

Citizenship Ceremonies Policy

Keywords: Naturalisation, Citizenship

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| Corporate Plan: | |
| Classification: | <i>Executive Services – Public Relations – Citizenship Ceremonies</i> |
| First Issued/Approved: | <i>23 January 2001</i> |
| Review Frequency: | <i>Good Governance Practice: Annually</i> |
| Last Reviewed: | <i>July 2023</i> |
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| Responsible Officer(s): | <i>Chief Executive Officer</i> |
| Council File Reference: | <i>COUNCIL POLICIES (P), Citizenship (P)</i> |
| Applicable Legislation: | <p><i>Pursuant to Part 3 – Role of Members as defined in the Local Government Act 1999 the following applies:</i></p> <p><i>58 – Specific roles of principal member</i></p> <p><i>(1) The role of the principal member of a council is-</i></p> <p><i>(e) to carry out the civic and ceremonial duties of the office of principal member;</i></p> <p><i>Australian Citizenship (LIN 19/066: Persons Who May Receive a Pledge of Commitment) Instrument 2019</i></p> |
| Relevant Policies: | <i>Code of Conduct Elected Members & Committee Members, Australian Citizenship Regulation 2016</i> |
| Related Procedures: | <i>Ceremonies to be carried out in accordance with Department of Home Affairs procedures and the “Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code” (2019).</i> |
| Delegations: | <i>Chief Executive Officer</i> |

1. Purpose

The Citizenship Ceremony Policy has been developed in accordance with the intent and requirements of Department of Home Affairs, with reference to the “Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code”.

The policy provides a basis for informing the community of the processes of conferring Australian Citizenship, in particular the role played by Council.

Australian citizenship is an important common bond for all Australians (whether Australians by birth or by choice) and lies at the heart of a unified, cohesive and inclusive Australia. It is a unique symbol of formal identification with Australia, acknowledging responsibilities and conferring substantive privileges which allow people to participate fully in the community.

2. Definitions

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| Council | Berri Barmera Council |
| Presiding Officer | a person who has been authorised in writing by the Australian Government Minister responsible for citizenship matters to confer Australian citizenship. In the case of local government councils, from within the council the holder of the office of Mayor, Deputy Mayor & Chief Executive Officer |
| Minister | the Australian Government minister responsible for citizenship matters |
| Pledge | statement of commitment to Australia including the acceptance of responsibilities and privileges of citizenship |
| Candidate | person who has their Australian Citizenship application approved by the Department of Home Affairs and have been cleared for attendance at a conferral ceremony and resides in the Berri Barmera Council region |
| Private ceremonies | a ceremony for an individual or small group |

3. Principles

To outline the principles and procedures that the Berri Barmera Council will follow to carry out the requirements of the Department of Home Affairs in its role of conferring Australian Citizenship.

4. Policy Statement

Framework for Policy

4.2. Citizenship Ceremonies Procedures

- Residents desiring to become Australian Citizens must make their application through the Department of Home Affairs. Due to the Australian Citizenship test requirements, Council plays no part in the approval processes.
- After candidate's lodge applications with the Department, and approval is granted, Council is provided with a monthly listing naming persons who have been approved to receive Australian Citizenship status.
- The final step in the acquisition of Australian citizenship by grant is the making of the Australian Citizenship Pledge at a citizenship ceremony, conducted by Council. In this way, candidates are conferred the legal status of Australian citizen. (The Citizenship Ceremony is the only part in the entire process in which Council plays a part).
- Councils are required to hold a ceremony on 26 January as part of their Australia Day celebrations, unless less than 20 people were conferred citizenship by in the previous year. It is also an expectation that citizenship ceremonies are to be scheduled on or around other days of significance, for example Australian Citizenship Day (17 September). Ceremonies not on these dates may be scheduled by request, in liaison with the Council and Department of Home Affairs. The majority of citizenship ceremonies are public occasions and conferees are encouraged to participate in a public citizenship ceremony wherever possible. A minimum of two weeks' notice is required to enable Certificates to be obtained from the Department of Home Affairs.

- The ceremony is an important event where conferees make a commitment to Australia. The attire of attendees and their guests should reflect the significance of the occasion. As a minimum smart casual clothing or National or cultural dress is appropriate.
- Upon receiving notification that a resident has been granted Citizenship, the information is kept on record until the date of the next Ceremony (Australia Day), unless requested otherwise.
- Local Government representatives who are authorised to conduct Citizenship Ceremonies are per the Australian Citizenship (LIN 19/066: Persons Who May Receive a Pledge of Commitment) Instrument 2019 – Schedule 1, currently the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CEO.
- Elected Members are to be advised of and invited to Ceremonies proposed to be undertaken.

5. Confidentiality

Any information provided will be treated as strictly confidential. Information provided to the Council's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will be securely retained within Council's records.

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