



**VOLUNTEERING
POLICY
2026/2027**

Version 3.0

March 2026

1. PURPOSE

RAT FM is a volunteer-driven community radio station operated by PHAZE Broadcasters Inc. Volunteers are the foundation of the station and play a critical role in delivering high-quality broadcasting, community engagement, technical support, administration, events and governance.

This policy establishes the principles for recruiting, managing, supporting and recognising volunteers while ensuring RAT FM maintains compliance with all applicable legislation, broadcasting regulations and community broadcasting standards.

This policy aims to:

- create a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment;
- provide volunteers with clear expectations;
- ensure fairness and transparency;
- support professional development;
- maintain compliance with applicable legislation;
- protect the reputation of RAT FM.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to every volunteer engaged by RAT FM, including but not limited to:

- Presenters
- Producers
- News Readers
- Panel Operators
- Outside Broadcast Crew
- Technical Volunteers
- IT Volunteers
- Administration Volunteers
- Social Media Volunteers
- Marketing Volunteers
- Community Engagement Volunteers
- Event Volunteers
- Committee Members
- Board Members

Volunteers may participate on a casual, temporary, project or ongoing basis.

Author:	Matthew Berry	Reviewed By:	Matthew Berry
Revised Date:	March 2026	Next Revision Date:	January 2027
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3. OUR VOLUNTEER PHILOSOPHY

RAT FM believes that volunteers should be:

- respected
- valued
- supported
- included
- treated fairly
- provided with opportunities to develop skills
- recognised for their contribution

Volunteering at RAT FM is undertaken freely without expectation of financial reward.

4. COMMUNITY BROADCASTING VALUES

All volunteers are expected to support the values of community broadcasting by:

- serving the Ballarat community;
- encouraging diversity and inclusion;
- providing opportunities for community participation;
- supporting local music, artists and organisations;
- promoting respectful discussion;
- acting honestly and ethically;
- maintaining political and commercial independence;
- broadcasting in the public interest.

5. COMPLIANCE

All volunteers must comply with:

- Broadcasting Services Act 1992
- Privacy Act 1988
- Copyright Act 1968
- Occupational Health and Safety legislation
- Child Safe Standards (where applicable)
- Equal Opportunity legislation
- RAT FM Constitution
- RAT FM Policies
- RAT FM By-Laws
- Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice
- ACMA licence conditions (when licensed)
- Any directions issued by station management.

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action

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6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

RAT FM is committed to equal opportunity.

No volunteer will be discriminated against on the basis of:

- age
- race
- ethnicity
- gender
- gender identity
- disability
- sexual orientation
- religion
- political belief
- marital status
- pregnancy
- family responsibilities
- cultural background

All volunteers deserve respect and dignity.

7. RECRUITMENT

Volunteer recruitment shall be fair, transparent and based on merit.

The process generally includes:

- Volunteer application
- Interview
- Reference checks (where appropriate)
- Police Check (where required)
- Working With Children Check (where required)
- Acceptance of station policies
- Induction

Acceptance as a volunteer is at the discretion of RAT FM.

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8. INDUCTION

Before commencing duties volunteers will receive an induction covering:

- Station history
- Community broadcasting principles
- Station policies
- Health and Safety
- Emergency procedures
- Broadcasting standards
- Studio procedures
- Code of Conduct
- Privacy obligations
- Technical systems
- Programming expectations

Additional training may be required before undertaking specialist roles.

9. TRAINING

RAT FM is committed to providing ongoing training.

Training may include:

- Radio presentation
- Interview techniques
- Panel operation
- Audio production
- News writing
- Outside broadcasting
- Podcast production
- Technical operations
- Social media
- IT systems
- Governance
- Leadership

Volunteers may be required to successfully complete competency assessments before broadcasting independently.

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10. VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

All volunteers are expected to:

- act honestly and ethically;
- represent RAT FM professionally;
- comply with station policies;
- follow lawful directions;
- arrive on time;
- notify supervisors if unable to attend;
- treat others respectfully;
- maintain confidentiality;
- protect station property;
- report hazards;
- use equipment responsibly;
- maintain professional standards both on-air and off-air.

11. BROADCASTER RESPONSIBILITIES

Presenters and production volunteers must:

- comply with broadcasting laws;
- follow station programming policies;
- avoid defamatory material;
- avoid offensive or unlawful content;
- correctly identify sponsorship announcements;
- respect copyright;
- maintain accurate program logs where required;
- operate equipment safely;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- act in accordance with RAT FM editorial policies

12. SOCIAL MEDIA

Volunteers using social media on behalf of RAT FM must:

- be authorised;
- publish accurate information;
- remain respectful;
- avoid political bias unless part of approved programming;
- avoid abusive language;
- protect confidential information;
- immediately report security concerns.

Personal social media must not imply official RAT FM positions without approval.

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13. CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteers may have access to confidential information including:

- membership records;
- volunteer records;
- sponsorship information;
- financial information;
- passwords;
- technical documentation;
- programming information.

Such information must not be disclosed without authorisation.

Confidentiality continues after volunteering ends.

14. PRIVACY

RAT FM complies with the Privacy Act.

Volunteer information will be collected only where necessary.

- Personal information will:
- be stored securely;
- only be accessible by authorised personnel;
- not be disclosed without consent unless required by law.

Volunteers may request access to their personal information.

15. WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

RAT FM is committed to providing a safe workplace.

Volunteers must:

- follow safety procedures;
- report hazards immediately;
- use equipment safely;
- wear required PPE where necessary;
- report injuries;
- participate in emergency procedures.

Volunteers must not work while impaired by alcohol or illegal drugs.

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16. STATION PROPERTY

Volunteers are responsible for protecting station assets including:

- studios
- microphones
- computers
- broadcast equipment
- vehicles
- outside broadcast equipment
- portable recording equipment
- keys
- access cards
- passwords

Station property remains the property of RAT FM.

17. USE OF IT SYSTEMS

Volunteers must:

- use station systems responsibly;
- protect passwords;
- not install unauthorised software;
- not download illegal content;
- comply with the Information Technology Policy;
- report cybersecurity incidents immediately.

18. ATTENDANCE

Reliable attendance is essential.

Volunteers unable to attend rostered shifts should notify their supervisor as early as possible.

Repeated unexplained absences may result in removal from rosters

19. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Where concerns arise, RAT FM will seek to resolve issues through:

- discussion;
- mentoring;
- additional training;
- written feedback;
- formal performance management where necessary.

The objective is improvement rather than punishment wherever possible.

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20. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Disciplinary action may occur where volunteers:

- breach station policies;
- repeatedly fail to perform duties;
- engage in harassment;
- discriminate against others;
- misuse station property;
- broadcast inappropriate material;
- breach confidentiality;
- bring RAT FM into disrepute;
- commit unlawful acts.

Actions may include:

- counselling;
- additional training;
- suspension;
- removal from duties;
- termination of volunteering.

21. INSURANCE

Approved volunteers are covered under RAT FM's insurance arrangements while undertaking authorised volunteer activities.

Activities outside authorised duties may not be covered.

22. ENDING VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers may resign at any time.

Reasonable notice is appreciated.

RAT FM may end a volunteer engagement where:

- operational requirements change;
- misconduct occurs;
- policies are repeatedly breached;
- trust has broken down;
- safety concerns exist.

Where practical, volunteers will be given an opportunity to respond before any decision is made.

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23. VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

RAT FM values every volunteer.

Recognition may include:

- certificates;
- references;
- volunteer awards;
- appreciation events;
- training opportunities;
- public acknowledgement;
- long service recognition.

24. COMPLAINTS

Volunteers who experience concerns should raise them through:

- Their immediate supervisor.
- The Station Manager.
- The Board of Directors (where appropriate).

Complaints will be handled confidentially, fairly and promptly in accordance with the station's Grievance Policy.

25. REPORTING NON-COMPLIANCE

Volunteers are encouraged to report:

- breaches of broadcasting standards;
- safety concerns;
- unlawful activity;
- harassment;
- discrimination;
- conflicts of interest;
- financial misconduct;
- inappropriate behaviour.

Reports may be made without fear of retaliation.

26. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier where:

- legislation changes;
- ACMA requirements change;
- Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice are updated;
- operational needs require amendments.

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