Volunteer Handbook

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## Welcome

Thank you so much for choosing to volunteer with the [library]. We are pleased to welcome you to our team of volunteers. Our belief is that volunteers are a vital part of achieving our goals in the community. It’s our hope that you find your volunteer experience with us to be rewarding. To ensure a fulfilling experience, the enclosed packet will give you additional information about our organization and will include details about the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or the Volunteer Coordinator. Again, welcome, and thank you!

Sincerely,

Executive Director

[Insert name here]

## Library Information

[Add general information about the library. Mission, values, vision, LRP, etc. Subset on key employees and community interaction.]

## Staff Directory

[List key staff, their positions, contact information and photos (optional) here.]

## Library and the Community

[Basic background about how the library interacts with the community. How does the library interact in the community?]

## Volunteer Programs

[Insert current volunteer programs you’re promoting or have availability for]

## Roles & Responsibilities of Volunteers

The library upholds the restrictions on using unpaid volunteers in non-profit organizations as outlined in New York State Labor Standards. When considering volunteers and volunteer responsibilities, the library will utilize unpaid volunteers to support the library’s mission and goals through traditional volunteering tasks. Additionally, unpaid volunteers will not be used to replace/augment paid staff or their activities, nor will unpaid volunteers be compensated for their efforts. For more information on these restrictions, see New York State Labor Standards Fact Sheet P 726.

Traditional Volunteer Tasks for the Library:

* Aesthetic Upkeep
  + Shelving returned books
  + Straightening shelved books
  + Minor spot cleaning on shelves
  + Arranging book displays
* Book Sale Support Team
  + Organizing/sorting donated items for Book Sale
  + Accepting payment for Book Sale items
* Fundraising Support Team
  + Assisting in tasks associated with library fundraisers
  + Library Friends Book Sale
* Communication
  + Restocking brochure table
  + Monitoring public bulletin board
* Program Support
  + Supporting the Children’s Library with specific programs
  + Check people into programs when they arrive
* Library Outreach
  + Book delivery to nursing homes

[Other items may be added if they are specifically reserved for volunteers.]

## Volunteer Policies

General Policies

Accident Procedures: If a volunteer witnesses an accident, they should notify a staff member immediately. Similarly, volunteers must immediately report any injuries while volunteering. The Volunteer Coordinator or on-desk staff member will provide an Incident Report Form [see below] to be completed immediately.

Applications: Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer with the [library] will be asked to complete a volunteer application [see below].

Background Checks: Additional screening procedures may be instituted for all volunteer applicants. These procedures may include background checks [insert your library's policies here]. Individuals who refuse permission to conduct these checks will not be accepted as library volunteers.

Becoming Employees (Volunteers): Should a volunteer decide to apply for a paid position at the library, they will go through the same hiring process as any other individual. If hired as a library employee, the individual will no longer be considered a volunteer at the library as staff members are ineligible to participate in the volunteer program.

Compensation: Library volunteers will not receive any compensation other than reimbursement for expenses as part of the conditions of work.

Dismissal of a Volunteer: We appreciate the skills and commitment volunteers bring to our library. However, volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the library or who fail to safely and satisfactorily perform the duties assigned to them may be subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with the library’s Volunteer Coordinator or Library Director.

Equal opportunity: It is the policy of the library not to discriminate against any volunteer because of race, religion, creed, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, disability or veteran’s status.

Interviews (Volunteer): Prospective volunteers may be interviewed by the [Library’s] Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director to determine the applicant’s qualifications, general availability, and preferred volunteer tasks.

Exit interviews: Exit interviews will be conducted with volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have about improving the position, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity with the organization in the future.

Minors: Volunteers must be age 13 or older. Volunteers who have not reached the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. The volunteer activity that is assigned to a minor must be performed in a non-hazardous environment and comply with all appropriate requirements of child labor laws.

News Media Inquiries: No volunteer may give information concerning the library or any of its programs or patrons to the news media unless specifically authorized to do so by the Library Director. These inquiries should be referred to the Library Director.

