



Elmwood Park

PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Volunteer Policy

Purpose

Volunteers at the Elmwood Park Public Library contribute time, energy, talents, and fresh perspectives. They perform a variety of tasks that supplement the efforts of paid staff and they enrich the Library's offerings.

The Elmwood Park Public Library offers volunteer opportunities for interested community members wishing to contribute to the Library's mission in making it a place where life, work, and play unite. The Library volunteer program also serves to provide opportunities for individuals to fulfill service requirements for school or other organizations.

The purpose of the Volunteer Policy is to provide guidelines for the volunteer program and those who participate in it so the Library and its volunteers can work together to provide excellent service for the residents of Elmwood Park.

Application

All interested volunteer applicants are required to complete and sign an application as provided by the Library. Applicants may also need to go through an interview process to determine suitability for the position. Applicants younger than 18 years of age are required to have a parent or legal guardian sign permission on the application form.

Volunteer selection is based upon the need of the Library and its various departments, as well as the qualifications and availability of the prospective volunteer. If there are no suitable opportunities at the time of submission, volunteer applications will be kept on file for one year for potential future service.

The Library does accept applications for students taking practicum courses to get library experience for class credit. The Library also will take on unpaid internships for students or recent graduates also looking to get library experience for job applications.

The Library does not accept individuals referred to the Library by a law enforcement or criminal justice agency.

Elmwood Park Public Library employees who wish to volunteer within the Library in addition to their regular employment must agree to the following:

- The services are entirely voluntary with no coercion by staff, no promise of advancement and no penalty for not volunteering.

- The volunteer does not replace another employee or impair the employment opportunities of others by performing work that would otherwise be performed by regular Library employees.
- The volunteer serves without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered.
- The activity does not take place during the employee's regular working hours or scheduled overtime hours.
- The volunteer time is insubstantial in relation to the employee's regular hours.
- Library employees may qualify as volunteers only if they either volunteer for or perform distinctly different services than they are otherwise employed to perform.

Background Checks

In some circumstances, applicants who are age 16 or older may be asked to consent to, and successfully pass, a criminal background check prior to being offered a volunteer position at the Library, such as when the position requires working with children or money.

Appointments

Opportunities are based on the needs of the Library. Staff will then determine selection, placement, scheduling, and training of volunteers based on interest, availability, experience, attitude and other personal attributes, as well as qualifications and aptitude for the particular volunteer position. References will also be considered when accepting applicants.

The Elmwood Park Public Library will not discriminate in making volunteer opportunities available. The Library supports and adheres to all laws and policies dealing with equal employment opportunity, the Civil Rights Acts, the Americans with Disabilities Act, fair employment practices, and other federal, state, and local legislation concerned with employment and hiring practices.

Preference will be given to Elmwood Park residents.

Volunteers who are family members of library staff may not be placed under the direct supervision of their family member.

Schedule & Tasks

Volunteers shall agree to a pre-arranged schedule of hours based upon the needs of the Library at any given time. This schedule will be during regular hours of operation when supervisors are available, with the occasional exception for special events outside of regular hours.

Volunteers will be responsible for fulfilling the agreed-upon schedule, and must contact library staff before their assigned shift if they will be absent or tardy. Upon missing two scheduled shifts in a row without notifying staff, a volunteer's appointment with the Library will be terminated.

For record-keeping purposes, time sheets and completed tasks may be noted by the volunteer's supervisor.

A variety of tasks may be assigned to respond to immediate needs that the Library might have. Library activities may limit the number of volunteers that are accepted at one time. Tasks may include the following: assisting in programs and special events, craft preparation, photographing public events, locating/shelving materials, straightening shelves, shelf-reading, preparing and maintain displays, cleaning and dusting, book and disc cleaning and repair, maintaining outdoor garden, filing, organizing, and general office help.

Guidelines

While volunteering at the Elmwood Park Public Library, individuals agree to abide by relevant Library rules and policies, including but not limited to:

- Following the Behavior & Code of Conduct Policy, including being respectful to staff, patrons, and other volunteers.
- Adhering to the Confidentiality of Records Policy.
- Dressing appropriately, including no torn or dirty clothing, no offensive imagery/language, and no open-toed footwear (as a safety precaution).
- All individuals are expected to be focused on their assigned tasks while volunteering, and not entertain their peers during service hours.
- Depending upon the task and the approval of their supervisor, volunteers may bring a personal listening device to help pass the time.
- Volunteers must be able to get to and from the Library and its event locations on their own.
- Volunteers will never be asked to drive on behalf of the Library.
- If any incident, accident, or injury occurs while volunteering, volunteers should report to their supervisor or Librarian-in-Charge immediately, so that proper action can be taken.
- Volunteers will only use Library phones, computers, and equipment for volunteer-related tasks, and shall not use them for personal use.
- Volunteers shall have limited access to staff-only areas, and then only when accompanied by a staff member or under their direct supervision.

It is the Library's responsibility to provide training and supervision to volunteers.

Termination of Volunteer Service

The continued use of each volunteer shall be contingent upon the Library's needs, as well as acceptable conduct and satisfactory performance of duties. The Library has the authority to dismiss any volunteer whose commitment to service, attendance record, performance of duties, or conduct is unsatisfactory.

Regardless of the above, this policy does not constitute a contract between the Library and volunteer; therefore both the individual and the Library have the right to discontinue the individual's service at any time.

Recognition & Documentation

While volunteers are not paid, the Library appreciates all the contributions they make, and recognition for consistent and competent individuals may be given at the Library's discretion.

Upon request, volunteers will be provided with documentation regarding participation and the number of volunteer hours completed. Volunteer records will be kept for a minimum of five years from the date of separation.

Friends of the Elmwood Park Library

The Friends of the Elmwood Park Public Library is an affiliate group that supports the Library, and is comprised of members who serve on a volunteer basis, without remuneration. This policy does not extend to the Friends, as they are governed by their own Board of Directors and bylaws.

Elmwood Park Public Library Board of Trustees

Trustees are elected as public officials to serve on the Library's Board of Trustees on a volunteer basis, without remuneration. The role and expectations of library trustees are primarily determined through the Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS) and the Elmwood Park Public Library Board of Trustee Bylaws. Any changes to the bylaws must be presented before the entire board of trustees in an open session and passed by a majority vote.

Young Adult Council

The Young Adult Council is a volunteer group of teens that gives input to the Library, as well as performing fundraising for charity. It is comprised of members who serve on a volunteer basis, without remuneration. This policy does not extend to YAC, as they are governed by their own executive board, with staff supervision.

Policy Review and Revision

The Elmwood Park Public Library Board of Trustees will review this document at least biennially. Approved and adopted by the Library Board on April 19, 2018.