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## **RICHLAND LIBRARY VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

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# WELCOME

Dear Volunteer:

Welcome to Richland Library's Volunteer Program! I am so pleased that you are interested in volunteering with the library.

Our vision is to improve the quality of life for everyone who interacts with the library. To be successful, we rely on the effort and commitment of our volunteers. Volunteers are an important resource and their accomplishments make significant contributions to the library. In 2018-2019, 585 volunteers gave Richland Library more than 19,800 hours of service, valued at nearly \$430,000. Now, you will take part in our day to day work and service to our customers and community.

In this handbook you will find the essential information you need to learn about our volunteer opportunities and the resources you will need to get started.

**Application:** You will be asked to complete a written application in Richland Library's volunteer management system (CERVIS) that includes personal information and this will create your profile. You will also need to apply for a specific assignment or "open project" and location. <https://www.richlandlibrary.com/volunteer>

**Orientation and Training:** After the application is completed, you will be contacted for an interview. Most applicants will be called or emailed for the interview at the location where the volunteer service will take place. Interviews usually take 30 minutes. If all agree that the volunteer and placement are a good fit for each other, the next step is the orientation. Normally the orientation and training will be at the site of service. Both orientation and training will be scheduled prior to your assignment as a volunteer. All volunteers must participate in the orientation and training process.

**Screening:** Library staff may contact references provided on the volunteer application. Some volunteer positions require Richland Library to conduct background checks with the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

Thank you for donating your time and talents to Richland Library. We look forward to the contributions you will make to our continued growth and success.

Sincerely,

*Katy Watkins, CVA*  
Volunteer Coordinator

# THE ORGANIZATION

## About the Library

Awarded the National Medal in 2017 by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Richland Library is a vibrant, contemporary organization that provides resources and information that advance the Midlands. Offering state-of-the-art technology, a variety of literary and cultural programs and 13 bustling facilities located throughout the county, Richland Library provides a truly customizable, modern library experience for residents and visitors alike. We're all about providing access to information and technology. [#AccessFreely](#)

## Richland Library Mission Statement

We help our customers learn, create and share.

## Richland Library Vision

We enhance the quality of life for our entire community.

## Richland Library Promises (Values)

We are welcoming.

We are caring.

We are committed to offering you the best.

We are helpful.

We are fresh and fun.

## Volunteer Program Statement of Purpose

Richland Library utilizes the skills of volunteers in order to expand our ability to provide the best possible experiences and services for our customers and community. We are committed to involving those members of the community who have skills and interest plus available personal time, in Library activities. Through volunteer service to the Library, citizens of our community enhance public support for the library, assist the library in providing a higher level of service to our customers and find personal satisfaction through their contributions to the library.

# VOLUNTEER RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES & EXPECTATIONS

## Volunteer Rights:

- Be carefully interviewed and appropriately assigned;
- Receive new volunteer orientation and position specific training;
- Do meaningful and satisfying work in a comfortable environment;
- Be supported in your role and given the resources to accomplish the assigned task;
- Be safe on the job;
- Have choices and feel comfortable about saying "no";
- Receive feedback on your work, and;
- Receive recognition for your contribution.

The greatest reward any volunteer can receive is the satisfaction of doing volunteer work itself. As a volunteer for Richland Library, you will also gain a broader knowledge of how the library functions and know that you are contributing your time and talent to a worthwhile public service organization.

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

- Support the vision and mission of the library,
- Be reliable and punctual,
- Be trustworthy;
- Respect confidentiality;
- Respect the rights of people you work with;
- Carry out the specified job volunteer duties or let us know if the assignment doesn't meet your expectations or needs;
- Give productive feedback;
- Be accountable and accept feedback;
- Be committed to the program;
- Avoid overextending yourself;
- Accept guidance/decisions of staff in fulfilling your volunteer duties;
- Adhere to the volunteer agreement;
- Address areas of conflict or concern with the volunteer supervisor;
- Participate fully in required orientation and training;
- Wear your name badge and record volunteer hours as instructed;
- Update contact information as needed in CERVIS and emergency contact information with Richland Library Safety & Security;
- Notify staff at earliest opportunity when you will be late or unable to volunteer; and,
- Follow Richland Library guidelines, procedures and Code of Conduct

