



VOLUNTEER

Welcome

to the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library Volunteer Program!

As a Library volunteer, you will be joining local residents from teens to senior citizens, who are willing to share their time and talents as members of our team. People volunteer for a wide variety of reasons. Some want to meet new people or learn new skills or perhaps feel useful by helping others. Whatever your reason for choosing to volunteer – we welcome you!

The Library is proud of its volunteers and we are pleased that you have decided to join us. This handbook will introduce you to the Library and its Volunteer Program. It will give you an overview; from requirements and benefits as a volunteer, to “need to know” information.

Volunteering will offer you a personal opportunity for growth and fulfillment and allow you to step outside of your daily routine and enter a new and challenging environment. Some of the rewards of volunteering include friendship, recognition, learning new things and genuine satisfaction in a job well done.

Regardless of your lifestyle, volunteering can enrich your life and we are looking forward to working with you.

About the Library

In addition to the Main Library, there are eight branch locations throughout Richland County to provide services to the outlying areas. Plymouth and Bellville branches became affiliated with the Mansfield Library in the 1930's. Service in Lexington began in the 1950's while the Butler branch came into existence in 1971. Ontario and Madison branches were opened after the 1986 bond issue was passed. Lucas branch opened in 1990 as a result of community efforts. Partnering with the Crestview Local Schools, our Crestview branch came into existence in 1998. It is located in the same building as the Crestview Middle School.

The Richland County Information & Referral line was established in the mid-1980's to help residents find assistance and services in the community. The Library became involved with the service in 1992. Through a formal partnership in 2004, it established the entity that has grown to become the current First Call 211 office. The staff in this department respond to more than 1,300 contacts a month with requests as varied as locating housing assistance, clarifying utility program options, publishing free meal locations, assisting income tax filings to providing contact information for government offices, service providers and community resources. Operating in its own building, the assistance center offers walk-in public lobby hours and 24/7 access by phone.

The Outreach Department was formed in 2013, although Outreach Librarians have provided Outreach services since 1990. The Outreach Department exists to take the Library out into the community and to those who cannot come to the library due to physical limitations. Lobby Stop visits are made to senior living facilities around the county with materials to lend and programs to educate and entertain. The Outreach librarians visit a wide variety of community locations and attend many community events, as representatives of the Library.

The Computer Lab was established in June 2001 through a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This grant allowed the Library to purchase 12 PCs, software, networking equipment and provide staff training. Today, the Lab offers classes on Microsoft Office products, typing tutorials, mouse practice and the use of tablets and other hand-held devices to access library material. They have drop-in workshops for jobseekers trying to find and apply for jobs online or put together a resume and, in 2018 they began offering classes for Richland Newhope clients to work on computer basics. The Lab holds monthly class for the Senior Community Service Employment Program, takes tablet classes on the road to the branches, and holds a series of classes for senior citizens at Outreach locations. The Lab staff also teaches inmates preparing for release at the Richland Correctional Institution and, of course is open for public use with personal assistance available at all times.

Beginning in 2014 and continuing today, we have been broadening our idea of what a "Library collection" should look like. New items have been rapidly added in an attempt to offer access to health and wellness equipment, technology and, STEM related tools. The Library introduced a collection of bikes and blood pressure cuffs in partnership with Richland Public Health. We were able to offer telescopes and air quality monitors through generous donations from community groups and in 2015 & 2016 we added tablets and WiFi hotspots to our collection.

In recent years, along with our Outreach Department's efforts, the Library has tried to meet our customers where they are by offering small collections in locations other than our Library Branches. In 2015 we added a small leisure reading collection at the Bromfield Library at OSU-Mansfield. This collection was created in order to allow the Public Library to serve college students, many of whom have limited transportation to the Library's various branch locations. The Library maintains a small children's collection at the Friendly House, in 2017 we began donating some of our weeded books to Ohio Health hospital to allow patients families to have access to reading materials while waiting on loved ones undergoing surgery and we have plans to place a small collection of books available to residents of the Domestic Violence Shelter.

Volunteer Program Details

Mission

The mission of the Volunteer Program is to assist Library staff in its efforts to serve the Library in the delivery of comprehensive services to its customers and the community. The Volunteer Program provides the opportunity for community members to volunteer their services. Volunteers do not replace paid staff, but assist staff in various departments, thereby enhancing services the Library provides.

