



Volunteer Services Policy

Section: Administration

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Reviewed:

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Ames Public Library (APL) will utilize volunteers in order to enhance library services, programming and resources.

The Library will not be dependent on volunteers for daily operations. Volunteers will not replace or displace employed staff.

Volunteer Types and Programs

- **Adult Volunteers:** Individuals who are 18 years of age or older.
- **Youth Volunteers:** Students in 5th through 12th grades.
- **Regular Volunteers:** Individuals who are assigned long term, ongoing tasks in which shifts are scheduled on a regular weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis.
- **Ad Hoc Volunteers:** Individuals or groups who volunteer for a single event or short term basis without intention or consideration of long term placement.
- **Community Service Program:** Participants include people who have a court-ordered community service obligation, people involved in court diversion programs, and students under disciplinary action from a school or APL.
- **Fee Alternative Program:** This program is offered to library patrons who would like to volunteer in order to reduce their library fees.

Eligibility

Adults and students in 5th grade or older may participate in Volunteer Services programming, with the following exceptions:

- Groups of children younger than the 5th grade who are completing a service learning assignment through school or another organization. Adult supervision from the school or organization may be required.
- A child younger than the 5th grade accompanied by their parent, grandparent, or guardian.

Application Process

Volunteers will complete an application and agree to the terms stated in the guidelines. Applicants under the age of 16 are required to have a parent or guardian sign the application and agree to the terms stated in the guidelines

Volunteers will also complete an interview with the Volunteer Services Coordinator or designee.

Ad Hoc volunteers may not be required to complete an application or interview prior to the event or activity they are participating in.

Background Checks

Volunteer applicants 18 years of age and older will be subject to a background check. Background checks may be repeated during the volunteer's tenure at APL.

All volunteer applications indicating a criminal history (misdemeanor, felony, deferment) will be reviewed by the Volunteer Services Coordinator and leadership staff.

- Applicants with a criminal history will only be accepted if the designated staff determines that the placement of that applicant will not jeopardize the safety of APL patrons and staff or the integrity of APL resources.
- Any applicant with a history of crimes against a minor will automatically be denied volunteer placement.
- A volunteer or applicant under investigation for or charged with crimes against a minor will be suspended or disqualified from volunteering until the issue is resolved.

Ad Hoc Volunteers may not be subject to background checks.

Documentation

A record will be maintained for each volunteer. The volunteer record may include the following information: volunteer application; results of background checks; copy of driver's license, if required; copy of any other licensure, if required; results of probationary period; and progress notations. Additionally, APL staff will maintain records of each volunteer's hours of service and job performance.

Volunteer Placement

All new Regular Volunteers at Ames Public Library will be assigned a task or activity according to their interests, skills, and APL needs. Placement may be contingent on a valid driver's license and the results of a background check.

Ad Hoc Volunteer assignments will be limited to low-risk activities, as determined by the Volunteer Services Coordinator and leadership staff.

Probationary Period

Volunteers will be subject to a probationary period as determined by each workgroup and/or immediate supervisor. Continued volunteer service at APL is contingent on the successful completion of this probationary period.

Supervision

All volunteers are under the supervision of the Volunteer Services Coordinator. Volunteer workflow, training and performance evaluation may be conducted by other designated APL staff. The Volunteer Services Coordinator will be responsible for designating a trainer who will directly oversee the volunteer's performance.

Dismissal

Volunteers may be terminated for failure to perform assigned job duties, failure to meet minimum standards of performance, or for violation of library rules. The library staff reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer at any time.

Staff as Volunteers

Library staff, or former staff, may be eligible to volunteer under the following circumstances:

- The volunteer work is being performed under the umbrella of a separate Library organization (e.g. APL Friends Foundation).
- The volunteer is serving as a representative of an outside organization (e.g. ISU) which is participating in an event sponsored by the Library.
- Former staff members have not been employed by the Library for a period of at least three months and are not assigned to their previous job responsibilities.