

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

LIBRARY

ADULT (18+) VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK 2026

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in serving as a volunteer at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library and we look forward to working with you to improve lives and build a stronger community. Volunteer participation makes a huge difference at the library. With your help we can expand and enhance library services in our community.

The Volunteer Handbook lists guidelines to follow and practical information you need to know when you volunteer at the library. Please take time to read the handbook and become familiar with the details.

Volunteer Services

Mission

The library seeks to empower volunteers to use their talents in a way that brings them personal satisfaction and contributes towards providing the best public library services. Staff and volunteers' partner as a team to implement the mission and vision of the library. Together, our work builds a highly literate and educated community which improves lives and builds a stronger community.

Philosophy

Volunteers are members of a team that are dedicated to offering skills, unique abilities, and time without pay to the library. Volunteers are rewarded by learning new skills and helping the library create a more educated and literate community. We recognize our volunteers by ensuring that they are given opportunities that match their desires and skill sets, by organizing special events, and by offering sincere thanks and never wasting a volunteer's time.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers complete a variety of tasks in Library locations. Some examples are assisting with programs, reading buddies, student success centers, homework help, tech tutoring, shelving materials, repairing books, helping with displays and decorations, greeting patrons, and assisting customers in the computer areas.

Volunteer Services Team

Chauna Wall - Volunteer Coordinator for adults 18 and over cwall@cmlibrary.org or 704-416-071.

Holly Summers - Senior Program Manager Teen Services (age 13-18) at hsummer@cmlibrary.org or 704-416-4661

Contact volunteer services Monday-Friday with general questions about volunteering.
For a list of library locations seeking volunteers click here www.cmlibrary.org/volunteer

Volunteer Point Person (VPP) All library locations have a [Volunteer Point Person](#) (VPP) and will make sure you have the training you need for your volunteer position, schedule your volunteer shifts, and answer your questions.

Contact your VPP:

- If you will be late or not able to report to your shift
- If you need to make a scheduling change
- If you are no longer able to volunteer

First Steps for Adult Volunteers

The library's volunteer web page www.cmlibrary.org/volunteer will list available opportunities with descriptions and allow you to submit applications for open positions. You are urged to call your preferred location and ask for the VPP to start a conversation.

After you apply, you will be contacted to request a 30-minute interview. If we are a good fit for each other, the next step is a background check which will require your social security number. Once the background check has cleared, volunteering can begin.

Your VPP or another designated staff person will train you; training usually occurs on the job. CML staff can only give a professional reference for educational purposes only. We can verify your service hours.

First Steps for Teen Volunteers (VolunTeens)

The library accepts applications from teens (13-18) two times a year—April 1st and August 1st.

To learn more, visit our website and enter the key word "VolunTeens", contact Holly Summers at hsummers@cmlibrary.org or call your local branch and ask for teen staff.

About the Library

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library (the "Library") is one of America's leading urban public libraries, serving a community of more than one million citizens in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

Through 20 locations, targeted outreach and online, the Library delivers exceptional services and programs, with a mission to improve lives and build a stronger community.

In short, we strive to be essential to our community. The Library values and promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of the services, programs and benefits it offers the community and Library employees.

Since our founding in 1903, as an original Carnegie Library, our role as a provider of lifelong education in this community has never been more relevant. As stewards of the community's trust and resources, we work hard every day to provide valuable experiences. Our customers, staff and supporters inspire us each day to be an *essential* resource for our community.

Mission:

Improve lives and build a stronger community

Vision:

The essential connector of a thriving community of readers, leaders and learners.

Brand Promise:

Accessible and welcoming to all, our public library celebrates and supports the joy of reading and learning, fosters exploration, personal growth, and connects individuals to each other, the community, and the world. In short, we help people think, "I can."

Core Values:

Learning – We connect children, teens and adults with reading and information to expand curiosity, explore interests, and discover passions.

Openness – We provide a friendly, helpful learning environment that supports free access to library resources and the exchange of information.

Respect – We act with integrity, deliver exceptional service, and earn the public's trust as responsible stewards of its resources.

Inclusion – We celebrate diversity, invite multiple points of view, and recognize the potential of every individual.

Leadership – We embrace the Library's role as community leader and empower staff to learn, innovate and lead.

