

**Auburn Public Library
Volunteer Handbook
Accepted by the Board of Trustees October, 2009**

Message from the Director

Welcome to APL! We are very pleased that you have chosen to become part of the Auburn Public Library and sincerely hope that you find your association with us both enlightening and satisfying. We value the unique talents of each volunteer and thank you for helping us to accomplish our mission and for being our advocates in the community.

The Auburn Public Library volunteer program mutually benefits the Library, the individuals who volunteer, and the community. It benefits volunteers and the community by providing opportunities for personal enhancement, empowering individuals to reach their potential as productive members of the community, and providing opportunities to make positive contributions to the greater Auburn community. An active and successful APL volunteer program benefits the Library by stretching public and private dollars to supplement, enhance, and support Library staff in meeting the demands for quality public service.

A Brief History of Auburn Public Library

In 1890, the Auburn Board of Trade charged a committee to plan a library for the city of Auburn. The trustees rented two rooms in the Elm Block, above the Auburn Trust Company, and Miss Annie Prescott was appointed librarian. The library opened for business on August 21, 1891.

In 1902, library trustees received notice that philanthropist Andrew Carnegie would give Auburn \$25,000 to construct a building to house its library. Ground was broken on July 22, 1903, and the library building opened on August 1, 1904.

Because of the new building's popularity, the library eventually had to find more room. The children's room was moved to the top floor lecture hall in 1920. Electric lights replaced gas fixtures in 1915. The third level of book shelving was installed in 1929.

By the late 1940s, all space in the original building was being used to capacity. A long-awaited building expansion came in 1956. The 4,156 square-foot addition provided a new children's room, three stack floors, and work space for the staff.

With additional renovations in 1978, the ground floor became the main entry, the reference room was redesigned, and the children's room was relocated to the first floor. All of the library's space, now 13,146 square feet, was now being fully utilized.

With a renewed emphasis on materials that were practical, interesting, and entertaining, library use increased dramatically through the 1980s. Once again, library services and collections outgrew available space. In the fall of 2000, the Auburn Public Library's board of trustees launched a major capital campaign to raise funds to expand the library in a way that would preserve the look of the original building and last another 100 years. In 2006, the newly-renovated library opened, with double the size of the original 1904

building. The Library now has room to offer its patrons the innovative services that will serve them well in the 21st century.

Mission of the Auburn Public Library

The Auburn Public Library offers community members of all ages cost-effective services to

- satisfy popular interests,
- realize self-directed learning and academic goals,
- find information on a variety of topics,
- meet and interact with others and
- evaluate information effectively.

About This Handbook

This handbook is intended to help you become familiar with the organization and policies of the Library. It contains policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Library Trustees for the Auburn Public Library concerning volunteers and related matters. The Library Director is charged with interpretation and implementation. Should you have any question about the Handbook's contents please refer them to your supervisor or to the Library Director.

In situations not explicitly covered by this Handbook the fundamental principles of fairness, consistency and common sense will be employed. Conditions may require the Library to supplement, modify or eliminate any of the work rules or policies described in this Volunteer Handbook without prior notice. The Handbook does not constitute a guarantee that your volunteer service will continue for any specific period of time, or end only under certain conditions. Your service at the Library is a voluntary relationship and nothing in this Handbook constitutes an expressed or implied contract of employment.

Role of the Library Volunteer

For the library, volunteers serve to

- Expand support for routine tasks and special library projects,
- Enhance the level and quality of customer services, and
- Provide supplemental expertise.
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For individuals, volunteering helps to

- Provide personal satisfaction, growth, and enrichment as well as opportunities to acquire new technical, office, administrative, or customer service skills,
- Impart a sense of personal achievement from learning new skills or successfully completing a project, and
- Increase feelings self-worth and pride from helping others.

For the community, volunteering helps to

- Create a positive community image of the Library,
- Bring information about local ideas, issues and concerns back to the library so that staff and administration can better meet community needs,

- Foster community support for the library by encouraging local citizens to become “shareholders” in a local government agency,
- Afford people the opportunity to make legal restitution to the community through library service, and
- Meet individual, civic organizations’, and religious groups’ requirements for community service.

