



Policy on the Use of Volunteers

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to lay out guidelines for the use of volunteers by the Library, whether in Library facilities or other Library activity sites. Notwithstanding any provisions of this Policy, it is acknowledged that Collective Agreements negotiated from time to time with the Library's unionized staff may also lay out some guidelines relative to the use of volunteers.

Policy statement

The Library Board recognizes the value of volunteers in accomplishing its mission. The Library Board believes in the value of a paid professional staff to reliably and capably provide core services. When there is an identified need and sufficient capacity, the Library may wish to utilize volunteers in order to:

- supplement and extend its services
- engage the broader community in its activities
- support community learning
- support education programs in the library profession

Recruitment

Volunteer positions within the library shall be posted in a manner accessible to the general public, with a clear job description and application process. Candidates shall be selected and interviewed on the basis of consistent criteria, including checking of references where applicable. The Library shall follow the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act in its volunteer recruitment practices.

A candidate selected to be in a volunteer role shall be given a letter or agreement prepared by the Library outlining the conditions of the volunteer placement.

Paid employees of the Library may serve in volunteer roles other than those of an advisory or governance nature, as long as the role is outside the scope of their paid work and will take place outside of usual working hours. When engaging a candidate who in the course of his/her duties would have occasion to be alone with a person considered to be in the vulnerable sector for more than a brief moment, he/she may be required to provide a criminal reference check as evidence that he/she is clear of unpardoned criminal offences.

Institutional placements

From time to time the Library may choose to partner with a recognized educational, employment or life skills institution in order to accept their clients as volunteers. Recruitment may not necessarily follow the process described above. In some cases, this position may take the form of an experience placement, where the Library provides a brief period of exposure to various aspects of library work but does not use the volunteer to fulfill an identified need. In addition, the Library may choose to continue to engage such a volunteer outside of the institution's program, where there is an identified need on the part of the Library, without public posting.

Supervision and Training

All Library volunteers shall work under the guidance of staff. The Library shall provide orientation and training to volunteers in order to help them successfully complete their assigned duties. This shall include a health and safety orientation as prescribed by the Ontario Occupational Health & Safety Act and any training mandated by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Unsolicited applications

The Library is under no obligation to accept, retain, or consider unsolicited general applications.

Dismissal

The Library may at any time, with no explanation or recourse, dismiss a volunteer and terminate its engagement with him/her.

Liability

The Library is not responsible for the loss of or damage to a volunteer's personal property, including any loss or damage to a volunteer's personal vehicle used in the course of their duties.

The Library is not responsible for any personal injury suffered by a volunteer while carrying out their duties.

In the event of a union-initiated work stoppage or legal strike, volunteers shall not be required to cross picket lines.

Expenses

The Library is not obligated to compensate a volunteer for any expenses incurred in the course of carrying out duties. No allowance shall be paid to a volunteer for the use of a personal vehicle. However, a volunteer may be compensated for the expense of a criminal reference check.

Identification

Volunteers shall wear tags identifying themselves as Library volunteers at all times that they are engaged in Library duties.

Privileges

Volunteers are not entitled to any privileges extended to Library staff except to the extent that these privileges are appropriate and necessary to the completion of their duties.

Employment References

If a current or former volunteer requests a reference for employment or volunteer work elsewhere, the Library shall provide written or verbal confirmation of the volunteer placement and duties only, unless the volunteer gives written permission for more specific reference information to be shared with a particular prospective employer.

Volunteers shall be treated as external candidates in applying for paid positions within the Library. Their performance in a volunteer position shall be considered as an employment reference only.

Related Policies

Public Relations Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Programming Policy

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Full-time Collective Agreement

Part-time Collective Agreement

Non-Union Personnel Policy

Employee Borrowing Policy

Champions of the Library Terms of Reference

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy