



VOLUNTEER POLICY

Volunteers of Skokie Public Library help the library expand and enrich its services and are recruited as needed for special projects or for ongoing needs. Volunteer opportunities offer Skokie residents a way to contribute to the community and learn more about the library while helping the library expand and enrich its services. The library and its volunteers work together to achieve the goals and mission of the library.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide overall guidance and direction for staff and volunteers engaged in activities in the library. These policies are for internal management guidance only, and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a contractual or personnel agreement. Issues not covered by this policy shall be resolved by the library's Executive Director.

II. DEFINITION OF "VOLUNTEER"

A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or an expectation of compensation, performs a task under the direction of an assigned library staff member or on behalf of the library. Participation as a volunteer for the library does not and will not be construed in any way to create an employment or agency relationship between the library and a volunteer. Volunteers are prohibited from representing themselves to patrons or the public as an employee of the library. No volunteer will be eligible for medical, health, accident, workers' compensation, or any other benefits. While volunteers serve the needs of every library department, they will not be used to replace the work done by paid library staff.

III. ELIGIBILITY

Volunteers will be recruited without regard to any individual's race, creed, color, national origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, physical or mental ability, socioeconomic level, or any other legally protected characteristics.

The library will only accept volunteers 11 years of age and older. Volunteers between the ages of 11 and 17 must have consent from their parent, adult caregiver, or legal guardian, and may not volunteer without direct supervision by a staff member or an adult volunteer. Satisfactory completion of a background check is required as a condition of volunteering for all volunteers 18 years of age or older. Anyone unwilling or refusing to undergo a background check will be ineligible to serve the library in a volunteer capacity.

Any person interested in volunteering for the library must fill out an application form. Each

application will be reviewed by designated library staff members who oversee the area for which the person is volunteering. Candidates will be accepted based on their qualifications in relation to the needs of the library at any given time. The library accepts the service of volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the library. Volunteers understand that the library may, at any time or for any reason, terminate the volunteer's relationship with the library. Due to the potentially large number of volunteer applications, the library may be unable to fulfill all volunteer requests.

The library may also offer volunteer opportunities for teens who are looking to fulfill a court-ordered community service requirement. Teens must be 18 years of age or under and either live in Skokie or attend a Skokie school to qualify.

IV. SUPERVISION

Each volunteer will be assigned to an on-site supervisor and is required to follow procedures established by the staff supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for the day-to-day management and guidance of a volunteer's contributions. Volunteers should feel free to ask any questions of this person or report any problems or concerns about their assignment. All volunteers should keep their supervisor informed of their assigned projects and of any changes to their availability schedule.

V. BEHAVIOR

Volunteers are expected to support the mission, values, and goals of the library. They must conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, and courteous manner to all staff and patrons, and adhere to all established policies and procedures of the library, including the Appropriate Library Use Policy, safety guidelines, and appropriate attire guidelines. Volunteers must also maintain the confidentiality of patron information, including registration and circulation records and personal data, in accordance with the Library Records Confidentiality Act, 75 ILCS 70/1, et seq.

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular scheduled and timely basis. If volunteers expect to be absent, they should notify their immediate supervisor in advance so that alternative arrangements may be made.

No volunteer has a vested right in the position for which they have volunteered or to which they have been assigned by the library. Volunteers can be released from their duties at any time at the discretion of the library.

VI. TRAINING

All volunteers will receive an orientation to the program they will be working with and a tour of relevant library spaces and community sites as needed. Volunteers will receive training to provide them with the information and skills reasonably necessary to perform their assignment. Staff members with responsibility for the delivery of services should have an active role in the training of the volunteers.

VII. VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

The volunteer specialist and other staff directly involved with the volunteers may design a program of recognition for the volunteers.

*Adopted by the Skokie Public Library Board of Trustees, September 13, 1995;
Revised January 6, 2025; June 11, 2025.*