## **What Volunteers Can Expect from Volunteer Supervisors**

### **The Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities Include:**

- Provide training and support to all volunteer supervisors;
- Recruit volunteers;
- Manage online CERVIS volunteer management program;
- Assist with the receiving and screening of volunteer applications;
- Assist with the interview and selection process;
- Coordinate and assist with the orientation and training of volunteers;
- Develop and recommend guidelines and procedures for the volunteer program;
- Provide monthly system-wide statistics on volunteer data;
- Handle personnel matters relating to volunteers;
- Implement volunteer recognition activities, and;
- Maintain relationships with organizations that provide volunteer placement or have mutually beneficial volunteer programs.

### **The Branch Manager / Department Head Responsibilities Include:**

- Identify staff member/s responsible for the evaluation and oversight of volunteer program within their location and/or department;
- Determine the number of volunteers which can be effectively engaged in service at any given time and the number of hours the volunteer may work, in relation to the amount of time and supervision required;
- Provide accessibility and devices to enable volunteer sign-in into to CERVIS to track service hours and update profile;
- Refer personnel matters regarding volunteers to the Volunteer Coordinator;
- Participate in volunteer recognition activities, and;
- Encourage staff support and cooperation with the volunteer program.

### **The Volunteer Supervisor Responsibilities Include:**

- Interview volunteer applicants;
- Recommend assignments/projects and work schedules;
- Train volunteers in assigned duties;
- Supervise volunteers;
- Ensure accuracy of volunteer records in CERVIS;
- Ensure volunteers enter all their service hours monthly;
- Monitor the volunteer's performance as needed, and;
- Participate in volunteer recognition activities.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPECTATIONS**

The culture at Richland Library includes high levels of customer service. Volunteers are expected to give the same level of service when interacting with staff, customers and fellow volunteers. We expect volunteers to join staff in fulfilling Our Promises (values) to be welcoming, caring, committed to offering their best, being helpful, bring a fresh perspective and have fun while serving!

# THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

## Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers complete a variety of tasks in all branches of the library. Visit [www.richlandlibrary.com/volunteer](http://www.richlandlibrary.com/volunteer) to learn more about other volunteer opportunities.

*Adult Volunteers* work in the Main Library and other library locations to supplement the daily work of the library, support programming and provide a higher level of service to our customers and community. Adult volunteers typically work a one to two-hour shift weekly. Opportunities and activities vary by location, but may include:

- *Customer Experience Volunteer* - collecting books customers put on hold, shelving books, preparing for programs, assisting with maker space activities and workshops, etc.;
- *Outreach Volunteer* - assist staff with outreach programs including bringing books to homebound customers and program support;
- *Special Event/Project Volunteer* - assisting with author events, special projects or various evening and weekend activities;
- *Computer Volunteers* - assisting customers utilizing public computers and with computer classes;
- *Book Sale Volunteer* - support Richland Library Friends and Foundation by working weekly to sort and shelve donated books and materials; and operating the quarterly book sales; or
- *Collections Management Volunteer* - assist staff in the unpacking, preparation and management of collection materials.

*Teen Volunteers* are youth in 8th-12th grade (13-18 years of age) and work in the Main Library Children's Room and other locations to supplement the daily functioning at a library location. Opportunities and activities may include:

- *Teen Library Apprentice Volunteers* - help sort and organize books and materials, tidy after events and in play areas, gather materials for displays, prepare materials for library programs, etc., and;
- *Teen Advisory Board (TAB)* - meets monthly to plan programs and perform service projects at select locations.

*Junior Volunteers* are youth in 6th - 8th grade (11-13 years of age) and are actively involved in the library and assist staff with the Children's Room with various tasks. Volunteers typically work a one-hour shift weekly. Opportunities include:

- *Junior Library Apprentice* – help sort and organize books and materials, tidy after events and in play areas, prepare materials for library program, etc., and;
- *Tween Advisory Group (TAG)* – groups typically meets monthly on Saturdays to plan programs and perform service projects at select locations.