Volunteer Coordinator

The Library Director is responsible for overseeing the APL volunteer program. Below are the major duties of the volunteer coordinator.

- Plans and coordinates, with library staff input, the effective use of volunteers.
- Assesses volunteer staffing needs.
- Recruits volunteers.
- Reviews volunteer application forms and, in consultation with staff, determines probable placement.
- Assigns appropriate staff to conduct initial interviews and reference checks, and make final recommendations for placement.
- Works with volunteer supervisors to design appropriate volunteer awards, recognition, and benefit programs.
- Oversees volunteer records and statistics.

Volunteers Defined

Volunteers:

- Comprise all individuals who voluntarily give of their time and talents to help further the mission of Auburn Public Library. These include the Board of Library Trustees, Advocates for the Library, Library Corporators and adults and young people who perform various tasks that benefit the Library.
- May also include teens and adults who are providing court-ordered community service. The Library does not accept individuals who commit crimes such as robbery or theft or crimes against persons.
- Are involved in a wide range of library activities. They are valued and treated with the same courtesy and respect accorded paid staff members
- Do not receive salary, benefits or other compensation; are not used to replace or reduce the number of paid staff; are not placed in positions that would jeopardize the library’s ability to operate if a volunteer were absent.

Recruitment and Selection

Volunteers are recruited and selected based on their qualifications and availability and the Library’s need at the time. Volunteers are recruited from a cross section of the Auburn community and represent different races and ethnic backgrounds reflecting the make-up

of the L-A area, as well as people of different ages, and with varied physical and learning abilities. Volunteers may also have diverse beliefs, skill levels, and a wide array of educational levels.

Volunteers are required to fill out an application and may be interviewed by Library staff. If a suitable volunteer placement is not available at the time of application, applications will be kept on file for one year.

Volunteer Needs Assessment

The need for volunteers is not a reflection of personal or departmental deficiencies, nor does it imply that future requests for paid staff will not be seriously considered. Each Department will identify appropriate volunteer opportunities. Job descriptions for these are included at the end of this handbook. The need for volunteers may vary, and the existence of a job description does not guarantee that volunteer work will be available. Special projects may also provide volunteer opportunities not described here. The Volunteer Interest/Skill inventory will help match volunteers to these opportunities.

Some key questions that managers or librarians will want to ask themselves when requesting volunteer assistance for a particular task or project are:

- How soon is the volunteer needed?
- Where will the volunteer be working?
- Can the volunteer flex hours or does the volunteer need to work when you are there?
- What type of volunteer will you be most comfortable working with for the project or task?

A more detailed Needs Assessment Form may be found in Attachments.

Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteers are recruited and selected based on their qualifications and the Library's need. Volunteers are recruited from a cross section of the Auburn community and represent different races and ethnic backgrounds reflecting the makeup of the L-A area, as well as people of various ages, and with varied physical and learning abilities. Volunteers may also have diverse beliefs, skill levels, and a wide array of educational levels.

Age

Young. Boy and girl volunteers often come from local service groups or organizations, such as scouting, and school programs that require students to do community service before graduation. There are two age groups that the volunteer program recruits:

Junior	Age 8 to 12
Teen	Age 12 to 18

Adult. Adult men and women volunteers are recruited as individuals and from local service and professional organizations as well as businesses, many of which encourage

employees to perform community service. Unemployed workers and semi-retired or retired individuals are also recruited.

Interest

The Library recruits general volunteers as well as special-interest volunteers for well-defined tasks. The goal is to match volunteers' demonstrated interests with volunteer jobs. For example, the library may choose to recruit individuals who enjoy gardening, like being outdoors and have the physical stamina to assist in tending its flower beds from spring through fall.

Skills, Training, and Education

Recruiting for specific skills, training or education allows the library to match volunteers with jobs that require knowledge, skills and abilities in specific areas.