Goals and Objectives

Recruitment

To recruit qualified volunteers who represent all areas of the community;

To recruit volunteers who can meet the needs of the Library.

Orientation and Training

To properly orient the volunteer to the Library and its staff;

To provide adequate training to ensure that the volunteer will be useful and comfortable in his/her placement.

Community Awareness

To promote the needs and accomplishments of the Library volunteer program;

To let the community, through the involvement of the volunteers, be aware of the resources of the Library.

The Role of the Volunteer

As a volunteer, you will be assisting staff in daily tasks to make the Library a better place for its customers. The Volunteer Program will evolve allowing for new library projects and programs. The time that you give as a volunteer is valued by all of the Library staff.

Becoming a Volunteer

Volunteers who need to accumulate community service hours for school, community organizations or clubs are permitted. Follow the normal volunteer application procedure and note the school, organization or club on your application along with hours required.

The Library will not consider volunteer applicants that need to fulfill court ordered community service hours.

A volunteer applicant must be 14 years of age. There may be an exception for those younger who would like to volunteer for "service learning" requirements (i.e. school, church, clubs, etc). They may be considered for volunteer positions dependent upon or if there is a need. In these cases a parent/legal guardian may be required to volunteer with the student. These are short term volunteer assignments.

The Library will attempt to place a volunteer in a position that meets that volunteer's interests and abilities but Library need will be the primary criteria. Volunteer assignments cover a wide range of responsibilities; sometimes an assignment may not be suitable. If so, discuss the matter with the manager of the area in which you volunteer or the HR Coordinator who will try to work out a change of assignment.

To become a volunteer you must meet the following terms:

Complete and return the Volunteer Application to any Library location

Complete a brief in-person or over the phone placement interview

Accept the volunteer assignment that is offered

Meet with the manager of the department or location you will be volunteering for to sign appropriate paperwork and receive the Volunteer Handbook and orientation.

Volunteers will receive an orientation including a tour of the building where assigned, and introduction to the Library staff at that location. They will receive additional orientation and training relative to those specific volunteer assignments.

The department/branch supervisor to whom you are assigned will handle the scheduling. Problems regarding scheduling may be discussed with the department/branch supervisor.

The program coordinators (Deputy Director and HR Coordinator) reserve the right to move volunteers to other assignments if the need for a volunteer is greater than where he/she is currently placed. The Library or the volunteer may end the volunteer arrangement at any time.

What you can expect as a volunteer:

Be given appropriate assignments with consideration to life experiences, skills, and availability;

Receive adequate orientation and training;

Be provided with proper supplies and work space;

To be treated as a respected member of the work team;

To be informed of any changes in policies or procedures;

Be able to express your opinions and ideas.

What the Library expects from the volunteer:

To fulfill attendance commitments;

Call in advance when unable to volunteer;

Approach assignments with eagerness and sincerity;

Complete assignments according to direction;

Complete time sheets in order to keep an accurate record of hours served;

Wear a volunteer badge when volunteering;

Treat customers and fellow workers honestly and politely;

Respect for customers, staff and Library policies.

Benefits of being a Volunteer

Use of the staff room for breaks;

New skills;

Job references/college recommendations;

Fine free status (individual volunteer only)

Volunteer Policy

Policies and procedures for the Volunteer Program are developed and implemented by the Deputy Director and HR Coordinator, subject to approval by the Library Director. Policies and procedures may be changed or deleted at the discretion of the Deputy Director and HR Coordinator, with approval from the Director. All volunteers will be notified of any changes. The Volunteer Handbook is available to any volunteer and is on file in all departments and Library branch facilities as well as the Volunteer Desk located in the Main Library staff lounge.

This Volunteer Handbook outlines volunteer responsibilities and benefits as well as Volunteer Program policies and will be given to all new volunteers.

Announcements concerning volunteers will be posted on the bulletin board above the volunteer desk in the Main Library staff lounge as well as in designated areas at Library branch facilities. The Deputy Director (419.521.3127) or HR Coordinator (419.521.3147) are available for questions or issues of any kind.

