or national volunteer awards, celebrating the efforts of volunteers across various categories.

For more information visit:

- The Centre for Volunteering, [www.volunteering.com.au](http://www.volunteering.com.au)
- Volunteering Australia, [www.volunteeringaustralia.org](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org)

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## Recognition in the workplace

Council acknowledges the impact our volunteers have on our community by providing our volunteers with ongoing and regular support, feedback and acknowledgement so our volunteers feel appreciated.

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*“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.”*

- American author, Elizabeth Andrew.

# About the Clarence

Located in the Northern Rivers region in NSW, the Clarence Valley covers an area of 10,441 square kilometres and has three major centres, Grafton, Maclean and Yamba







Yamba Main Beach. Credit: Destination NSW.

## Our Population

Total population: **54,580**

## Our Area



**3** towns

**60** villages



**2,068**

kilometres of roads



**8** rivers

**36** beaches

**100** kilometres  
of coastline



**2,262**

square kilometres of  
National Parks, State  
Forest & Reserves



**26,069**

dwellings

## Our People



**49** median age

**71.4%** residents aged  
over 18 and eligible to vote

**2.3** people per average  
household (**26,069** dwellings)

Source: id profile, 2021 Census, NIEIR

# About Council

Clarence Valley Council employs more than 450 staff and provides many services to more than 54,000 people across the Clarence Valley.

All our volunteers and employees make a meaningful contribution to our community and assist Council to achieve our goals.

Clarence Valley Council's Community Strategic Plan, **The Clarence 2032** outlines these goals and what the community identified as its priorities and objectives for the next 10 years. The document provides strategic directions across:

- Society
- Infrastructure
- Economy
- Environment
- Leadership



## Vision, Mission and Values

**As a Council volunteer, you are part of a community working to realise the Council’s vision. You will make a positive difference to the lives of others, you will be supported, and your work will be recognised and appreciated.**

### Our Vision ...

To make the Clarence Valley a community full of opportunity.

### Our Mission ...

To plan and deliver services valued by the community.

### Our Values ...

The acronym ‘**STRIVE**’ describes the values and behaviours which are considered core requirements when we deal with each other and our community.



# Principles of volunteering

## Definition of volunteering:

*Clarence Valley Council defines a volunteer as a person from the community who offers their services to Council without monetary compensation.*

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## As part of our commitment to you Council will provide:

- A safe and healthy workplace.
  - The provision of all necessary safety information, instruction and personal protective clothing and equipment required to perform their role.
  - Clearly defined activities and duty rosters as appropriate.
  - Induction and ongoing supervision and support.
  - Access to policies, procedures and WHS documentation.
  - Sufficient instruction to volunteers to enable them to undertake the activities or provide the services specified in their role to the required standard.
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## Responsibilities

Volunteers and Council have shared responsibilities, these responsibilities are underpinned by our vision, mission and values, as seen on page 11.

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## What we ask of you:

- Comply with Council policies to ensure compliance with WHS requirements.
- Take reasonable care of your health and safety and not put yourself or others at risk.
- Be reliable, dependable, accountable and complete agreed hours and activities.
- Cooperate to enable compliance with all work health and safety requirements.
- Take reasonable care of your health and safety and not put yourself or others at risk.
- Where required, wear appropriate personal protective clothing and/or equipment.
- Report any near misses, accidents or injuries immediately.
- Comply with Council's Code of Conduct and other policies.
- Respect the privacy of staff, clients and other volunteers.
- Inform your supervisor when you will not be available to volunteer.
- Enjoy the journey!

# Volunteering Guidelines

## Age restrictions

The minimum age for volunteering with Council is 18. The maximum age is 90.

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## Insurances

Volunteers are covered by Personal Accident and Corporate Travel insurance for travel to and from the workplace and whilst engaged in volunteering work. Public liability is provided under Council's public liability insurance.

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## Use of personal vehicle

Council does not provide motor vehicle insurance whilst using personal vehicles for work purposes. Volunteers must ensure they maintain a current NSW driver's licence, and their vehicle is registered with Service NSW with appropriate insurance coverage.

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## Dress standard

Volunteers are required to demonstrate a neat and responsible standard of dress. Where a Council identification badge has been issued to a volunteer they are required to wear it while representing Council. Where protective clothing is required, volunteers must comply with Council requirements.

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## Grievance procedure

Volunteers have the right to a fair hearing applying the principles of:

- Confidentiality.
- Fairness (i.e. grievances are resolved without bias).
- Timeliness.
- Freedom from unfair repercussions.
- Aggrieved volunteers are encouraged to explore the problem directly with the person(s) involved; clearly outlining what they feel could be done to alleviate the situation. If this is not an option or does not resolve the situation, they should speak to their People Manager. If the People Manager is part of the grievance, email the People and Culture team at **people@clarence.nsw.gov.au**

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## Volunteer performance

Where a volunteer's performance is below an acceptable standard and/or behaviour is inappropriate the matter will be brought to the volunteer's attention immediately. The principles of procedural fairness will be applied when dealing with the performance of a volunteer. Procedures will be consistent, fair and equitable with the initial aim of encouraging improved performance and/or conduct. Action taken by Council will depend on each situation but may result in the cessation of a volunteer's services.

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## Media comment

Volunteers must not make any comment to the media on behalf of Council. Any requests for a press release or statement must be referred to the People Manager.

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## Withdrawal of volunteer services

A volunteer may withdraw their service with Council by advising their People Manager at any time. An adequate period of notice is requested in order to allow Council to find a replacement. All Council property in their possession should be returned to the People Manager prior to ceasing voluntary work.

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## Termination of a volunteer's services

A People Manager may advise a volunteer at any time that their services are no longer required.



For more details contact your People Manager.

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*Together, through volunteering we're  
changing communities for the better.*

- Volunteering Australia

# Work, Health and Safety

**Clarence Valley Council is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all workers and aims to achieve continued compliance with the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017, approved Codes of Practice and Australian Standards. Under Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation a volunteer falls under the definition of ‘worker’.**

## **Worker responsibilities**

Workers have a shared responsibility for their own safety, that of their co-workers and others at the workplace.

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### **Workers will:**

- Comply with Council’s WHS policies and procedures at all times;
- Wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) identified for tasks;
- Immediately notify supervisors of any hazards, injuries and incidents;
- Assist managers and supervisors in the identification and control of workplace hazards;
- Participate in WHS consultation arrangements; and,
- Participate in any training provided as required by their position.

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## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Personal Protective Equipment refers to clothing, gloves, shoes, face masks and other items utilised to prevent injury, illness or disease. All volunteers must wear PPE specific to activities undertaken and as directed.

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## Incident reporting

Workers are responsible for ensuring all incidents are reported to their supervisor immediately after the incident has occurred. They must also:

- Render any assistance required to ensure the area is made safe, if safe to do so.
- Provide first aid treatment to any injured persons, if safe to do so and worker is First Aid trained.
- Provide a witness statement if required.
- Provide assistance if requested and if it is safe to do so by the WHS unit; Police; Ambulance or the WHS Regulator.
- Complete the appropriate incident report form as soon as able.

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***“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”***

*- Mahatma Gandhi*



**Register your interest to join the Clarence Valley Council  
volunteer community today by visiting:**

**[www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/volunteer](http://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/volunteer)**

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