

Thinking of Being a Bushcare Volunteer?

Fact sheet

Shoalhaven City Council acknowledges the substantial contribution of Bushcare volunteers' efforts to help restore and maintain our city's natural area reserves. These reserves are managed to achieve outcomes such as biodiversity protection, providing for sustainable community use, and the protection of cultural heritage. The Bushcare Program aims to provide a framework for community to actively help care for these reserves.

This fact sheet provides a summary of information for those considering being a Bushcare Volunteer.

Eligibility

The Bushcare/Parkcare Program is open to all residents, ratepayers, and visitors to the Shoalhaven, provided they operate in accordance with Bushcare Policy and Procedures. Volunteers participating in the Shoalhaven Bushcare programs must be over 10 years of age. School groups are eligible.

➤ Working with children

In cases where volunteers will have more than incidental contact with children aged up to 16 years, individuals will be required to complete a Working with Children Check

➤ Pre-existing conditions

Pre-existing conditions that may pose a risk are to be disclosed to Council upon registering and these will be passed on to the volunteer Coordinator of the relevant Group. Volunteers are only to take on tasks that do not pose unacceptable risks based on pre-existing conditions.

➤ Volunteers with carers

Volunteers that have a disability and are supervised by a Carer are welcome to participate, undertaking appropriate tasks. The Carer and where possible, the carer's client, must register and undertake the corporate induction process. Site safety inductions must be completed by both.

Temporary volunteers

Visitors, part-time residents, or event-based participants may volunteer by filling out their details, the date and signing on a Bushcare Site Recording Sheet before they work and provided they:

- Satisfy the age requirements for insurance.
- Are wearing the appropriate clothing.
- Are inducted on-site about the hazards and control measures that must be employed.

Dismissal of volunteers

In instances of misconduct or breaches to the volunteer responsibilities, Council's Chief Executive Officer has the right to dismiss a volunteer. This includes:

- Theft of property or funds.
- Intoxication through alcohol or other substances while volunteering.
- Verbal or physical harassment of any other volunteers, members of the community or Council employees.
- Disclosure of confidential information regarding the Council and/or clients.



- Breaching any other volunteer responsibilities or working contrary to approved works/plans.
- Malicious damage to Council or community property.
- Not working in a safe manner.

Volunteers will be informed of their right of appeal against any dismissal, managed through Council’s standard governance processes.

Safety is everyone’s responsibility

Most important is safety. It is a requirement that Bushcare volunteers exercise a duty of care to themselves, other volunteers, Council staff and the public. Shoalhaven Bushcare Volunteers must work safely, which means:

- Adopting a ‘Safety-First’ approach
- Be inducted and registered as a volunteer with Council
- Help identify hazards and communicate these
- Implementing controls to manage hazards (such as wearing Personal Protective Equipment)
- Notifying Council of any medical conditions that is likely to affect your duties as a Bushcare volunteer (so we can help manage these – not to stop you from volunteering)
- Notify your volunteer Coordinator of any near-miss, accident or injury
- Signing on at each working bee



Training

A variety of training and knowledge-sharing opportunities and materials may be offered and could include formal courses. Courses, workshops, and other educational opportunities will focus on local issues whilst offering the participants opportunities to develop a diverse range of relevant skills and knowledge.

Initially, Bushcare volunteers are required to complete Council’s Volunteer Health, Safety and Behaviour Induction. This can be completed on-line ([Apply to be a volunteer](#)).

Informal training in bush regeneration is provided on site, through peer knowledge and from Council’s Bushcare Field Officers. Council will also provide for formal accredited training for volunteers where needed and where resources allow.

Volunteer Group Coordinators

Bushcare Groups each have a Volunteer Coordinator, who provides the main contact for Council and helps direct the day-to day working of the group. Bushcare Volunteers are encouraged to consider becoming a Volunteer Bushcare Group Coordinator or Deputy Bushcare Group Coordinator. This can help to enhance your leadership, teamwork and group coordination skills.

Change of circumstances?

If for any reason you have a change in your details or circumstances, if you are unable to continue to be a Bushcare volunteer, please contact your volunteer Bushcare Group Coordinator or by emailing Council at Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au.

More info:

For more information about your role and responsibilities as a Bushcare volunteer, visit Shoalhaven City Council’s Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures document [here](#).

Contact Us

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