



Policy

12. REFERENCES POLICY

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Strategic Outcome:	Good government
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Date for Review:	18/09/2016
Responsible Officer:	Director Corporate Services

1. POLICY STATEMENT

It is important that the Council and Council officers provide clear and factual information when providing references or acting as referees for current and former employees of Berrigan Shire Council.

It is also important that the privacy of personal information regarding current and former employees is protected in line with legislation, the Privacy Code of Practice for Local Government and the Council's Privacy Management Plan.

2. PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance to Council officers when providing references for current and former Council employees.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Councillors, Council staff and other Council officials.

4. OBJECTIVE

This policy is developed to assist the Council with Delivery Plan Objective 2.2.2.7:

Coordinate the delivery and management of Shire records and communications

5. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, a **reference** is a statement:



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- a) by the Council, or a Council officer,
- b) to a potential employer of a person who is a current or former employee of the Council,
- c) that relates to the employment of that person at the Council.

A reference may be written or verbal.

6. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 References from the Council

6.1.1 Written references

The Council may provide a written reference for a current or former employee, on the request of that employee.

Written references provided by the Council will be produced by authorised officers on Council letterhead stationery and signed by the General Manager. At a minimum, the reference will indicate the employee's length of service and position(s) held in the organisation. Further information about the employee may be included in the reference with the express consent of the employee.

6.1.2 Verbal references

Where the Council is requested by a potential employer, it may verify that a current or former employee works or has worked for the Council, the duration of that work, and the position occupied during that time.

Council officers providing a verbal reference will not give an opinion as to the suitability of a current or former employee for a particular position with any potential employer without the express and specific consent of that employee.

Council officers should ensure verbal responses made as a referee on behalf of the Council are succinct, businesslike and relevant to the position in question.

6.2 References from an individual Council officer

Staff may request a reference from an individual Council officer.

These references will:



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1. not be provided on Council letterhead stationery.
2. clearly indicate that content of the reference contains the Council Officer's personal opinions and comments and not that of the organisation.

7. RELATED POLICIES OR STRATEGIES

7.1 Legislation

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
- *Defamation Act 2005*
- Privacy Code of Practice for Local Government

7.2 Council policies and guidelines

- Code of Conduct
- Privacy Management Plan