Time

Volunteers are recruited both for activities that are sustained over a long period of time and for activities of short duration. A short-term time commitment is usually project-oriented or connected with an event. It could be an ideal commitment for a newcomer to the community and/or library or someone who is testing the volunteer waters.

Legal Distinctions

There are two types of volunteers: community volunteers and court referred volunteers.

Community. Community volunteers are individuals or groups, such as scouts, who volunteer to fulfill organizational or educational requirements or for personal fulfillment and pleasure.

The Library has the option to not accept or to terminate individuals at the Library's discretion.

Court-ordered. The Library accepts volunteers who are ordered by the court to provide community services. It is understood that while the library is not required by law to accept anyone the court refers, many of these individuals are talented and skilled people who made a mistake and want to work through the incident. The Library has the option to not accept or to terminate individuals at the Library's discretion.

Court-ordered services involve teens and adults working at the library as restitution for offenses committed in the community. Such people are convicted of driving under the influence (DUIs), driving while intoxicated (DWIs), and minor traffic infractions (e.g., no automobile insurance, speeding, or excess parking tickets), truancy, and possession of a controlled substance. The Library will not accept individuals who commit crimes such as robbery, purse snatching, stealing, or similar offenses, or crimes against persons.

Disability

Individuals with physical or learning disabilities are welcome library volunteers. Their success depends both on the staff's ability to devote supervisory time and on identifying

levels of work that fit within the individual's skill/ability levels. The Library has the option to not accept or to terminate individuals at the Library's discretion.

Application/Hiring Process

There is a standard application process for selecting volunteers for volunteer service that is similar to the process used for paid employees. The process reinforces the importance and value of volunteer service and the need to select the best volunteer for the job at hand. It also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the library and volunteer staff.

The process requires the volunteer to

- Fill out a volunteer application and interest/skill inventory forms
- Be interviewed by a staff member or another volunteer
- Sign a release form that allows the library to do reference and/or background checks, if necessary
- Sign a library - volunteer agreement
- Have a parent or guardian complete a parental permission form, if applicable
- Complete an orientation

Forms and sample interview questions can be found at the end of the Volunteer Handbook.

For those desiring a very short term volunteer opportunity of no more than a few hours, there is also a simplified volunteer application included in the Attachments Section. Since such assignments do not allow time for training they are generally limited to tasks such as dusting shelves or weeding flower beds. Unless they are well known to staff, volunteers of this nature may not work with the public.

Reference and Background Checks

Reference and/or background checks may be performed to learn more about the personality of an individual and how that person relates to others. Questions asked are kept specific to the job. Checks are performed only with the prior written consent of an individual and information is kept confidential.

Reference and/or background checks are required for volunteers working with vulnerable customers, such as children, the elderly, or the physically challenged and in sensitive areas such as patron or donor databases or the handling of money.

Unpaid Expenses

Volunteers do not receive salaries, benefits or other compensation or reimbursement. Expenses directly related to volunteer service are generally deductible from state and federal income taxes. Therefore volunteers may wish to keep an on-going record of transportation, parking, and other relevant expenses.

Volunteer and Library Roles and Responsibilities

While to the public, a volunteer is part of the Library's staff, volunteer and paid staff perform different work, are evaluated on different criteria, and receive different benefits.

The Library will provide to volunteers:

- The same courtesy and respect accorded a staff member
- Orientation, training and supervision by a staff member or other trained volunteer
- A willingness to address concerns and be open to suggestions
- Recognition for their contributions
- Meaningful assignments

Volunteers will:

- Have a positive attitude.
- Work with library staff to accomplish the goals set by the library.
- Perform assigned duties to the best of their abilities
- Represent the Library when actively serving as volunteers
- Seek the guidance and accept the decisions of staff
- Recognize the function of paid staff, maintain positive working relationships with them, and stay within the scope of volunteer responsibilities
- Wear a volunteer badge
- Report on time, as scheduled, and check in with designated staff upon arrival at work
- Record volunteer hours on volunteer time sheets
- Give prior notice to a supervisor as soon as possible if the individual
 - Must change or can not keep her/his schedule
 - Needs to take an extended leave
 - Wishes to be reassigned
- Give notice upon ending volunteer service

