

Barrington Public Library – Volunteer Policy and Procedures

Barrington Public Library – Volunteer Policy

1. Purpose

Volunteers are essential partners in supporting the mission of the Barrington Public Library. They enhance and extend library services but do not replace or assume the duties of paid staff. Volunteers contribute their time, skills, and enthusiasm to strengthen library programs and operations.

2. Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer is any individual age 14 or older who performs authorized tasks for the library without remuneration. Volunteers ages 14–15 must provide valid working papers. Volunteers under 18 must submit a signed parental permission form.

3. Role of Volunteers

Volunteers assist with clearly defined tasks for which they receive appropriate training and supervision. They are not expected or permitted to perform duties assigned to professional staff, including responding to reference questions beyond basic directional assistance.

4. Selection and Placement

Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications, the needs of the library, and staff capacity to train and supervise. The library may limit the number of volunteers at any given time. Individuals unable to commit to a regular schedule may be referred to the Friends of the Library. The library is not obligated to accept volunteers from outside placement services and does not accept court-appointed volunteers. Individuals seeking to fulfill service requirements for outside agencies must meet all volunteer criteria.

5. Background Checks

All volunteers age 18 and older must undergo a criminal background check, paid for by the library. Volunteers may begin service while the check is pending but may not work unsupervised with children or elders until clearance is received.

6. Standards of Conduct

Volunteers must adhere to the same confidentiality, behavior, and performance expectations as paid staff. Volunteers may only perform tasks for which they have been trained.

7. Scheduling

Volunteers are expected to work during scheduled shifts when staff supervision is available. Drop-in volunteering is not permitted.

8. Safety, Liability, and Insurance

Volunteers will be informed of relevant safety and security procedures. Volunteers are not covered by Workers' Compensation. Volunteers using personal vehicles must carry their own insurance and are responsible for any traffic violations or related costs. Volunteers are covered under the Town of Barrington's liability insurance and RSA 508:17 (Volunteer Immunity Law). All volunteers will receive the Town Volunteer Letter and a volunteer recognition form upon acceptance.

9. Termination of Service

Volunteers assigned to a specific project end service when the project concludes unless other arrangements are made. Volunteers are asked to provide two weeks' notice before ending service. Repeated absences without notice or failure to meet expectations may result in dismissal.

10. Employment Status

Paid staff of the Barrington Public Library may not volunteer at the library. Volunteers applying for paid positions will be evaluated as external candidates.

11. Recognition

The library staff and trustees will recognize volunteers for their contributions. Certificates of outstanding service may be awarded when appropriate.

Barrington Public Library – Volunteer Procedures

1. Application and Onboarding

- - Prospective volunteers complete a volunteer application.

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- - Applicants are interviewed to determine suitability and placement.
- - Volunteers under 18 submit parental permission; ages 14–15 also provide working papers.
- - Volunteers age 18+ complete a background check authorization.
- - Upon acceptance, volunteers receive task-specific training, safety information, the Town Volunteer Letter, and a volunteer recognition form.

2. Scheduling and Attendance

- - Volunteers are assigned regular shifts based on library needs and staff availability.
- - Volunteers notify staff if they will be absent.
- - Repeated absences or no-shows may lead to dismissal.
- - Volunteers record their hours each visit using the designated tracking method.

3. Supervision and Training

- - Volunteers work under the supervision of paid staff.
- - Staff provide training for each assigned task.
- - Volunteers do not perform tasks for which they have not been trained.
- - Volunteers do not provide reference services beyond directional assistance.

4. Acceptable Volunteer Tasks

Tasks may include shelving materials, processing new books, shelf reading, maintaining patron files, assisting with children's programs, grounds weeding, cleaning, special events, photocopying, preparing mailings, inventory, collection shifting, and facilitating clubs.

5. Special Projects

- - Volunteers assigned to a specific project end service when the project concludes unless reassigned.
- - Staff determine whether additional training or reassignment is appropriate.

6. Safety and Liability Procedures

- - Volunteers follow all library safety protocols.
- - Volunteers using personal vehicles for library tasks must verify insurance coverage.
- - Volunteers may not transport patrons unless explicitly authorized.

7. Ending Service

- - Volunteers provide two weeks' notice when discontinuing service.

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- - Staff may end a volunteer's service if expectations are not met or if library needs change.