Volunteer Orientation: All volunteers are required to attend a general orientation about the library and the library’s volunteer program. Volunteers will be asked to attend an orientation within the first three months of their volunteer placement.

Placement: When placing a volunteer in a position, the Volunteer Coordinator will pay close attention to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer as well as the current needs of the library. No placement shall be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and the Volunteer Coordinator can be met.

Responsibilities (Staff and Volunteer): As outlined in New York State Labor Standards, volunteers may not “replace or augment paid staff to do the work of paid staff,” nor “do anything but tasks traditionally reserved for volunteers.” Therefore, volunteers are not permitted to do any duties outside of their assigned volunteer tasks. If asked to perform the work of paid staff, please report this to the Volunteer Coordinator or Library Director immediately.

Safety Procedures: Each volunteer is expected to obey safety rules and exercise caution in all work activities. Immediately report any unsafe condition or hazardous situations that you observe to a staff member. If you are unsure how to do a job safely, ask the Volunteer Coordinator or the Library Director.

## Conduct and Behavior Policies

Volunteers must adhere to the following policies for their own safety and the successful operation of the [library].

Attendance: Volunteers and the [library]’s Volunteer Coordinator will work together to determine a schedule that works for both parties. Volunteers are asked to contact the Volunteer Coordinator and provide as much notice as possible when unable to fulfill their commitment to serve as scheduled.

Confidentiality: Information, both verbal and written, regarding patrons, employees or volunteers is to be kept confidential at all times. Any volunteer who interacts with or becomes aware of confidential information is required to maintain confidentiality. It is mandatory that all information be held in the strictest confidence, both within and outside of the library. If you have questions or concerns about specific information contact the Volunteer Coordinator or Library Director.

Dress Code: Volunteers, like the staff, are considered representatives of the organization and are responsible for presenting a positive image to patrons and the community. Volunteers are to dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties as well as inline with other dress code policies in place at the library.

Drug-Free Workplace: The possession, distribution or use of alcohol or illegal drugs at the library or while volunteering at the library is forbidden.

Grievances: Volunteers are welcome to share any grievances they have concerning the [library]’s staff, Board Members or other volunteers with full confidentiality. Whenever a volunteer has a job-related question, problem, or concern with the library, library staff, or patrons, they should discuss the issue with the Volunteer Coordinator. In the event that informal conflict resolution fails to resolve an issue, a grievance may be discussed with the Library Director.

Harassment: It is the policy of the library that it will not permit verbal or physical conduct by an employee or volunteer which harasses, disrupts or interferes with another’s work performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment.

Library Policies: Along with the policies set in this handbooks, library volunteers must also abide by all relevant library policies.

Rights (Volunteer): All volunteers have the right to be treated in a considerate and respectful manner that emphasizes human dignity. If at any time you feel disrespected, threatened, unsafe, or uncomfortable report the issue immediately to the Volunteer Coordinate, Library Director, or appropriate party.

Smoking: The library’s grounds are tobacco free. This includes products related to smoking, chewing tobacco, snuff or smokeless tobacco. Smoking is prohibited when performing any volunteer tasks related to the library.

Solicitations: Volunteers are not to engage in any type of solicitation while serving the library, with the exception of library-sponsored programs. Any volunteer wishing to solicit funds or in-kind gifts on behalf of the library must receive prior approval from the Volunteer Coordinator or the Library Director.

## Liability Protections

Federal Volunteer Protection Act

The Federal Volunteer Protection Act aims to promote volunteerism by limiting a volunteer's risk of tort liability when acting for nonprofit organizations or government entities.

*Source:* [*https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-105publ19/pdf/PLAW-105publ19.pdf*](https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-105publ19/pdf/PLAW-105publ19.pdf)

New York State Good Samaritan Law

Good Samaritan laws empower average citizens to help individuals in emergencies without fear of legal repercussions as long as they act in good faith to help the individual. New York State’s Good Samaritan Laws protect individuals from lawsuits surrounding issues related to CPR, use of an automatic external defibrillator (AED), and calling 911 if experiencing or witnessing a drug overdose.

