

## Library Volunteer Policy

Reference:       Adopted by the Library Board  
                  August 28, 2012  
                  Revised and adopted by the Library Board  
                  Revised

**Definition of a volunteer:** A volunteer is one who performs a service of his or her own free will under the supervision of library staff; who contributes time, energy and talents directly for the Cloquet Public Library and is not paid by library or City of Cloquet funds. All volunteers must be accepted and enrolled by the library prior to performance of assigned tasks.

Types of volunteers:

1. **Volunteers** are individuals, 14 years of age or older, who contribute time and talent directly or on behalf of the library and are not paid by library funds.
2. **Regular-service volunteers** are persons or groups engaged in specific voluntary service activities on an ongoing or continual basis.
3. **Occasional volunteers** are persons or groups who offer to provide a one-time or periodic voluntary service.
4. **Community service volunteers** are persons who are required by their school, work place, or by court order to complete a specific number of hours of service.
5. **The Friends of the Library** is a volunteer organization established either as an independent 501(c) (3) or under the umbrella of the Library Foundation to raise funds and provide support to library services, programs and staff. A Board of Directors, in conjunction with the Library Director, sets Friends' policies and oversees FOL operations and expenditures. The Board or its designee is responsible for FOL volunteers. Friends volunteers follow established library procedures as stated in the *Rights, Responsibilities and Code of Conduct for Volunteers*. The Library Director serves as liaison to the Friends' Board. The FOL is ultimately responsible to the Library Foundation Board and/or the Library Board of Directors.

**Purpose of volunteers:** Under supervision of library staff, volunteers perform a wide variety of tasks that are important to the institution and its ongoing mission. Volunteer citizens of a variety of ages and talents are welcomed as a valuable resource to the library to help us fulfill our mission.

Volunteering also serves as a method for area residents to become familiar with the library, and creates opportunities for individuals to feel personal satisfaction while performing a valuable service for the community.

**Background checks:** It is the policy of the Cloquet City Council to run background checks on all those who work for or with city endeavors. The Cloquet Public Library will follow the city's policy with regard to background checks for volunteers.

## **Library Volunteer Policy (continued)**

Background checks will not be required for service organizations who volunteer as a group and are supervised by an organization's staff person or representative, and for which the volunteer activity is a single event.

**Volunteer vs. staff:** Though volunteers are a valuable resource to the library, they are not staff, and thus are not entitled to staff privileges. In particular, volunteers may take only short breaks (no more than 15 minutes) in the staff kitchen/lounge, but should be sensitive to staff lunch periods or staff breaks when staff need to use the kitchen. Volunteers should check with their supervisor about break times.

### **Volunteers must :**

- file an application and be accepted as volunteers,
- perform their mutually-agreed upon duties when and where assigned, and if they will be late or unable to work, must contact a staff member in advance or at the earliest time possible
- attend training sessions as needed
- wear a volunteer badge while at work in public areas
- sign in and record the number of hours spent volunteering

Many volunteers come into contact with Library patrons and may well be the first official contact a patron has with the Library. It is important, therefore, that volunteers maintain a professional, friendly demeanor at all times. All patron questions other than directional are to be referred to a staff member who is trained to provide informational services for patrons.

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of ALL library information. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in immediate termination of the volunteer.

Volunteers and/or volunteer assignments may be terminated at any time without notice by the library director.

Volunteers cannot expect and will not be granted use of library computers, printers, or any other library equipment for personal gain, over and above what is available to all library patrons.

Volunteers are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or/and using, possessing, selling or otherwise being involved with illegal substances.

Adopted as part of this policy is the

- Rights, Responsibilities, and Code of Conduct for Volunteers.

*(continued)*

## **Rights, Responsibilities, and Code of Conduct for Volunteers**

### **Rights**

#### **Volunteers have the right to:**

- Be treated with respect
- Be trained to do tasks with which they are not familiar
- Be recognized as a contributor to the mission and goals of the library
- Request letters of reference, if appropriate
- Have any personal information about themselves kept confidential and for library internal use only

### **Responsibilities**

#### **Volunteers are responsible to:**

- Arrive promptly. Volunteers who will be late or unable to work at an agreed-upon time should contact their staff supervisor or the Library Director as early as possible.
- Sign in and keep a record of the amount of time they volunteer
- Refer patrons with questions to a library staff person
- Notify their staff supervisor immediately if they are injured while volunteering, whether or not medical attention is required
- Maintain the confidentiality of all library records and patron information. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in immediate dismissal.
- Conscientiously perform all assigned tasks to the best of their abilities. If assigned tasks are unclear, volunteers must request clarification or assistance from their staff supervisors.

#### *Examples of tasks:*

- Shelve materials
- Assist a staff member with programs and projects
- Answer the phone
- Perform clerical work as assigned
- Process and/or repair materials
- Provide computer assistance to patrons
- Perform grounds maintenance

### **Code of Conduct:**

#### **Volunteers are expected to:**

- Wear a nametag while volunteering in public areas
- Dress in clothing that is clean, neat, in good repair, appropriate for the assigned duties, and in keeping with the library's public nature.
- Refrain from smoking in the Library or on the Library grounds.
- Refrain from using library equipment, materials or property for personal profit
- Refrain from soliciting staff or patrons
- Refrain from using the library name or tax-exempt status for personal advantage
- Be tactful, patient and courteous when volunteering in the Library
- Refrain from harassing library patrons, staff or other volunteers. Behavior considered to be harassing includes, but may not be limited to, unwelcome verbal or physical acts such as offensive physical actions, such as obscene hand or finger gestures; written or spoken graphic communications such as slurs or jokes; any type of physical contact when the action is unwelcome by the recipient; or any unwanted sexual attention of a persistent or offensive nature made by a person who knows, or reasonably should know, that such attention is unwanted.

Harassment due to an individual's race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, status as a veteran or sexual orientation will not be tolerated.

Volunteers are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol and/or using, possessing, selling or otherwise being involved with illegal substances.