

Volunteers Policy

Policy Statement

The library has established a volunteer program that strives to reach a maximum level of public service to the community. Volunteers give support services to paid staff and provide assistance with special, unusual or supplemental services and tasks that further the library's mission.

Regulations

1. The library director shall designate a volunteer coordinator to oversee the volunteer program. The volunteer coordinator may enlist other staff or volunteers to assist in volunteer training and volunteer program administration.
2. Library volunteers are identified as persons who regularly perform duties or tasks for the library for a period of time without wages or benefits. Community service workers who are requesting a limited or specific number of service hours shall serve under the same guidelines as all library volunteers. The Friends of the Library volunteers are governed by their own policies and bylaws and, as such, are not regulated by this personnel policy. Any conflicts between the policies or practices of the Friends and the library will be resolved by the library director and the Friends Board.
3. Applicants, who must be age 12 or older, and must complete one of the following applications and submit it to the volunteer coordinator:
 - A. Volunteer Application & Agreement – For those requesting to serve as a library volunteer for typically, at least twenty hours over multiple weeks. Specific terms of service may depend on the area of volunteer interest.
 - B. Community Service Application & Agreement – For those requesting a limited or particular number of service hours to satisfy a specific obligation, such as a court order, school honors program or service organization requirement. Community service applicants must be residents of the library's legal service area.
 - C. Persons under 18 years of age must have written permission from a parent or legal guardian to serve in any volunteer or community service capacity with the library. Any volunteers under the age of 14 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian at all times during volunteer orientation or service hours.
 - D. If there is no suitable volunteer service match with the applicant's skills and interests or location, schedule and transportation requests the applicant will be notified. The application will be kept on file for one (1) year and the applicant will be contacted if there is an appropriate opening during that time.

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- E. Volunteers will be pre-screened with a background check. The library retains the right to use discretion in accepting court-ordered community service volunteers based on library needs and the nature of the volunteer's offense. Serious criminal charges, such as offenses related to theft, assault, or weapons-related charges will not be accepted for court-ordered community service.
4. When the library accepts a volunteer or community service member's offer of service per application, they will be required to attend an orientation session. At an orientation the volunteer coordinator will:
- A. Provide an orientation tutorial
 - B. Review the volunteer policy.
 - C. Provide instruction about sign-in and sign-out procedures.
 - D. Conduct a tour of the library with introduction to library staff at that time.
 - E. Review duties and confirm volunteer commitment.
 - F. Discuss personal and building safety matters.
 - G. Specify appropriate responses to other library patrons.
 - H. Initiate or schedule training as needed and define task responsibilities.
5. Volunteers and community service workers are recognized by the public as representatives of the library and shall be guided by the same work and behavior code as library employees. This will include, but not be limited to:
- A. Dress and grooming appropriate for a business environment and tasks assigned.
 - B. Name tags worn at all times while volunteering in the library.
 - C. Adherence to sign-in and sign-out procedures with advance notice to the volunteer coordinator or designee in the event of absence or lateness for a scheduled time.
 - D. Courteous and proper interaction with other library patrons. All patron questions other than directional (Where are the restrooms? Where is the computer lab? etc.) should be referred to a library staff member.
 - E. Responsibility for updating personal data (such as change of address, telephone number or emergency contact information) with the volunteer coordinator.
 - F. Observance of the library's drug free workplace status. Use of alcohol, illegal drugs or tobacco products in the library is prohibited as is the abuse of drugs or alcohol or reporting for service under the influence of these substances.

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- G. Immediately reporting to a library staff supervisor any occurrence of injury, minor or serious. If any assignment appears to cause physical discomfort or could lead to personal injury, the volunteer should, without delay, report this to the volunteer coordinator or the staff supervisor in the assignment area.
 - H. Harassment or improper advances toward another person in the library or on library grounds is strictly prohibited. This includes unreasonably interfering with anyone's work or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Any concerns or questions about the behavior of library patrons, staff or other volunteers should be referred or addressed to staff supervision or the volunteer coordinator. Under no circumstances should a volunteer or community service worker initiate a confrontation with library patrons, staff or other volunteers.
 - I. Volunteers and community service workers are not allowed to sit at public service desks or use staff computers unless specifically assigned to an area by the volunteer coordinator or a staff supervisor.
 - J. Library owned equipment, such as copiers/printers, fax machines, computers, supplies, etc. are for library use only and may not be used for personal business. No equipment or material should be removed from the library without prior submission of a written request by the volunteer and prior written approval from the library director, volunteer coordinator or staff supervisor.
 - K. All transactions between library patrons, staff and/or volunteers and community service workers are completely confidential. This includes any information about materials a patron has looked at, asked for, requested or checked out, as well as questions asked by library patrons¹.
6. Volunteers may participate in a regular evaluation process in a formal or informal manner, written or verbal. Volunteers and community service workers serve under an at-will status and may be discharged with or without cause or notice by the library director or volunteer coordinator.
7. Volunteers and community service workers who wish to end their tenure with RHPL should notify the volunteer coordinator about the decision and the effective date. Volunteers and community service workers may be asked to participate in an exit interview. Volunteer and community service worker files will be retained for two years.
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Approved: July 11, 2022

Rochester Hills Public Library Board of Trustees

¹ MLC 397.601 *et seq.* Library Privacy Act