



## **Volunteer Policy**

*Prairie River Library District*

### **PURPOSE**

The Prairie River Library District Volunteer Program is designed to expand and enhance public service to the community in support of the library's mission. Prairie River Library District may utilize the helpful services of interested volunteers to supplement the work done by library staff but not replace employees or employee positions. Volunteer service aids the library in making the best use of its fiscal resources.

### **COORDINATION**

Prairie River Library District Branches may accept volunteers on an as-needed basis under the direction of library staff. Volunteers are given tasks based on the needs of the branch in which they are volunteering. The library does not guarantee a position for each prospective volunteer and has the right to decline any application without cause. Additionally, the library may alter a volunteer's duties and hours at any time based on the needs of the library.

### **VOLUNTEER DEFINITION**

A volunteer is an individual who is 14 years of age or older, who contributes time, energy, and talents directly to the Prairie River Library District without payment or the expectation of payment. Potential volunteers who may be receiving compensation through workforce programs must be approved and coordinated through the Prairie River Library District Director. All volunteers act in accordance with the policies of the library.

Prairie River Library District employees are not permitted to volunteer for Prairie River Library District programs, events, or general opportunities.

Friends of the Library who wish to volunteer in the library are required and subject to processes as outlined in the policy.

### **BECOMING A VOLUNTEER**

The process to become a volunteer is important to the success of each volunteer and the quality of service provided to the library. Volunteers serve the library with approval from and at the complete discretion of the Branch Manager and/or the Prairie River Library District Director.

1. **Volunteer Form:** The library requires volunteers to fill out and submit a Volunteer Application for the purpose of volunteer screening and keeping records in accordance with library policies. Submitting a Volunteer Form does not guarantee volunteer placement.
2. **Placement:** Volunteers are invited to join the volunteer team based on their availability, skills, interests, and qualifications in relation to the needs of the library at any given time. Volunteer opportunities become available based on library needs and the availability of staff to supervise. If selected, volunteers may be contacted for a volunteer orientation or interview and may be subject to a background check.
3. **Equal Opportunity:** Volunteers are selected to serve the library without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status, or military status.
4. **Parent/Guardian Consent:** Volunteers under 18 years of age should obtain permission from their parent/legal guardian if they wish to volunteer in a formal volunteer role at the library. In these cases, volunteers will submit a Guardian Consent Form. Individuals under 18 years of age do not need parent/guardian permission to participate in library programs that may involve informal service activities, such as program set-up, take-down, or focus groups. Parents/guardians should direct any questions to the Branch Manager.
5. **Training and On-Boarding:** The library supports efforts to set volunteers up for success. Volunteers are required to review important information, procedures, and other tools that relate to their role and complete any training deemed necessary before beginning new volunteer tasks. Training sessions are subject to staffing availability to coach volunteers while ensuring sufficient desk coverage at the branch.
6. Volunteers are not covered by worker compensation. Prairie River Library District is not responsible for injury or illness that occurs while in service as a Prairie River Library District Volunteer.

## **VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

Volunteers deserve to volunteer in a safe and welcoming environment where they are appreciated for their time and service to the library. As valued members of the library's teams, volunteers are expected to promote and maintain exceptional levels of customer service while representing the library to the public.

1. **Conduct**  
Volunteers will be familiarized with library policies. Volunteers shall follow all policies of the library, be attentive to their assigned tasks, practice personal safety at all times, and to respect the library's technology, property, resources, and the privacy and confidentiality of patrons, staff, and volunteers. Volunteers may be permitted to access private staff offices only with expressed permission by library staff onsite. Volunteers should bring concerns or questions to the Branch Manager on site. All volunteers are required to read the Prairie River Library Code of Conduct.
2. **Attendance and Absences**  
The library values and appreciates the time of each volunteer. The Branch Manager on Site will work with each volunteer on scheduling. Volunteers are expected to complete scheduled shifts, but if a volunteer is unable to serve a scheduled shift, the library must be notified with as much advance notice as possible. Failure to notify the library or excessive absences and/or tardiness may cause the library to reevaluate the volunteer's service with the library.

### 3. *Timekeeping and Shifts*

Volunteers will record volunteer hours by signing-in and out for shifts. If an electronic timekeeping system is not available, volunteers may use a paper log or submit their hours to the Branch Manager.

## **VOLUNTEER ROLES**

Each volunteer is provided with a volunteer opportunity description, or outline of helpful volunteer tasks that support the library's Strategic Goals. Volunteer opportunities may include assisting staff with library services, programs, events, or outreach visits in the community.

### 1. **Tasks**

Volunteers assist with supplemental tasks only assigned to them by library staff. Volunteers do not perform critical tasks only delegated to paid employees. These may include, but are not limited to: accessing library card account systems or patron records, assisting patrons with library card account questions, driving library-owned vehicles, using employee computers at public-facing service desks, making supplies purchases on behalf of the library, and performing volunteer tasks inside library buildings without library staff on the premises.

### 2. **Offsite Opportunities**

Some volunteer positions involve assisting library staff on visits in the community, which may require riding along inside library vehicles with staff members. Volunteers under 18 years of age must have guardian permission through a ride along form to ride inside library vehicles. Volunteers do not drive or operate library-owned vehicles. In the event a passenger seat is not available for a volunteer to ride with staff to an outreach location, the volunteer may choose to coordinate their own personal transportation to the offsite location.

### 3. **Library Materials**

Volunteers, through their roles, are directly involved in providing access to library materials. Volunteers can expect to come into contact with a variety of materials in the library's collection. The library does not monitor or filter the types of library materials a volunteer may handle while performing volunteer duties.

Volunteers are encouraged to discuss concerns they may have about their assigned tasks or quality of their training and supervision with the Branch Manager overseeing their volunteer duties.

## **CONCLUSION OF SERVICES**

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to create a contract between the volunteer and Prairie River Library District. Both the volunteer and the Prairie River Library District have the right to terminate the volunteer's association with the library at any time, for any reasons or no reason, with or without cause.

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