

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SERVICE PROCEDURE

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Responsible service: Governance & Civic Services

Contact position: Manager Governance & Civic Services

Procedure objective

Blue Mountains City Council undertakes a number of processes to acknowledge individuals' outstanding service to the city. These include recognising an individual's outstanding service through the following forms of acknowledgement:

- a) Council's Freecitizen of the City Award – recognition of an individual's outstanding achievements and dedicated service to the community during their personal life or professional career.
- b) Death of a dignitary acknowledgement – acknowledgement of services to the city by a dignitary of the Council or city upon their death.

Scope

This procedure provides a framework for councillors and Council officers when considering nominations for, selecting or conferring the Freecitizen of the City Award and provides guidance on appropriate forms of acknowledgement for dignitaries upon their death.

Roles and responsibilities

Positions	Responsibilities
Mayor	Acknowledge dignitaries and confer awards on behalf of the Council.
Meeting & Councillor Support Officer	Organise wreath-laying ceremonies for attendance by councillors, Council officers and family members of a deceased dignitary. Manage correspondence between the community, family members of a deceased dignitary, and councillors for mayoral minutes and addresses.
selection panel	A panel comprised of the Mayor and two councillors assigned by the CEO to determine, accept and refer Freecitizen of the City Award nominations.

Definitions

Term	Definition
the city	In the context of this policy, 'city' refers to the Blue Mountains local government area and its community.
dignitary	<p>In this policy, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serving federal or state members of parliament, • serving or former councillors, • a Freecitizen of the City, • a serving or former Chief Executive Officer or general manager, and • a local dignitary as determined by the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer. <p>For the purposes of this policy, a dignitary must have lived in or had a significant connection to the Blue Mountains.</p>
Freecitizen of the City	A Blue Mountains resident (excluding a current or former elected representative or Council officer) who has made an outstanding service contribution to the Blue Mountains community.

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1. Freecitizen of the City Award

This award can occur only via a nomination process. It is awarded after an internal assessment has been completed against the selection criteria detailed in this procedure.

1.1 Nomination requirements

Candidates for the Freecitizen of the City Award must be nominated via the Freecitizen of the City Award nomination form, which can be accessed via the Blue Mountains City Council website.

Nomination requires submission of details pertaining to the nominee's community service, their personal details (including evidence that they are a resident of the Blue Mountains local government area), their acceptance for nomination, and at least three referees.

Acceptance of nomination is required because the nominee's personal details included in the application will be made public. All nominations are confidential until the selection panel has agreed to confer a Freecitizen of the City Award.

Nomination forms must be accompanied by supporting documentation including certificates of appreciation or other awards to substantiate that the nominated individual has merit for consideration and satisfies the selection criteria. All accompanying documents should be photocopies and must be certified by a Justice of the Peace.

Any individual or organisation can nominate a candidate for consideration at any time. Nominations can be submitted anonymously.

It must be noted that a candidate cannot receive the award as a gift or by purchase. The award will not confer any special privileges, undue benefits, rights or exemptions from duties or obligations to Council or under law.

All nominations must be submitted in hard copy, marked 'Private and Confidential – Freecitizen of the City Awards' and addressed to the Mayor. Nominations can be hand-delivered to the Council offices or sent by post to Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba NSW 2780.

1.2 Selection criteria

Nominees must meet the following selection criteria:

- a) Socio-economic profile: The nominee is a prominent resident of the Blue Mountains local government area who has a prolonged history of providing dedicated and outstanding service to the community. This service history must be extraordinary, and the nominee must have been a resident of the Blue Mountains region during the provision of their services.
- b) Personal profile: The nominee must have exhibited persistently high moral and ethical behaviours for the benefit of the community as demonstrated by their personal and professional service history.
- c) Service profile: The nominee must have provided a significant and long-term contribution to the wellbeing and amenity of residents within the Blue Mountains community. Further to this consideration, they must have provided support for residents through volunteered time and activities and/or in their capacity as a business person.

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- d) Outcomes profile: It can be demonstrated that the nominee's endeavours have been of benefit to the city and the community as a matter of public record.

Current and past elected Council representatives and Council officers are excluded from receiving the Freecitizen of the City Award.

The selection panel that determines nominations as per the above criteria is comprised of the Mayor and two councillors (selected by the Chief Executive Officer). Nominations cannot be assessed during a caretaker period.

The assessment panel will treat all submissions as confidential and cannot disclose details of the application or outcome outside of formal processes. The panel will assess the eligibility of the nominated person and the extent to which he or she meets the selection criteria and make a recommendation for a report to Council. To be successful, the nomination must be carried by an absolute majority vote.

A Freecitizen may withdraw from the application process or decline an offer of the title without having to provide any justification for doing so.