[Policies A-Z](#)

We ask you to follow all library policies and rules.

Attendance

Each library location will work with individual volunteers to establish a mutually agreeable schedule. Volunteers are expected to abide by their schedule and to notify their direct supervisor in the event of a change. Missing the first day or two back-to-back dates or habitual absenteeism without notification is grounds for dismissal. An active volunteer is one who has given us at least three hours within the last two months. **Advance notification of vacations and other absences is appreciated.**

Anti-Harassment

The Library is committed to maintaining a professional and productive work environment that is free from discrimination and in which employees at all levels can devote their full attention and best efforts to their job. We take this commitment seriously. Discrimination, including harassment has no place in the work environment, and people who engage in such conduct will be subject to corrective action. The Library does not authorize and will not tolerate any form of harassment based on the following factors: race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, age, genetic information (including family medical history or genetic tests or services), political affiliation, physical or mental disability, pregnancy (including childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth), hair styles or texture, or protected military/veteran status, and any other status protected by federal, state, or local law

Bullying

The Library does not tolerate abusive conduct, bullying, or other intimidating or aggressive behavior by employees or between employees and nonemployees, customers, vendors, applicants for employment, or customers, whether it is based on a protected category. If an employee is found to be mistreating their colleagues, we will take appropriate action to stop the behavior. If you would like to report behavior that you believe is bullying, you may use the same reporting procedures outlined above.

Computer, email and internet usage:

Library technology is intended for library business use. The library reserves the right to monitor your use and access the content of these services.

This includes computers, computer files, the email system, software furnished to volunteers, and the equipment, services, and technology provided to access the internet. • At no time may you use computers, email system, or the internet in ways that are disruptive or offensive to others. Viewing pornographic or other offensive sites on Library computers, including Library- issued iPads, phones, laptop computers or personal devices while on Library premises or in Library vehicles is prohibited.

Court Assigned Community Service

All court assigned volunteers should contact the Volunteer Coordinator for more information at 704.416.0711. The Library can accept many offenses, however we do not accept (but not limited to) those with a history of violence or theft. If we can accept your offense, and there is an availability or need at the branch, then we will proceed with your application

Criminal Activity

All volunteers aged 18 and older must submit and pass a criminal history check. Any Charlotte Mecklenburg Library volunteer committing a criminal activity, which includes but is not limited to theft,

vandalism, drug abuse, assault, making threatening statements, or carrying a concealed weapon on library property while on or off duty, will be dismissed. Appropriate authorities will be notified.

Discontinuation of Volunteer Service

The library has the right to refuse or discontinue the service of a volunteer. Active volunteers who violate any library policy or do not competently fulfill their volunteer tasks can be discontinued.

Discontinuation can occur if two “no shows” occur without notification to your supervisor or the VPP or if a volunteer doesn’t show on the first scheduled day.

EDI

The Library values and promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of the services, programs and benefits it offers the community (and Library employees) **Inclusion** – We celebrate diversity, invite multiple points of view, and recognize the potential of every individual.

Emergency Closing/Inclement Weather

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, or power failures can disrupt Library operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of a work facility or branch. The decision to close or delay regular operations will be made by the Library’s management. For safety reasons, volunteers should exercise good judgment in determining if they can travel safely to work. Regardless of whether the office remains open on an inclement weather day, it is each volunteer’s decision to determine if they can safely travel to work.

Please call your location if there are any questions about hours. **The inclement weather line is 704.416.0191.** The number for general information is 704.416.0100.

Employment

Volunteers seeking employment must follow the same application and screening steps as the public. If interested in working with CML please click www.cmlibrary/careers

Insurance coverage

Report any injury that happens while you are volunteering to the branch Volunteer Point Person (VPP) immediately. This includes injuries not requiring medical treatment.

Media

You should not be in contact with the media or its representatives regarding a library issue without approval from Chief Marketing and Communications officer or the Chief Library Services Officer.

No Retaliation Policy

The Library will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who:

- reports or provides information about suspected unethical or illegal activities including fraud, discrimination, or possible violations of any Library policies;
- complains of or opposes an employment practice that the employee, in good faith, believes violates federal or state law or Library policy; or
- files a charge, truthfully testifies, provides assistance, or participates, in good faith, in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing related to or arising from an

allegedly unlawful employment practice. • files a charge, truthfully testifies, provides assistance, or participates, in good faith, in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing related to or arising from an allegedly unlawful employment practice. If you believe that you or someone else has been retaliated against, you must report it as soon as possible to the VPP.

