

5. Volunteer Policies

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Policy 5-1. Volunteer Program Overview

Revised 7/19/2023

Josephine Community Library District (JCLD) considers volunteers an essential part of community engagement at all four branches. Library volunteers are critical to the success and community culture of the library system — they are the heart of our library and our community. Engaging volunteers in meaningful work, requesting volunteer input on significant decisions, and showing appreciation on a regular basis makes the library a pleasant place to begin and continue to volunteer. From re-shelving and shifting materials to cataloging, storytime, and front desk service, library volunteers make it possible for the library to continue operating and thriving year after year. Recruitment and retention of volunteers allows for a unique opportunity to receive community input, develop community partnerships, and allows the communities JCLD serves to shape library culture.

Volunteers share their knowledge, expertise, enthusiasm, energy, and ideas throughout the library for the benefit of all.

A volunteer in the library system is an individual who receives no direct compensation for services. Volunteers and staff are expected to work together in a manner that is respectful, patient, and appreciative of volunteers, with staff offering guidance, assistance, and support when and where appropriate. Volunteers are held to similar standards of conduct and procedure as employees.

Personnel compensated as employees of JCLD may not volunteer to do work they would otherwise be paid to accomplish.

Under the supervision of the library director, all staff members support the JCLD volunteer program. by recruiting, selecting, interviewing, training, and placing volunteers. The volunteer coordinator also organizes volunteer activities, communications, and arranges for appropriate district-wide volunteer recognition and appreciation events to acknowledge the benefit volunteers provide to the libraries and the communities they serve.

Policy 5-2. Equal Employment Opportunity

Adopted 1/25/2018

JCLD is committed to a policy of equality for all volunteer applicants. Volunteer decisions will comply with all applicable employment laws prohibiting discrimination as they apply to sex, race, color, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy, age, marital status, disability, and genetic information.

Policy 5-3. Volunteer Selection

Revised 09/20/2023

Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications in relation to the needs of the library at any given time. Volunteers must go through JCLD's procedure for approval and placement, as follows:

- Prospective volunteers complete a volunteer application and a background check form.
- Parents or guardians of prospective teen volunteers complete the Emergency Medical Authorization form.
- JCLD runs a criminal background check in compliance with Fair Credit Reporting Act.
 - Any person convicted of a crime against or otherwise involving a minor at any time in the past will not be approved to be a volunteer.
 - Most felony convictions will result in a negative determination. Evidence of multiple convictions, either felony or misdemeanor, are likely to also result in a negative determination. Where a conviction is remote in time or where the applicant's conduct since the conviction(s) indicates rehabilitation or lack of risk to the program, some leeway may be provided, but only with approval of the library director.
 - Persons convicted of the following will be disqualified from any volunteer position:
 - A crime of violence or other serious crime against a person within the prior 10 years.
 - A theft-related crime, embezzlement, or fraud within the prior 10 years.
 - A crime against or otherwise involving a minor at any time in the past.
 - A sex offense at any time in the past.
 - Registered sex offenders will be disqualified.
- After the background check is satisfactorily completed, the volunteer manager conducts an interview with the prospective volunteer to determine the best placement and schedule.

All volunteer information will be kept confidential and protected for the minimum amount of time required by law and then responsibly disposed of. Sensitive information may be re-requested for periodic background check updates.

Upon acceptable completion of a criminal background check and interview, the new volunteer will be given orientation materials and a date and time for their first training shift.

Policy 5-4. Volunteer Positions and Time Commitment

Revised 7/19/2023

Adopted 1/25/2018

A. Categories of Volunteers

1. Adult Volunteers—18 years of age or older. Adult volunteers may work in any of the areas of the libraries.
2. Teen Volunteer—13 to 17 years of age. Teen volunteers work on activities and projects under the guidance of the department manager, or a staff member or adult volunteer assigned at the manager's discretion . Because of privacy laws, persons under 18 years of age cannot use or have access to staff computers containing confidential patron information. Parents/guardians should trust teen volunteers to work independently and should not interfere with their work. JCLD applauds parent/guardian involvement, but respectfully requests teen volunteers are free to focus on library business independent of parental supervision for the duration of their shift.

B. Volunteer Positions

Volunteers work in all areas of the library including:

- Circulation desk
- Information desk
- Book cataloging and processing
- Children's department
- Shelving and shelf reading
- Homebound book delivery
- Book mending
- Maintenance and housekeeping
- Events coordination
- Scrapbooking/historian
- Display designing
- Clerical support
- Finance
- Web design
- Fundraising
- Grant writing
- Communications and publicity
- Speakers bureau/outreach
- Friends of the Library

Volunteers are provided with job descriptions outlining essential functions of the positions assigned to them. Volunteers will not be expected to do anything staff would not do.

C. Volunteer Time Commitment

For most volunteer positions there are no minimum service hours required, however, the Circulation Desk and Information Desk require at least a 2.5-hour shift one day each week. Due to the need to create sustainable volunteer schedules, library volunteers are discouraged from exceeding 15 hours of service per week.