Equal Opportunity - General Statement of Policy

It is the policy of the Library to provide equal opportunity to applicants and employees; and to administer all personnel policies and practices such as recruitment, hiring and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion or national origin, sex, age, physical or mental handicap or disability or liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States.

The Volunteer Program will adhere to the Library's Equal Opportunity Policy

Ethics

A volunteer is subject to certain ethical standards. Honesty, reliability and discretion are the traits of an ethical person. A good volunteer, like any other valuable worker, tells the truth, respects the property of others, and refrains from careless acts or words. Noncompliance of certain ethical standards could result in dismissal from the volunteer program. Please see page 12: (Discipline and Dismissal)

Confidential Information

Protected by the Ohio Ethics Law, all Library customers have a right of privacy and confidentiality regarding the collection of personal information and the use they make of the Library facilities, collections and website. We have an obligation to our customers to maintain their confidentiality and respect their privacy. As you work with the staff, you may be exposed to information of a confidential nature. Such information is not to be shared with anyone else including family, friends or acquaintances. No one is permitted to remove or make copies of any records, reports or documents. Noncompliance will be subject to dismissal and/or possible legal action.

Parking

At Main Library, volunteers are permitted to park in the public garage or in the public parking lot west of Mulberry. Branch Managers will inform branch volunteers where it is permissible to park at their Library location.

Daily Sign In

Each time you volunteer, record your time on the volunteer time sheet to the nearest quarter hour. Volunteer time sheets are located in the volunteer notebook at the volunteer desk in the Main Library staff room, or at your Library Branch location. Sign your time sheet the first time you come in each month. We need this information for several reasons:

- Create individual permanent records of volunteer service;
- Report statistics concerning the volunteer program to the Deputy Director;
- Give an account of volunteer hours to worker's compensation.

When filling in the time sheet at each location, the volunteer needs to round his/her time to the nearest quarter hour. It is also necessary to sign the volunteer time sheet the first time the volunteer comes to volunteer every month. The time sheets are collected at the end of every month. The times recorded on the volunteer time sheets are used to:

The Deputy Director reserves the right to correct time sheet inaccuracies. The changes will be clearly marked and initialed. The volunteer time sheet must not reflect time spent as a customer. Volunteers are permitted in non-public areas of the Library only when they are actually volunteering.

Personal Belongings

The Library assumes no liability for personal items that are lost, damaged or stolen. Please do not bring items of value with you when you volunteer.

At Main Library, lockers are available for your coat and personal belongings. The locks are located in each locker. The keys to the lockers are located on the bulletin board at the volunteer desk. Please return the keys when you are done at the end of your volunteer work day. These lockers are intended for daily use and not for permanent use by one volunteer.

Ask Branch Managers where to place your personal items at branch locations.

Volunteer Appearance

Each volunteer is a reflection of the Library. Personal cleanliness is an important factor. Volunteers should be dressed neatly and refrain from wearing sweatpants while volunteering. Jeans are acceptable as long as they are neat.

The list below indicates dress that is not appropriate for a volunteer to wear while working at the Library. This is not intended to serve as an all-inclusive list; the supervisor reserves the right to send volunteers home who are not dressed appropriately.

- Torn, patched, or frayed clothing
- Any tight form fitting clothing
- Halter, tube or tank tops, leggings, stirrup pants and other extreme form-fitting garments
- Any neckline that could be too low cut or revealing
- Muscle shirts
- Shorts
- Skirts should be of a length that would completely cover appropriate body parts when standing, kneeling, bending, etc.
- Bare midriffs (bare skin showing between pants and tops)
- Sheer clothing
- Sweat suits/warm-up suits, or sweat pants, exercise and yoga pants
- Hats or head coverings not related to or required by a volunteer's religious practice
- Any flimsy, foam beach-type sandals
- Appropriate undergarments are to be worn at all times
- All practices for good personal hygiene must be applied

Volunteer Badge

You are required to wear a volunteer badge while volunteering at the Library. The badge does not identify the volunteer by name but informs customers and staff that you are a volunteer at the Library. The volunteer badge is located at the Volunteer Desk at Main Library and each Library branch facility. Volunteer badges are not allocated to each volunteer so please leave the badge at the facility where you volunteer for other volunteers to use.

