

Laingsburg Public Library

Volunteer Policy

Purpose

The Library welcomes requests from community members who want to volunteer and values the contributions of volunteers to supplement the efforts of library staff in meeting demands of the patrons. However, to protect patron privacy, safeguard sensitive information, and maintain system security, the Library believes it is essential to clearly define and limit the access volunteers have to library computers, networks, and information. Further, volunteers will be assigned to different tasks than Library staff.

Serve as a Volunteer

All individuals over age 18 are eligible to volunteer. All volunteers must apply for service with the Library Director or the Library Board. All volunteers must be accepted by the library prior to performance of assigned tasks. Volunteers may be subject to background checks, screenings, and/or training at the discretion of the Library before beginning any volunteer work. Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications in relation to the needs of the Library at any given time. The Library cannot guarantee any specific amount of hours for individual volunteers. The number of volunteers accepted is based on the amount of work available and/or necessary and supervisory staff/time available.

The volunteers described in this policy are different from the Friends of the Library volunteers who are governed by their own policies and bylaws.

Volunteer Status

Volunteers are not employees of the Library and are not entitled to wages, benefits, workers' compensation, or any other form of compensation or legal protection associated with employment. Nothing in this policy or in the volunteer's service with the Library shall be construed to create an employment relationship, partnership, agency, or joint venture between the Library and the volunteer. Volunteers are free to end their volunteer work at any time and the Library is free to end the Volunteer's service at any time.

Duties and Supervision

Each volunteer will perform the duties designated by the Library. Volunteers are expected to perform their assigned duties to the best of their abilities and to be loyal to the mission, values, goals and policies of the Library.

The Library depends on volunteers to be present at scheduled times. Volunteers who know they will be absent or late should notify their supervisor or the Library Director as soon as possible.

Volunteers will work with the Library for dates/hours of service and/or the Volunteer's schedule based upon the needs of the Library. The Library reserves the right to change or terminate a volunteer's duties or relationship at any time for any reason or no reason at all.

Volunteers may act as greeters, shelve books and other materials, dust books, materials, and shelves, shelf read, clean materials, help with programs and projects, read stories to children, process new materials, create displays, perform filing or perform other similar clerical tasks. Not all opportunities are available at all times. Volunteers may do work that is assigned to library pages but will not normally do work that is performed by other staff. Volunteers shall not be assigned any responsibilities that involve opening/closing the library, managing circulation desks, checking out materials, or handling library records. Volunteers are not permitted to make any purchases with Library funds.

Each volunteer will be assigned a staff member to supervise the volunteer when possible. The designated supervisor will:

- Provide training on permitted technology use.
- Clarify boundaries around computer access.
- Serve as the volunteer's point of contact for questions or concerns.

Volunteers should feel free to ask any questions of this person or report any problems or concerns about their assignment. If this supervisor is not available, the volunteer may also discuss any changes or problems with the Library Director and/or the Library Board.

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Library Equipment, Supplies, and Records

Library owned equipment and supplies are for Library use only and may not be used for personal business by any Volunteer. Personal telephone calls are prohibited while volunteering except in the case of an emergency and then must be kept brief

Volunteers may not use or otherwise access any Library staff computers, staff networks, administrative systems, or non-public Library software systems. For purposes of this policy, “staff computers” include any devices used by Library staff to perform administrative tasks or access patron records, internal communications, or software not available to the general public. “Patron records” include any circulation history, registration forms, program sign-ups, account balances, or other personally identifiable information about library users. This includes but is not limited to any computers, systems, and/or software that contain any patron data, internal communications, or administrative functions.

Volunteers may not attempt to bypass Library security protocols, access restricted files or networks, or use any devices in a way that could expose patron data or compromise Library systems. Any attempt to access administrative files, patron records, or other protected content (whether intentional or accidental) must be immediately reported to the supervisor or Library Director.

Volunteers may not retrieve, view, edit, or otherwise handle records that personally identify library patrons or staff or any records which reference any patron borrowing history.

Volunteer Safety

Volunteers are asked to be alert at all times to safety hazards and to report unsafe acts or conditions to their supervisor. Volunteers should also notify their supervisors of any assignment which causes physical discomfort or which could lead to personal injury. All injuries, whether minor or serious, must be reported directly to your supervisor or the Library Director or Library Board.

Volunteers are encouraged to report any conduct they believe violates Library policy, creates an unsafe environment, or reflects misconduct by another volunteer, staff member, or patron. Reports should be made to the assigned supervisor or directly to the Library Director. Reports will be handled as confidentially as possible and without retaliation.

Standard of Conduct

Volunteers must review, understand, and agree to comply with all Library rules and policies. Volunteers are bound by all Library policies regarding employee conduct including, but not limited to all anti-harassment policies. All Volunteers must refrain from use of alcohol or illegal drugs while on Library property or performing Library services, as is the use any drug or alcohol, or reporting for duty under the influence of drugs or alcohol is prohibited.

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 that Volunteers maintain a professional, friendly demeanor at all times. Volunteers are also expected to keep his/her/their dress and hygiene appropriate for a business environment and in keeping with his/her/their work assignment.

Volunteers are responsible for using all library records, materials, and equipment properly and only as instructed. Equipment issues or safety concerns must be reported immediately to the assigned supervisor.

Confidentiality

All transactions between library users and staff or volunteers must be treated as strictly confidential as required by Michigan Public Act 455 of 1982, the Library Privacy Act. Volunteers must not access, discuss, disclose, or use any information they may encounter about patron borrowing history, reference questions, account details, or any other personally identifiable use of Library services. This obligation continues even after the volunteer’s service has ended.

Law enforcement agencies seeking patron records must present a court order before any information is released. If a volunteer is approached by law enforcement or any third party for such information, they must immediately notify the Library Director. Volunteers are not authorized to access any records to comply with a court order.

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Photography and Social Media

The Library may occasionally photograph or video volunteers during Library programs or while performing volunteer duties for promotional or archival purposes. By volunteering, individuals consent to the use of their image unless they specifically opt out in writing.

Volunteers must obtain prior approval before taking photos inside the Library or posting about their volunteer work on social media in a way that could be perceived as representing the Library.

No Conflict of Interest

Volunteers may not accept gifts, favors, or compensation from Library vendors, patrons, or partners in exchange for preferential treatment. Volunteers must avoid situations where personal interests could conflict with their duties or the Library's mission.

Indemnification and Assumption of Risk

Volunteers agree to hold harmless and indemnify the Library, its employees, board members, and agents from any and all claims, losses, damages, or liabilities arising from or related to his/her/their volunteer service, except in cases of gross negligence or intentional misconduct by the Library. Volunteers assume all risk associated with their service and are responsible for their own medical insurance and protection of personal property.

Violations

Any volunteer found accessing unauthorized systems or information or in any way violating Library policies or patron confidentiality may be disciplined, up to and including immediate termination.

Volunteer Acknowledgement and Agreement

I acknowledge I have received a copy of the Volunteer Policy, had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to comply with all guidelines during my volunteer service with the Library.

Signature

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____