1.3 Referring and conferring the award

Any nomination accepted by the selection panel will be referred to an ordinary meeting of Council in the form of a mayoral minute recommending that the Council confer the award on the nominee.

A Freecitizen of the City Award may be conferred at a relevant civic event (e.g. a citizenship ceremony), an ordinary meeting of Council, or as part of a small mayoral reception, as determined by Council resolution.

Once awarded, the Freecitizen of the City will have their name added to the Freecitizen of the City Blue Mountains honour board in the Council chambers.

All Freecitizens of the City will be invited to relevant civic events and functions.

A Freecitizen may renounce the title at any time and without having to provide any justification for doing so by written notification to the Council.

2. Death of a dignitary

Upon the death of a dignitary of the Council or city, Council has a number of tributes and formalities that can be undertaken to pay respect and acknowledge the service that the dignitary gave to the Blue Mountains local government area and its residents.

A dignitary can include the following:

- serving federal or state members of parliament,
- serving or former councillors,
- a Freecitizen of the City,
- a serving or former chief executive officer or general manager, and
- a local dignitary as determined by the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

2.1 Tributes and formality guidelines

On the passing of any dignitary, Council's flags will be flown at half-mast in accordance with Council's *Flag Raising Procedure*.

The table below provides additional guidelines for councillors and Council officers to appropriately acknowledge the services of a dignitary upon their death.

Dignitary	Tributes and formalities			
	Donation (in lieu of flowers or wreath)	Expressions of sympathy: Letter or card	Mayoral minute (address in the Council meeting)	Flowers or wreath (in Lieu of donation)
Serving state or federal MP	✓	✓		✓
Serving councillor	✓	✓	✓	✓
Former councillor	✓	✓		✓
Freecitizen of the City	✓	✓		✓
Serving chief executive officer or general manager	✓	✓	✓	✓
Former chief executive officer or general manager	✓	✓		✓
Local Aboriginal Elders	✓	✓		✓
Other local dignitary	As determined by the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer			

2.1.1 Donations

Council may donate wreaths to a dignitary's funeral or memorial service, or it may instead donate to registered not-for-profit organisations in memory or on behalf of the dignitary at the request of the deceased's family.

If a wreath is appropriate, Council will deliver the wreath to the funeral home with a card and an accompanying note. All cards and notes are to be signed by the Mayor on behalf of the Council.

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There may be instances where a wreath-laying ceremony will be requested by the deceased's family. On these occasions, arrangements will be made between the Meeting & Councillor Support Officer and the family. The Meeting & Councillor Support Officer will distribute directives to any elected representatives and Council officers regarding attendance and ceremony details to be undertaken in order to represent the Council accordingly.

2.1.2 Expression of sympathy

A letter and/or card from the Mayor on behalf of the Council can be sent to the deceased's family and should be sent separately to a wreath.

2.1.3 Mayoral minutes and addresses by councillors

Mayoral minutes and addresses by councillors at Council meetings can be made to acknowledge the service of a deceased dignitary.

3. Acknowledgement of significant life events of Blue Mountains residents

There are other occasions when the Council (more specifically, the Office of the Mayor) may deliver certificates and/or flowers to acknowledge significant life events. These can include the following:

- Significant birthdays, being 90, 100 and 105 years, then every year thereafter. Recipients celebrating these birthdays will receive a framed congratulatory certificate from the Mayor.
- Significant wedding anniversaries, including 45, 50, 55, 60, 65 and 70 years of marriage. Recipients celebrating these events will receive a framed congratulatory certificate from the Mayor.
- A serving councillor, serving Chief Executive Officer or serving senior staff member will receive flowers on behalf of the Council on the birth or adoption of a child.
- A serving councillor, serving Chief Executive Officer or serving senior staff member will receive flowers on behalf of the Council on the death of an immediate family member.
- On the death of a serving staff member, the staff member's family will be sent flowers from the Council.
- The Mayor or the Chief Executive Officer may determine that other miscellaneous life events deserve acknowledgement.

Nominations for recognition of significant life events (other than deaths) as detailed here should be submitted at least two weeks before the day. All nominations must be addressed to the Mayor via email to council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au, delivered in person to the Council offices, or sent by post to Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba NSW 2780.

Council will not issue certificates annually or outside of the nominated milestones. Nominators should notify Council as soon as possible if circumstances change following the submission of a request.

Related documents

This document should be read in conjunction with:

Legislation

- *Flags Act 1953 (Cth)*
- *Australian National Flag Protocols*

Other documentation

- *Blue Mountains City Council's Freecitizen of the City Award Nomination Form*
- *Blue Mountains City Council's Flag Raising Procedure*