Time Commitments

The amount of time given by a volunteer will depend upon the assignment and the arrangements made with the department/branch supervisor. We encourage you to keep your time commitment—the Library needs you. The staff in your department/branch counts on your participation and support. Whenever possible, changes in scheduling should be discussed ahead of time. If you cannot report to work, it is your responsibility to contact the department/branch supervisor or the HR Coordinator.

Breaks

A 15 minute break for every four hours of volunteering is permitted. You should always let the department/branch supervisor know when you are leaving your assignment area. Volunteers can use the staff room. The staff room is for staff members and volunteers only, not friends or family members. Non-public work space is off limits except when you are volunteering at the Library.

Visitors

Your friends may be interested in what you do as a volunteer at the Library. However, please do not bring visitors with you or spend time with them while you are volunteering.

Printer/Copy Expenses

A volunteer may make five copies or print five pages per day on the Library's printer for personal use before incurring a charge. All copies after five will cost the normal rate.

Use of Library Equipment and Telephone

Care must be exercised by each volunteer who works with valuable equipment. Common sense guidelines include but are not limited to:

- Don't use equipment unless trained to do so

- Seek staff assistance if equipment is not working properly

- Refrain from using equipment for personal needs

- Personal use of Library telephones is not allowed except in the case of an emergency.

- Making and receiving calls on personal cell phones should be confined to non-public areas, workrooms or staff lounge and should be kept brief. Cell phones should be kept on silent or vibrate when in the Library.

Smoking, Eating, & Drinking

Library staff and volunteers need to maintain the professional atmosphere that the public expects. Food consumption is permitted in the staff room. Covered drinks are allowed in the Library. Main Library and all Library branch facilities are smoke free; therefore, volunteers at Main Library who choose to smoke may do so outside the Main Library facilities only at the south side exit (near the Technical Services Department), facing Library Way. Volunteers at the Library branch facilities must ask the Branch Manager where the designated area for smoking is allowed. Volunteers are required to dispose of their own cigarette butts. Use of alcohol or illegal drugs is strictly prohibited as is the sale, distribution, possession or manufacture of illegal drugs on the premises of the Library.

Fine Free Status

Volunteers must check out Library materials according to borrowing procedures. Materials that are removed from the Library without being checked out will be considered stolen. Volunteers will not have to pay fines on overdue materials while they are actively volunteering at the Library. Volunteers must return the materials in a timely manner. Fines accumulated prior to volunteering will not be waived. If a volunteer abuses the fine free status, it will be discontinued. Volunteers will pay fines on all lost or damaged materials.

Employment at Mansfield/Richland County Public Library

Employment at the Library should not be expected and volunteer status does not impact hiring decisions; however, volunteers are welcome to apply for open positions for which they are qualified.

Changes in Personal Information

The HR Department requires current personal information on each volunteer at the Library. The information is needed to contact the appropriate persons in case of an emergency, and when the supervisor must find substitutes for volunteers who may be unavailable. Please notify the HR Office of any change of address, name, telephone number and emergency contact information.

Incident/Injury Reports

The safety of patrons and staff at the Library is important. Volunteers who witness an incident/injury will assist in filing an incident report.

Volunteers injured while volunteering at the Library should report to their supervisor to document the incident. This report must be filed immediately. All incident/injury reports involving volunteers will be kept on file in the HR Office in accordance with the Library's records retention policy.

Fire and Evacuation Plan

If a fire alarm sounds, staff and volunteers are responsible for assisting customers out of the building. During your orientation and tour of the building you will be shown the location of the fire exits. When the fire alarm sounds, everyone immediately leaves the building. Keep in mind:

- Follow the lead of the staff;

- Do not use the elevators at Main Library;

- Remain calm and assist customers to the nearest exit;

At Main Library, be careful of the fire doors that drop in the archways between the second floor lobby area and the Children's Department and Adult Services;

- Exit the building and walk across the street until the all clear is given.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited by all volunteers, staff, supervisors, and members of management. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature when:

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle or not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors
- Sexual jokes and innuendoes
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or deficiencies
- Leering, whistling or touching
- Insulting or obscene comments or gestures
- Display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures
- Other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature

This policy describes conduct that is prohibited in the workplace and in any work-related setting whether or not the incidents occur during working hours. The Library takes sexual harassment very seriously. If a volunteer believes they have experienced any of the above situations they should report it immediately to their supervisor and the HR Coordinator upon which the alleged sexual harassment will be investigated.

