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CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

# LIBRARY

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## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK 2018

Welcome! Thank you for your interest in serving as a volunteer at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. Help us improve lives and build a stronger community through education and literacy!

More information about volunteer opportunities at each branch can be found at [www.cmlibrary.org/volunteer](http://www.cmlibrary.org/volunteer).

Please note these few things about getting started as a volunteer at the library. Most applicants will be called or emailed and asked for an interview which usually takes 20-30 minutes. If we all agree that we are a good fit for each other the next step is a criminal background check. Once the background check is completed and without issue volunteering can begin. Training usually occurs on the job.

### **About the Library**

Libraries mean many things to many people. We serve hundreds of thousands of people while also responding to the needs of individual library visitors. Since our founding in 1903, our role as a provider of lifelong education in this community has never been more relevant and timely. Focusing on four key areas, we believe we best serve our users and the community by viewing ourselves in the following manner:

#### **Library as Community Services Business**

To serve you best, we must provide excellent customer service, new technology, robust volunteer programs, convenient hours and improved access to both the physical and the virtual Library.

#### **Library as Place**

We strive to be a place that is accessible and welcoming to all and is the go-to place for literacy and life-long learning, for finding inspiration and exploring possibilities.

#### **Library as Leader**

We want to lead important community discussions and to serve as a key partner in literacy and other community issues, serving as a model for digital technology and access.

#### **Library as Community Strategy**

We strive to be a catalyst for community betterment, where neighbors can share ideas and develop solutions to community challenges and where volunteers and donors are eager to contribute to a literate, informed community that is working and thriving.

### **Volunteer Program Mission Statement**

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library seeks to empower volunteers to use their talents in a way that brings them personal satisfaction and makes a contribution towards providing the best public library services in our community. 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.

### **Volunteer Program 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. We endeavor to never waste a volunteer's time.

## **Volunteer Rights**

- Receive a clear comprehensive job description
- Be carefully interviewed and appropriately assigned
- Receive training
- Do meaningful and satisfying work
- Be seen as belonging, through inclusion at meetings, social functions, etc.
- Be supported in your role
- Be safe on the job
- Have choices and feel comfortable about saying "no"
- Receive feedback on your work
- Receive recognition for your contribution

## ***Volunteer Responsibilities (as a volunteer you are expected to)***

- Be reliable and punctual (Please see details under “attendance “below.
- Be trustworthy
- **Respect confidentiality**
- Respect the rights of people you work with
- Carry out the specified job description or let us know if the assignment doesn’t meet your expectations or needs
- Give feedback (i.e. participate in evaluations when asked)
- Be accountable and accept feedback
- Be committed to the program
- Avoid overextending yourself
- Acknowledge decisions made by the staff or the organization
- Address areas of conflict with the VPP
- Undertake training
- Sign in and out when volunteering
- Ask for support when it is needed
- Notify your supervisor if you can no longer volunteer

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Chauna Wall, Library Volunteer Coordinator at 704.416.0711 or by email at [cwall@cmlibrary.org](mailto:cwall@cmlibrary.org). Your feedback is always welcome and it helps us strengthen our program.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteers complete a variety of tasks in all branches of the library. Some examples are assisting with programs, homework help, tech tutoring, shelving materials, shifting materials, repairing books, helping with displays and decorations, greeting patrons and assisting patrons in the computer areas. [www.cmlibrary.org/volunteer](http://www.cmlibrary.org/volunteer) will show job descriptions of our opportunities and you can apply as well.

## **VolunTeens**

The library accepts applications from Teens 13-17 three times a year. Spring, Summer and Fall. To find out more visit our website and enter the key word of “VolunTeens” or contact Holly Summers at [hsummers@cmlibrary.org](mailto:hsummers@cmlibrary.org).

## **Court Assigned Community Service**

All court assigned volunteers should contact the Volunteer Coordinator for more information at 704.416.0711.

## **Age**

The preferred minimum age for volunteers is 14. Some locations/departments may limit volunteers to adults (age 18 and older). Children 5 years and older may volunteer with a parent or guardian. Parent or guardian must be present with the child at all times.

## **Special Needs Volunteers and their Caregivers/Guides**

Special needs volunteers who are accompanied by a caregiver or guide - both the volunteer and the caregiver/guide will need to complete a volunteer application and if over 18 a criminal background check. Both of their donated hours should be counted on any hour reports.

## **Personal Appearance**

Volunteers should dress neatly in clean and presentable clothing. T-shirts with inappropriate messages, short skirts, low cut tops and other revealing garments are not allowed. Volunteers, just like library staff, must present a professional appearance to the public. Because of the nature of the work we do we suggest you wear comfortable, closed toe shoes to avoid injury from falling books.

