

Minneapolis Public Library

Volunteer Policies and Guidelines

Upon receiving an acceptance letter into our volunteer program, volunteers are required to read through our volunteer policies as a part of their orientation process. After reading through the policies, contact the library to set up a time to receive training and start your volunteering experience with us!

Orientation and Training

All volunteers will be required to complete orientation and training to be considered a part of the volunteer program. Orientation will consist of reading through the Volunteer Policies provided in addition to the application. Training will occur on-the-job and be tailored to your specific volunteer role. Contact the library to set up a time to complete training in order to start your volunteer experience.

Scheduling Volunteering Hours

To schedule a time to volunteer, contact the library via email or phone 48 hours in advance. This allows the library to adequately prepare for your arrival and keep the necessary number of volunteers.

Notification of absence

Volunteers should be reliable and timely in their arrival. If a volunteer is no longer able to commit to a volunteer time slot, they should contact the library as soon as possible. Ideally, the library would like to know of a volunteer's absence 24 hours in advance, but we understand that emergencies happen. The volunteer may choose to reschedule their time slot at any time by contacting the library.

Dress Code and Belongings

Volunteers should represent the library in a positive manner and should maintain a clean and hygienic appearance while working. Clothing should also be suitable and comfortable for the volunteer's specific role. There is no uniform for library volunteers, but clothing should not be offensive or advertise alcohol or drugs. Volunteers should avoid wearing revealing clothes. Please ask if you have specific questions about what is appropriate.

Belongings should be kept to a minimum or kept inside a car if possible. Purses, jackets, backpacks, etc. may be left with the staff. Avoid bringing items that may be of value, as the library cannot guarantee the safety or damage of your items.

Phone and Technology Usage

Phone usage is strongly discouraged during volunteer hours. It takes away the engagement of volunteer and reduces efficiency in the workforce. Phones may be used for emergency purposes. Before listening to music, using tablets, computers, or other devices, the volunteer should check with their supervisor.

Library Representation

Volunteers are a reflection of the library both inside and outside of volunteer hours. Volunteers should strive to keep a positive image of the library in all that they do. Volunteers should act professionally in all situations, including in their use of language. Volunteers should avoid talking to the media, unless permission has been given by the director.

Weapons, Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

Volunteers are forbidden from using or bringing weapons, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco onto library property. The use of the above weapons or substances will result in dismissal. Smoking is permitted outside of the library building, but is strongly discouraged.

Treatment of Staff

Staff members are to be treated with respect and are available to answer questions and assist when needed. Any issues with personnel are to be reported to the director immediately. Library cats should be treated in a humane and respectful manner as they are also part of the library staff.

The Library as a Safe Environment

The library serves a variety of demographics and populations. Populations such as children, elderly, those with special needs or disabilities can be vulnerable. We take the safety of all library patrons very seriously. Background checks and a copy of a current driver's license are used as additional safety precautions. No discrimination, abuse, or harassment of any kind (physical, mental, verbal, emotional, cyberbullying, etc.) to any patron, volunteer, or staff member will be tolerated. Refusal to abide by this policy may be subject to termination of volunteer responsibilities.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are required to keep all personal information of patrons, staff, and other volunteers confidential. Volunteers also are prohibited from discussing library financial, tax, or other sensitive information with anyone.

Grievances and Dismissal Policies

Volunteers who fail to follow the volunteer policies may be written up with a Volunteer Incident report. The incident(s) will be kept on file and will be used as a part of the evaluation process. If any patron or staff member should suggest a report should be filed, the director will investigate. After one violation, the director and the accused volunteer will meet to discuss potential solutions. After two violations, the volunteer will be asked to take a break from volunteering at the library. The length of time of the leave will be determined by the director. After 3 violations, the volunteer will be forced to resign.

The director will keep the library board informed of the violation process. If an offense is severe enough (i.e. causing physical harm, theft, etc.), a volunteer may be put on temporary leave. A termination may be made without going through the violation process as long as it is justified and supported by the library board. If volunteers are experiencing issues with other volunteers, patrons, or staff members, they should contact the director immediately.

Accidents and Insurance Coverage

We strive to keep our volunteers working in a safe environment, however accidents happen from time to time. All accidents, property damage, injuries, or medical issues should be reported to the director immediately. However, the library is not responsible for any accidents or injuries that occur on library property. Volunteers sign a waiver as part of their application process.

Evaluation and recognition

Volunteer evaluation is vital to determining if volunteers are a good fit for our organization and if we are adequately training our prospective volunteers. Evaluation of each volunteer will occur annually. The director will fill out the evaluation and share the results with you. Any criticism should be presented constructively and is used as an effort to better our volunteers. The volunteer will be given a copy of the results to keep for their records.

The library strives to show appreciation and recognition of dedicated volunteers. As a volunteer, you have the right to be acknowledged for your efforts at the library. We truly value each and every one of our volunteers.

References

We would be delighted to serve as a reference for our volunteers. We request to know what the purpose of the reference is (award, scholarship, job, etc.) and the requirements for that reference, so we can best represent you.

Resignation

From time to time, volunteers feel the need to resign from their volunteer position. If you are having thoughts about resigning, contact the director to discuss your feelings and a possible solution. Sometimes, we find it necessary for volunteers to take a break or shift roles in order to keep their passion for our organization strong. Other times, job schedules, medical conditions, or family obligations require volunteers to have to resign from their position, which is understandable. We just ask that you let us know, so we can remove

you from our databases and so that we can better learn how to retain our current volunteers. Those who have been forced to resign from policy violations are forbidden from returning to the library.

Youth and Teen Policies

Volunteers under the age of 14 need to be supervised by their legal guardian at all volunteer opportunities. It is required for parents to attend the interview and training process with their child. We welcome our youth volunteers!

Teens under the age of 18 will need their parent's permission to apply as a volunteer. However, the parent does not need to be present during the interview, training, or volunteer hours.

Volunteers with children should try to find childcare, so that they may focus on their volunteer tasks. However, in the event that childcare cannot be found, volunteers may bring their children as long as they are not disruptive of the quiet library environment.

Contact information

For questions or to schedule volunteer hours, contact:

Minneapolis Public Library

519 Delia Ave
Minneapolis, KS 67467
(785) 392-3205
mplibrary@nckcn.org