Solicitation

Solicitation is not permitted in the Library.

Leave of Absence

Volunteers may on occasion find that they are unable to meet the commitment to their assignment. In a timely manner, a leave of absence can be requested by contacting the HR Coordinator. In order to take a leave of absence a volunteer must:

- Discuss the situation with the HR Coordinator
- Agree upon a return date
- Contact the HR Coordinator prior to scheduled return date
- In the case of emergency, contact the HR Coordinator at 419.521.3147

Volunteer Resignation

If you have found that you are no longer able to volunteer, please inform your supervisor and the HR Coordinator. It is very important for us to know that we will no longer be able to count on your volunteer services. The HR Coordinator will also ask that you fill out an exit evaluation form regarding your experience at the Library.

Discipline and Dismissal

To ensure continuous and successful operation of the Library and the Volunteer Program, and to minimize disruptions and conduct that interferes with the Library function, certain rules and policies are adopted. Infraction of such rules will be considered just cause for disciplinary action, including dismissal as a volunteer.

When a volunteer's performance is questioned it will be necessary to have a discussion and/or investigation with the volunteer about performance issues, unsatisfactory behavior or violation of Library or HR Department policies and procedures. Such a discussion may come from the Department Supervisor or the HR Coordinator.

Depending on the situation, certain options may include but are not limited to:

- Specific improvements may be agreed upon

- Additional training may be necessary

- Reassignment

- Time off pending reassignment

- The volunteer may choose to resign.

The Department Supervisor may request reassignment of any volunteer, however dismissal of volunteers shall be the sole responsibility of the HR Coordinator or the Deputy Director; the Director will be kept informed.

The following is the basis of disciplinary action and dismissal after warning. Under these situations, a volunteer will not be discharged without first having been notified that a repetition of the offense will make him or her liable to dismissal:

- Failure to conduct oneself in a professional manner

- Violation of policies or rules when the degree of such violation does not justify immediate dismissal without notice

- Falsifying volunteer time records

- Improper dress

- Failure to carry out instructions of the supervisor in charge.

The following will be the basis of dismissal without notice. This list includes but is not limited to:

- Violation of any law or regulation giving special attention to, carrying concealed weapons, fighting or attempting bodily injury to oneself or others, drunkenness, stealing, embezzlement, or malicious mischief which results in the injury of others or damage of property, use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol.

- Breach of confidentiality and/or falsifying any Library record.

- Use of profane or abusive language toward fellow volunteers, staff, supervisors or customers.

- Willful or gross negligent conduct in care and use of Library property.

Complaint or Problem Resolution

When volunteers have a complaint and/or problem the following procedure will be followed:

Any volunteer with a complaint must first discuss it fully with the immediate supervisor. Should they not reach an agreement on the matter a meeting with the HR Coordinators will be held as soon as possible to try to resolve the problem. A record of these proceedings must be kept by the HR Coordinator in the volunteer's file.

Exception to this procedure may be made when the complaint or problem involves the immediate supervisor directly. In this instance, the volunteer may contact the HR Coordinator who will discuss the complaint with the Deputy Director.

Volunteer Referrals

Library volunteers are very special. If you have friends or family members interested in volunteer opportunities at the Library, refer them to:

Volunteer Program
M/RCPL
43 West Third Street
Mansfield, OH 44902
419.521.3127

Holidays

Library Closed:

New Year's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve Day
Christmas Day

Library Open:

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day
Columbus Day
Veteran's Day

The Library will close at 5 PM on Thanksgiving Eve and New Year's Eve. Additional holiday time the Library is to be closed may be determined by the Board.

If you are scheduled to volunteer on a holiday when the Library is open and you do not wish to come in, contact the department/branch supervisor with whom you are working or the HR Coordinator at 419.521.3147.

Volunteer Program Handbook