Policy 5-5. Attendance and Recording Hours

Revised 10/18/2023

Volunteers are expected to fulfill the commitment agreed upon with the library. Volunteers not able to cover their shift for any reason are expected to notify their volunteer manager as soon as possible by telephone or email.

Volunteers who are sick or unable to volunteer due to a planned vacation are asked to advise their volunteer manager as early as possible to allow sufficient time to find a replacement volunteer.

If a teen volunteer cannot make a scheduled shift their volunteer manager should be notified as soon as possible. If a teen volunteer is more than 15 minutes late their emergency contact may be notified. Although JCLD acknowledges emergencies happen, volunteers are expected to be reliable in reporting for scheduled shifts. Absenteeism and tardiness can be disruptive and place a burden on other volunteers and on JCLD. Either may lead to corrective action, up to and including dismissal from volunteer service. If a volunteer fails to call in or show up for three (3) consecutive scheduled shifts or days, abandonment of volunteer service and voluntary resignation will be assumed.

Accurate records of time and attendance are a necessity for all volunteers. Volunteers are asked to report their total time on the appropriate time sheet for their position. The log of volunteer hours is used for various purposes such as reporting volunteer statistics to the Oregon State Library and applying for grants.

Policy 5-6. Training

Adopted 1/25/2018

All volunteers are required to attend volunteer orientation. Prior to shift assignment, each volunteer will receive specific training for their assigned position, either from staff or fellow volunteers. Examples include shelving training, circulation training, Polaris training, and so on. Communication (comm) logs, volunteer meetings, and ongoing education seminars and workshops may be utilized to keep volunteers current on changes within the position. Training requirements are determined by the supervising staff.

Policy 5-7. Volunteer Standards of Conduct and Dismissal

Revised 7/19/2023

Adopted 1/25/2018

Volunteers are asked to treat all patrons, staff, and fellow volunteers with respect. This maintains productive and positive space for all. Volunteers must adhere to the same standards of conduct as JCLD employees.

Personal Conduct

Volunteers are encouraged to exhibit the following professional behavior:

1. Promote the district's mission, vision, and values.
2. Be familiar with the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, the district's core services, and the district's strategic direction.
3. Render accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests for assistance.
4. Practice public-focused work principles.
5. Protect each user's right to privacy with respect to information sought or received and materials or services used.
6. Maintain efficiency in accordance with the district job description and standard of performance.
7. Properly use and care for all district properties, equipment, and materials.
8. Avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of patrons, coworkers, or the district.
9. Practice cost-consciousness in the discharge of duties and recommend work procedures which will result in cost savings or improved public service.
10. Maintain a neat and clean personal appearance.
11. Refrain from the use of language which might offend public sensibilities.
12. Treat the public and coworkers with courtesy and respect.

A volunteer who fails to meet certain obligations is an unfair burden upon the library, its staff, and fellow volunteers. JCLD reserves the right to immediately dismiss the services of a volunteer for reasons that include, but are not limited to:

- Insubordination, including improper conduct toward a supervisor, refusal to perform tasks assigned by a supervisor, or willful violation of any reasonable and lawful directive prescribed by a supervisor.
- Violation of lawful duty or district policies and procedures.
- Possession, distribution, sale, use of illegal drugs, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty.
- Bringing to any JCLD location any dangerous or unauthorized materials including explosives or firearms.
- Theft or unauthorized removal or possession of property belonging to JCLD, coworkers, volunteers, or the public.
- Misusing, destroying, or damaging property belonging to JCLD, a coworker, volunteer, patron, or visitor.
- Fighting, violent or threatening behavior, badgering, yelling, abusive or derogatory language, or similar conduct toward the public or a coworker while on the premises, or during any time of official action on behalf of JCLD.
- Violation of established safety policies or otherwise endangering the safety of other employees, volunteers, or patrons.
- Any purposeful conduct that may be determined to be harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment (see policy 4-8-2, *Harassment*).
- Smoking in any area designated as “non-smoking.”
- Being wasteful of material, property, or working time.
- Being absent from work without permission or failing to report to the supervisor when absent; being habitually tardy.
- Release of confidential information or patron records except in accordance with the adopted policies.
- Personal acceptance of gifts during any calendar year with an aggregate value of more than \$50, or other violations of Oregon government ethics laws.
- Altering or falsifying any record, intentionally destroying or altering any record, or similar action that would compromise the integrity of the library system.
- Falsifying or making a material omission on an employment application or materials inquiring about background information prior to hiring and/or an official record of JCLD.

It is the philosophy of JCLD to address volunteer issues or policy violations as soon as possible to correct situations and avoid repetition. If corrective action is necessary, a volunteer will be notified by the library director. Depending on the circumstances and severity of the situation, corrective actions may be taken at the discretion of the library director or their designee.