Right To Search

The Library reserves the right to conduct searches or inspections of Library vehicles; Library workspaces; other property owned, operated, or controlled by the Library; and property assigned to an employee and their personal belongings whenever a supervisor or manager has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will result in evidence of a violation of these policies. Such searches or inspections may include, for example, an employee's locker, desk, and Library assigned vehicles. The employee's supervisor or manager and at least one individual from an outside source or department will conduct the search.

Any illegal object found will be turned over to law enforcement authorities.

Safety Tips

You deserve to feel safe (physically and emotionally). You are not expected to handle any situation that feels unsafe to you. Please seek the assistance of a staff member to help. Be aware. Know where your closest staff member, barriers and exits are. It's easier to know in advance than to find out during an emergency. Keep an ear out for things like yelling or items falling. Those things might be cues to leave the area, to seek help or an exit.

Supported Volunteers and their Support Providers

Caregivers who accompany special needs volunteers are required to complete a volunteer application and criminal background check (if over the age of 18). This is in addition to an application for the individual seeking to volunteer. Hours for both will be counted. Support providers must always be with their client during their shift at a branch.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed inside any library building. Library staff can direct you to designated smoking areas outside the building.

Volunteer Discontinuation

Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures of the program or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. Typically, discontinuation is at the discretion of VPP, Volunteer Coordinator, or Branch Manager.

Library volunteers overseeing activities or programs WILL

- Show respect for the rights, safety and welfare of program participants
- Maintain a professional and respectful demeanor when engaging with program participants
- Document actions or conversations when a program participant has behavior issues and inform your VPP
- Report any violation of a library behavior policy or concerns about program participant behavior immediately to your VPP
- Report any concerns about personal safety, harassment, or intimidation by program participants
- Report any concerns about a patron or program participant to your VPP immediately

Library volunteers overseeing activities or programs WILL NOT:

- Use any racist, sexist, discriminatory, offensive, or culturally insensitive language including inappropriate slang
- Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any program participant
- Accompany a patron into a restroom or assist them with personal care

- Invite program participant to their home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times in their role as a volunteer
- Transport a program participant in a vehicle
- Give program participant gifts or personal items
- Dispense medication or share personal medication with others
- Perform errands on behalf of program participants
- Solicit business during the library program
- Use patrons' personal information for personal gain

Volunteers working in an educational setting WILL NOT:

- Broker any agreements to provide services outside of the library program
- Reveal personal information (i.e., Identification Number, Social Security Number, bank account information, etc.) about a patron gained during a library program
- Provide services (i.e., legal assistance, translation services, etc.) beyond the scope of the volunteer duties.

Thank you!

Thank you for contributing your time and talent to Library. We hope that your experience is positive, productive, safe, and fun! If you have questions about anything in this handbook, please don't hesitate to reach out to Volunteer Services or your Volunteer Point Person (VPP). Welcome aboard!

[I have read, understand and agree with the responsibilities of being a volunteer as outlined in the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Volunteer Handbook.](#)

As a volunteer for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library I, _____, have read, understand, and agree to the responsibilities of being a volunteer as outlined in the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library volunteer handbook and agree to abide by the following guidelines for confidentiality.

- I will not discuss a customer's library account. If I have a concern or a question, I will bring it directly to the VPP.
- Should a library customer voice a complaint, describe a conflict, or begin to discuss a problem with me, I will encourage that customer to discuss the issue with the library staff. I understand that as a volunteer, I am neither asked, nor expected to, address customers' individual concerns.
- When participating in a library work environment, or during conversations with library staff, I may learn confidential information about the library's customers (such as problems with accounts, lost items, borrowing habits). I will treat all information as confidential. I will not discuss it with others.
- I agree to maintain the highest level of discretion about confidential information, files or personal data on library customers and staff. At no time will I discuss confidential information, files or personal data with other volunteers or customers.

Volunteer Name (please print) -

Branch -

Date and Year –

[VPP's please keep this copy for your files.](#)