## Volunteer Commitment

Library volunteer positions require training and therefore a longer commitment of six months to a year is preferred. A typical shift is one to two hours once a week. The library relies on our volunteers to commit to a set schedule each week. We want to be prepared for you and we also find that coming in weekly helps retain what you have learned.

If you are interested in one time or short term service volunteer opportunities consider Volunteer Match, [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org) or United Way of the Midlands Volunteer Center, <http://uway.galaxydigital.com/need/>

## Library Closings

The library is closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Staff Engagement Day
- Easter Sunday
- Memorial Day Sunday and Monday
- Independence Day
- Labor Day Sunday and Monday
- Customer Service Improvement
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after
- Christmas Day and the day before or after

## Recruitment of Volunteers

Volunteer positions are filled selectively at the discretion of the library, but without regard to race, religion, color, political affiliation, physical abilities, national origin, gender or age, except where gender or age is a bona fide occupational qualification. The library reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer or volunteer position at any time based on the needs of the library.

## Age

The minimum age to volunteer is 11.

## Volunteers Needing Accommodations and their Caregivers (if applicable)

Volunteers needing accommodations and their caregiver (if applicable) will need to complete a volunteer application. Volunteers/caregivers are placed as able and appropriate. Both of their time should be collected as volunteer service hours.

## Court Assigned Community Service

Court assigned volunteers are welcomed and reviewed on a case by case basis. For consideration submit an online application at <https://www.richlandlibrary.com/volunteer>  
Contact the Volunteer Coordinator for more information at 803-929-3436.

# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Attendance

Each library location will work with individual volunteers to establish a mutually agreeable schedule. Volunteer schedules ensure that the library has the coverage needed to complete the daily work of the library and provide excellent personalized service to our customers. Your work is important but we do understand that travel, vacations, appointments, illness, etc. interfere with volunteer service.

Volunteers are expected to abide by their schedule and to notify their direct supervisor in the event of a change at the earliest opportunity.

## Behavior

As a volunteer, you are representing Richland Library to the public. All volunteers are expected to behave in a professional manner, especially when addressing library customers or staff.

## Confidentiality

Any information regarding customers and their use of the library is confidential and should not be shared. In the same spirit, the library honors the confidentiality of information regarding volunteers.

## Official Statements

*Any official statement involving Richland Library must receive approval from the Community Relations Department. The official statement may cover - but is not limited to - the library's policies, procedures, resources, services or programs.* If approached by the media, volunteers should respond by saying, "I don't feel as though I am the best person to address this topic. Please contact Richland Library's Community Relations Department for more information."

## Social Media Policy

Richland Library appreciates the importance of online social networking opportunities for promoting Library goals and maintaining relevance. To that end, the Richland Library Marketing and Digital Strategy Department manages a social media strategy that incorporates strategic timing of social media "posts" as well as public engagement in order reach customers and grow the positive impact of the Richland Library brand.

When posting on these social networks and other online forums, the distinction between an individual's personal brand/identity and the Library's may become blurred. In order to keep that distinction as clear as possible, and support the library's branding and marketing efforts, Richland Library volunteers are encouraged to share or re-post/tweet the library's existing messages to your Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter and/or Instagram accounts. And, when posting, please ensure that all posts follow Richland Library Volunteer Program Policies and Procedures. Be careful not to post any proprietary (including logo and trademarks) content or disrespectful posts.



## Screening

Location staff will interview the volunteer to determine if the library is a good match for the individual's interest and library's need for volunteer service. Library staff may contact references provided on the volunteer application to assist with screening. Some volunteer positions require the library to conduct background checks with the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and South Carolina Department of Social Services.

## Orientation and Training

All volunteers are expected to review the volunteer manual **prior** to the interview (<https://www.richlandlibrary.com/volunteer>). If placed as a volunteer, location staff will provide the required volunteer orientation and training.