## **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. [Habitual absenteeism may result in dismissal from the volunteer program](#). 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.**

## **References**

Library Staff can give you a reference for educational purposes only. [Staff are not allowed to give a professional reference.](#)

## **Inclement Weather and Emergencies**

There are times when a library may be closed due to inclement weather or other emergency. The volunteer should call the library for which they are volunteering if there is any question about the open hours of the building. The inclement weather line is 704.416.0191. The number for general information is 704.416.0100.

## **Smoking**

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

## **Beverages or food**

Those volunteers who require a snack break should discuss options with their volunteer supervisor. Breaks are usually reserved for those who work 3 or more hours at one time.

## **Behavior**

As a volunteer, you are representing Charlotte Mecklenburg Library to the public. All volunteers are expected to behave in a professional manner, especially when addressing a library customer.

## **Drug and Alcohol Use**

Any Charlotte Mecklenburg Library volunteer who is discovered possessing, using, selling, or transferring alcohol or illegal drugs will be immediately dismissed. Appropriate authorities will be notified.

## **Criminal Activity**

All volunteers age 18 and older must undergo 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.

### **Refusal and Dismissal**

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library staff has the right to refuse or dismiss a volunteer. Active volunteers who violate any Charlotte Mecklenburg Library policy or do not competently fulfill their volunteer duties after a reasonable amount of training and supervision will be dismissed. If you miss your first scheduled day or if two absences occur without notification that is tantamount to a resignation.

### **Corrective Action**

Corrective action may be taken if the volunteer's work is unsatisfactory. Corrective action is within the discretion of the Library Manager, Volunteer Coordinator or Volunteer Point Person and may include:

1. Additional supervision
2. Reassignment
3. Retraining with possible suspension
4. Referral to another volunteer position
5. Dismissal from the volunteer program

### **Volunteer Dismissal**

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. Dismissal is within the discretion of Volunteer Point Person, Volunteer Coordinator and Branch Manager

### **The following actions are prohibited on Library property for all:**

- Selling and/or soliciting for services, money or items.
  - Distributing or posting printed materials/literature that have not been approved by the Library
  - Possessing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
  - Smoking or other uses of tobacco.
  - Consuming food within the Library or consuming beverages in open containers.
  - Sleeping or putting your head, feet or legs on the table.
  - Not wearing shoes or shirt, or wearing clothes unbuttoned or unzipped.
  - Bringing animals into the Library other than assistance animals.
  - Any loud, unreasonable, and/or disturbing noises created by persons, electronic devices, or cell phones.
  - Any behavior that is disruptive to library use.
  - Intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing any Library property, or a patron's or employee's property
  - Taking Library materials into rest rooms.
  - Removing Library materials from the premises without authorization through established lending procedures.
  - Moving tables, chairs or other furniture.
  - Adults using children's area. This area is for children and their parents or care providers only.
  - Leaving a child under eight years of age unattended by a responsible person.
  - Leaving any child or young adult (up to age 17) in the Library after closing time.
  - Misuse of rest rooms. Rest rooms are for library patrons only. No changing of clothes, shaving or bathing is allowed.
  - Bringing in more than one canvas, nylon, paper or plastic bag. No bag can be over 18 inches in length. Larger bags of any type, bedrolls or luggage are prohibited.
  - Carrying weapons of any type.
  - Engaging in disorderly conduct of any kind, fighting or challenging to fight or using obscene/offensive words likely to provoke violence.
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- Any other illegal acts or conduct in violation of Federal, State, or local law, ordinance or regulation.
  - Failure to comply with the Library's established rules and regulations may result in exclusion from the Library for the day, or permanently, and/or in arrest.
  - Theft of Library materials is a serious offense and will result in permanent exclusion from the library and arrest.
  - Communication of threats, physical violence or sexual offenses will result in permanent exclusion.

- Trespassers will be arrested and prosecuted.

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 CM Library volunteer handbook. I pledge to:

- Advance the mission and core values of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.
- Arrive on time.
- Do my best with the tasks assigned to me.
- Accept supervision graciously.
- Obey the library's code of conduct.(see above)
- Conduct myself in a manner befitting a representative of the public library.
- Do my part to uphold the high standards of library service.
- A positive attitude is held in high regard

**I have read, understand and agree to the responsibilities of being a volunteer as outlined in the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Volunteer Handbook.**

I agree to abide by the following guidelines for confidentiality. I will not discuss a customer's library account. If I have a concern or question, I will bring it directly to the volunteer point person or other library staff member.

- 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, overdue fines, 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 in regard to 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.

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Volunteer Signature      Date

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Thank you for helping us create a more educated and literate community!