Policy 5-8. Dress Code

Adopted 1/25/2018

JCLD strives to provide a professional and welcoming environment in the library system. Staff and volunteers are expected to wear clothing that is neat in appearance and consistent with a professional atmosphere, keeping in mind the impression it has on patrons, visitors, and other employees as well as the need to promote organization and employee safety. Good individual judgment is the best guideline, but management retains the right to decide what dress is appropriate. Please abide by the following:

- Staff and volunteers on duty must wear their name badge.
- Clothing should be free of excessive holes, stains, and wrinkles.
- Clothing or buttons that reflect personal political views or references to sex, alcohol, or drugs are prohibited.
- Visible tattoos that may be deemed offensive to the general public must be concealed.
- No strong perfumes, colognes, or other odors are permitted.

The library provides staff and volunteers with at least one library branded shirt annually.

Policy 5-9. Cell Phones, Computers and Electronic Devices

Revised 10/17/2024

The use of personal cellular phones, personal data devices, or similar electronic media is limited to avert conflict with assigned work.

Library staff supervisors may request a volunteer not utilize such devices during their work time in the library. Personal use of library provided electronic media may also be limited.

This policy does not prohibit the use of electronic media for personal use; however, such use must be limited to assure it does not conflict with assigned duties.

Supervising staff may restrict access to the internet, email, or software systems if necessary, or may provide to a volunteer direction on use. Should a volunteer fail to follow such direction, the supervisor may elect to take disciplinary action.

Usage of library computers during scheduled volunteer hours for personal business is strongly discouraged.

Policy 5-10. Conflicts

Revised 11/15/2023

JCLD treats all volunteers fairly, objectively, and consistently. If a volunteer has a grievance with a staff person, another volunteer, or library patron, the volunteer should discuss the issue with their volunteer manager, or if necessary, the library director. The volunteer manager is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer conduct or complaints, ensuring that volunteers' views are heard, noted, and acted upon promptly.

Policy 5-11. Patron Confidentiality

Revised 11/15/2023

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all library information. This includes any information about what materials a patron looks at, requests, donates, or checks out, as well as reference questions asked by library users. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in immediate dismissal of the volunteer.

Policy 5-12. Giving and Receiving Patron Gifts

Revised 11/15/2023

The gift or acceptance of gifts from patrons is not to exceed \$20 in value. In addition, volunteers are not permitted to pay for a patron's fines, fees, or charges.

Policy 5-13. Resignation

Revised 11/15/2023

When a volunteer has decided to end their volunteer experience with the library, their volunteer manager should be notified. Volunteering with JCLD is “at-will,” which means volunteers are free to stop service at any time, with or without cause or notice. However, to achieve an orderly transition, JCLD respectfully requests volunteers provide JCLD with at least five working days of notice.

Whenever possible, the volunteer manager will conduct an exit interview to measure volunteer’s satisfaction with training, management, volunteer culture, and appreciation.

The library may, upon request, provide letters of reference for the volunteer, if deemed appropriate.

Policy 5-14. General Safety Responsibilities

Adopted 1/25/2018

JCLD makes every effort to provide a safe environment for patrons, volunteers, and staff. Volunteers are responsible for helping to prevent and eliminate conditions that could be harmful to themselves or others. Volunteers shall:

- Work carefully and comply with all safety policies.
- Report unsafe conditions to staff.
- Report all accidents to staff, no matter how minor.
- Alert staff immediately if there is an emergency. If the building needs to be evacuated, volunteers must move quickly and calmly to the nearest exit.

Policy 5-15. Workers' Compensation Coverage

Revised 12/20/2023

In accordance with ORS 656.031 which requires coverage for municipal volunteer personnel, all approved and active volunteers will be covered by JCLD's workers' compensation insurance coverage during hours spent volunteering at the library.

Policy 5-16. Harassment

Revised 01/17/2024

JCLD takes all forms of discrimination and harassment against its volunteers seriously and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated respectfully. JCLD is committed to placing qualified volunteers without regard to race, sex, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or any other status protected by law. JCLD does not tolerate harassment or discrimination of any kind.

Any volunteer who feels harassed or is aware of harassment may file a complaint with their immediate supervisor or manager. The report may be made to the branch manager or library director if the volunteer manager is not an available option. Persons who file a complaint or participate in an investigation are assured confidentiality to the extent possible and will be safeguarded from retaliation.

In accordance with Oregon law, the following information is provided to volunteers to report any prohibited conduct while in service for the library.

- Prohibited conduct should be reported as soon as possible.
- The volunteer or branch manager will seek library director and board counsel to determine how to address and mitigate the matter.
- JCLD will not require or coerce a volunteer to enter into a nondisclosure or non-disparagement agreement. Volunteers may choose to enter into one of these agreements, at which time they have seven days to reverse their decision.
- Volunteers are asked to work with their volunteer manager or library director to document any incidents involving harassment or discrimination.

Policy 5-17. Acceptable Use Policy

Adopted 4/15/2020

Only service desk and cataloging volunteers have access to networked computers. These volunteers are asked to take advantage of the public computers available at each branch for any personal use. Usage of networked library computers for activities which require logging into a personal account is strongly discouraged. This helps to keep the library network safe from unintentionally downloaded viruses and spyware.