Library Insurance Coverage

Volunteers are covered under the library’s liability insurance policies in the event of accidental damage or injuries.

## Legal Issues

12 N.Y.C.R.R. § 143-3.12(c)(5)

“*Volunteer*. The term volunteer means a person who works for a non-profit-making institution under no contract of hire, express or implied, and with no promise of compensation, other than reimbursement for expenses as part of the conditions of work.”

*Source:* [*https://labor.ny.gov/legal/laws/pdf/minimum-wage/Art-19-regs.pdf*](https://labor.ny.gov/legal/laws/pdf/minimum-wage/Art-19-regs.pdf)

Labor Law § 651(5)(f)

“...as a volunteer, learner or apprentice by a corporation, unincorporated association, community chest, fund or foundation organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable or educational purposes, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual;...”

*Source:* [*https://codes.findlaw.com/ny/labor-law/lab-sect-651.html*](https://codes.findlaw.com/ny/labor-law/lab-sect-651.html)

New York State Labor Standards Fact Sheet 726

A person may do volunteer work in a not-for-profit organization, if that organization is set up and operates strictly for charitable, educational or religious purposes.” The Fact Sheet goes on to list restrictions applicable to volunteer positions. Other organizations may not use unpaid volunteers.

Restrictions

Unpaid volunteers may not:

* Replace or augment paid staff to do the work of paid staff
* Do anything but tasks traditionally reserved for volunteers
* Be required to work certain hours
* Be required to perform duties involuntarily
* Be under any contract to hire
  + by any other person or business
  + express or implied
* Be paid for their services (except  
  reimbursement for expenses)

A person who is a paid employee of such an organization may volunteer for that organization. However, the type of work they do as a volunteer must be completely different from the type of work they do as an employee.

*Source:* [*https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/factsheets/pdfs/p726.pdf*](https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/factsheets/pdfs/p726.pdf)

## Operations & Work Outlines

[Generic template for volunteers or specific to volunteer responsibilities. Safety guidelines, work process, and information on shifts and schedules.]

Photo Release

[Refer to Volunteer Photo Release Form below or your own Photo Release document]

## Incident Report

To be completed as soon as possible after an incident.

|  |
| --- |
| GENERAL INFORMATION |
| Date of Incident:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Reported by:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Witnesses in building: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Contact Information:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

|  |
| --- |
| ACCIDENT DESCRIPTION |
| Location:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

Reviewed by:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date Reviewed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |
| --- |
| DETERMINATION |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| PLAN OF CORRECTIVE ACTION |
| Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Resolution Satisfactory? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

## Volunteer Application

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with [library]. We’re excited to have you on board. Please fill out the following volunteer application for review.

Personal Information

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_State\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Zip Code\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |
| --- |
| EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEER |
| Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Relationship\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Email\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

Volunteer Interests/Availability

What type of volunteer tasks are you interested in?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What prompted you to fill out a volunteer application with [library]?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate when you would be interested in volunteering \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Note: Parental/Guardian Authorization of a minor must be completed if the volunteer is under 18 years of age.

Name of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Additional considerations for a volunteer application:

Volunteer Position Preference

Here are the volunteer positions that we have available. Please check what interests you.

* Insert your own volunteer opportunities available
* And here
* And here

Skills relevant to volunteering with [library]

**Reference Information** (if your library wants to keep track of how people heard about the volunteer experience)

[Occupation/Education background]

## Volunteer Photographic/Recording Release Form

I hereby grant all right, title and interest to [Library] to use photographs and/or video of me, including my name, image and voice, taken on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(date) at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(location) in publications, news releases, online and in other communications related to the mission of the [library]. I understand and agree that this paragraph also applies to my minor child(ren) who are volunteering.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature of Adult, or Guardian of Children under the age of 18)

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_