- Dress appropriately
- Respect and act courteously to all patrons and employees
- Refrain from expressing religious, political, social or other personal views to the public
- Maintain the confidentiality of all library and patron information and records and reference queries
- Disclose in advance medical, health, or physical limitations related to the volunteer job

Leaving Service

When a volunteer project or assignment is completed or eliminated, the volunteer's service is discontinued. If desired, an effort will be made to reassign a volunteer. However, if no other mutually suitable volunteer work exists at that time, the volunteer will be asked to discontinue service.

If a volunteer is unable to adequately perform the duties assigned the volunteer may be removed from service.

Paid Employment

Volunteers should follow the Auburn Public Library employment process in order to be considered as a candidate for paid employment in the Library.

Recognition

Thoughtful and personal recognition communicates how important and valuable volunteer service is to the Library, reinforcing good volunteer service and motivating volunteers to continue to donate their time and talent to the library. The Library provides informal and formal recognition and rewards.

Informal recognition can be written or verbal. Informal recognition is no-cost, personal, up-front, and timely. It tells volunteers in specific ways what they did right and how beneficial their good work is to the organization.

Informal events are more official than spontaneous on-going recognition. Informal affairs can include a casual event like a potluck or morning breakfast. These events recognize and say "thank you" to a volunteer group or an individual. Formal events require significant planning and may include formal presentations.

[Volunteer Application](#)

**Auburn Public Library
Volunteer Agreement**

Thank you for considering the Auburn Public Library as a place to donate your time, knowledge, skills and abilities. Your good work serves the greater Auburn community by supplementing, enhancing, and supporting library staff in meeting the demand for quality public service.

Auburn Public Library’s volunteer and paid staff performs different work, is evaluated on different criteria, and receives different benefits. Volunteers are not Auburn Public Library or City of Auburn employees and do not receive salary, benefits, or other compensation.

The library agrees to provide you with

- Meaningful work assignments
- The same courtesy and respect accorded a staff member
- An orientation, training and supervision by a staff member or other trained volunteer; answer your questions, and offer feedback regarding your work
- Recognition for contributions as a volunteer

As a volunteer, I agree to

- Perform duties as assigned to the best of my abilities
- Represent the Library while actively serving as a volunteer
- Accept the guidance and decisions of staff
- Recognize the function of paid staff, maintain smooth working relationships with them, and stay within the scope of volunteer responsibilities
- Wear a volunteer badge
- Report on time, as scheduled, and check in with designated staff upon arrival at work
- Record volunteer hours on volunteer time sheets
- Give prior notice to my supervisor as soon as possible if I
 - Must change or cannot keep my schedule
 - Need to take an extended leave
 - Wish to be reassigned
- Give notice upon ending volunteer service
- Dress appropriately
- Respect and act courteously to all patrons and employees and not discriminate
- Refrains from expressing religious, political, social or other personal views to the public
- Maintain the confidentiality of all library and patron information and records and reference queries
- Identify medical, health, or physical limitations related to the volunteer job

Volunteer’s Signature

Staff Signature

Date _____

Date _____

Volunteer Orientation

Orientation Date: _____

Volunteer Name: _____

Supervisor: _____

General

- Introduction to staff
- Mission, goals and objectives
- Customer service policy
- Organizational chart

Physical Surroundings

- Work area
- Location of restrooms
- Location/use of staff room
- Name Tag
- Phones and staff directory
- Parking

The Job

- Hours of Work
- Emergency closings
- Job description
- Supervisor

Roles and Responsibilities (Please refer to library/volunteer agreement for complete list.)

- Customer service attitude
- Punctuality
- Conduct/appearance
- Confidentiality of library and patron information

Safety

- Regulations
- Emergency evacuations and exit locations
- Safety handbook
- First aid kit

