

NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY	DATE EFFECTED: SEPTEMBER 2005	VOLUNTEER POLICY
	DATE REVISED: OCTOBER 19, 2022	
Associated Policies: Code Of Conduct, OHS, Workplace Violence and Harassment, Rules Of Conduct/Regulations, Social Media, Dress Code, Severe Weather.		

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities for volunteers within the Niagara Falls Public Library (NFPL). The NFPL promotes and supports community volunteer participation within its organization because it believes that volunteers help make it a better library by contributing their time, knowledge, and expertise, and by strengthening the link to the communities it serves. The NFPL Volunteer Program also serves as a method for residents to become familiar with the library.

Definitions:

A volunteer is any individual who performs assigned tasks for the Niagara Falls Public Library without expected wages, benefits, or compensation of any kind.

Volunteers do not replace paid Library staff and are not considered employees of the Niagara Falls Public Library. Rather, volunteers contribute by supporting and enhancing existing services offered by the NFPL.

Special volunteers may include, but are not limited to:

- Students required to perform community service as an education requirement.
- Individuals participating in work programs provided by community health and social services agencies.
- Students requiring internships or cooperative placements.

In each case, an agreement must be in effect with the organization, school or program from which the volunteers originate and must identify responsibility for management and care of the volunteers.

Roles And Responsibilities:

The CEO/Chief Librarian has the responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Each department will be responsible for recruiting, onboarding, training, and managing its own volunteers.

Volunteer supervision is the responsibility of the designated library staff within the department to which a volunteer is assigned.

Recruitment:

- Volunteer opportunities will be posted to the Library's website as they are available.
- Volunteers must be at least 14 years of age and an application must be filled out for all those who intend to volunteer for the library for more than one week. A parental or guardian signature is required for those volunteers who are under 18 years of age. Age restrictions will vary depending on the nature of the volunteer role.
- All volunteers are required to complete the designated application form prior to being assigned to a volunteer position: Teen volunteer application (ages 14 years of age – 17 years of age); Adult volunteer application (18 years +).
- Potential volunteers will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability, interests, and ability to undertake the position. In placing a volunteer in a position, attention shall be paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer, and to the requirements of that volunteer position.
- The Library accepts the service of any volunteer with the understanding that such service does not constitute an obstruction to or conflict with the provision of services to customers or others.
- Volunteer opportunities are identified by senior staff. Every effort will be made to match volunteer ability to the opportunity available. However, the NFPL's overall mandate must always take precedence and opportunity for volunteer involvement may be restricted.

Screening:

- The screening process at Niagara Falls Public Library follows the guidelines established by Volunteer Canada. These steps include clear job descriptions, application forms, formal interviews, reference checks, orientation and training, supervision, and police checks where deemed necessary. Individuals who refuse to comply will not be accepted as a volunteer.
- The Library will show due diligence in determining the appropriateness of an assignment for any volunteer. Additional documentation may be required by the Library. All volunteers over 18 years of age will be required to provide a satisfactory Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check from Niagara Regional Police.

Onboarding:

- Volunteers are considered to be officially accepted and enrolled by the Library upon successful completion of interview and reference check.
- All volunteers will be given an orientation including AODA, Health & Safety training and any other legislated training as appropriate as well as any that are relevant to the policies, procedures, role, responsibilities of the assigned volunteer position.
- Volunteers will be provided with a name badge at the time of onboarding identifying their role.

- All personal information about volunteers is collected for internal purposes only in accordance with the Library's Privacy Policy. Volunteer personnel files will be retained until the volunteer is no longer active with the library.
- Volunteers who have completed at least 6 months of service for the Niagara Falls Public Library may be eligible for reimbursement of the Vulnerable Sector/Police Records Check fee.

Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Volunteers will abide by all library policies and comply with the library's Health & Safety, AODA and other policies and procedures.
- As representatives of the NFPL, volunteers are responsible for presenting a good public image and must dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Volunteers must present a courteous manner at all times.
- Volunteers are required to wear their identification at all times while performing their assigned tasks and duties for the NFPL.
- When expecting to be absent from a scheduled volunteer duty, volunteers should inform their staff supervisor in advance so a replacement can be found.
- Volunteers must be covered by their own vehicle insurance where their voluntary activity involves the use of a vehicle and are liable for their own parking tickets and/or fines related to driving offenses.
- Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information that they may be exposed to while serving as a volunteer whether this information involves single members of staff, volunteers, customers, or other persons, or involves the overall business of the Library.
- Volunteers must obtain approval from appropriate Library staff prior to taking any action or making any statement that might affect or obligate the library
- In the event of an opening for a paid position within the Library, volunteers who apply for the position shall be treated and evaluated on the same basis as all other external applicants.
- The NFPL reserves the right to make changes to the nature of the volunteer assignment.

Volunteer Termination:

Volunteers who are unable to adequately perform the duties assigned to them will undergo a performance review with their supervisor to address the concerns. Other reasons for a performance review include but are not limited to:

- Repeated absenteeism
- Failure to abide by NFPL policies and procedures
- Disrespectful conduct
- Failing to maintain confidentiality

In the event that the concerns persist, the NFPL will terminate the volunteer relationship if no other suitable roles are available.

NOTE: Any form of harassing behaviour or workplace violence on the part of volunteers will result in immediate dismissal.

Volunteers selected for work on a specific, short-term project will discontinue service when that project is completed unless other arrangements have been made.

The Niagara Falls Public Library Board reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's relationship with the Library at any time and for any reason.