## Recognition

Volunteer contributions enable the library to extend and expand its services. As a thank you to our volunteer contributions, we recognize the volunteers in several ways to include: volunteer appreciation activities, volunteer recognition events; and selection of our Richland Library Volunteers of the Year.

Richland Library facilitates the Richland Library Hall of Fame to recognize individual volunteers (both adult and youth) who have contributed a designated number of hours or years in service to the library. These volunteers have shown long term support for the library and are deserving of special recognition. On an annual basis, adult volunteers are nominated who have reached either 1,500 hours or 15 years of service. Each winner's name is displayed in the Main Library and recognized at the annual volunteer awards event. Other adult and youth volunteers can be added by a special nomination.

An additional benefit for volunteers is the fee waiver for volunteers who live outside of Richland County. Currently, the non-resident fee is \$65. Once a volunteer has reached 150 hours (or one year) and continues to volunteer at least 50 hours per year, the volunteer may request a waiver of the non-resident fee.

## Volunteer Verification Requests for Employment and Educational Purposes

Supervisors of volunteers can provide references for educational and employment purposes. References include verification of service, length of service and personal experience with volunteer. Persons providing references should include a statement that their personal reflection does not reflect views and opinions of Richland Library. Please allow up to seven working days to respond to all volunteer verification requests.

Volunteers can access reports of their volunteer service themselves. To learn how please view tutorial at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6mtlXplfXQC>.

## **Tax Benefits**

Expenses such as bus fare, gas or parking fees as a result of volunteer service may be deductible. Information is available from the IRS ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)), the South Carolina Department of Revenue, a tax advisor, accountant or attorney. Please contact your tax advisor for advice on deductibles relevant to you. None of this information is to be taken as official tax or legal advice.

## **Breaks**

Staff lounges or other designated areas are available to volunteers for a break if a volunteer works a significant number of hours. It is the responsibility of the volunteer supervisor to inform volunteers of these locations. Eating and drinking at the library should be confined to these designated areas. The volunteer should speak with the supervisor to schedule a break during the volunteer time.

## **Parking**

For the Main Library, parking is generally available in the lower customer parking lot behind the library at Park and Washington Streets. Parking at meters is free after 6:00 p.m. and on the weekends.

Volunteers at branch libraries will receive parking instructions from their supervisor.

## **Smoking**

Smoking on library property is not permitted.

## **Beverages and Food**

Volunteers should use beverage containers that can be sealed to prevent spillage and only consumed in approved areas. Bringing food into the library is not permitted. Those volunteers who require a snack break should discuss options with their volunteer supervisor. Breaks are usually reserved for those who work three or more hours at one time.

## **Personal Appearance Please remember you represent the library when you**

**wear your** nametag. Volunteers should dress neatly in clean and presentable clothing. T-shirts with inappropriate messages, hats (unless approved), short skirts and shorts, torn clothing, low cut tops, and other revealing garments are not allowed. All representatives of the library, must present a professional appearance to the public. Volunteers deemed not appropriately dressed by staff will be informed and sent home to return for the next regularly scheduled shift. Because of the nature of the work we do we suggest you wear comfortable, closed toe shoes to avoid injury.

## **Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices**

We want you to perform to your highest ability and focus on your assigned tasks. Cell phones and all other electronic/digital devices should not be in use during your volunteer session. With approval from the volunteer supervisor, volunteers working in non-public areas *may* be permitted to use devices with earbuds. Please let your volunteer supervisor know if there are urgent personal or special circumstances that require your use of the phone while you are volunteering at the library. Please also store your devices safely. The Library is not responsible for lost or stolen personal devices.

## **Library Telephones**

Library telephones are used to conduct library business. Local personal calls, either incoming or outgoing, are not allowed unless approved by the volunteer supervisor.

## **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 Library will make every effort to notify volunteers of any inclement weather closings. Information will also be posted on the website and on the main library general information line (803-799-9084).

## **Safety**

Richland Library does not carry or maintain health, medical, or disability insurance for volunteers. Injuries that occur to library volunteers while at the library are not covered under the South Carolina Worker's Compensation Law. If you are injured while volunteering at the Library, notify your supervisor immediately to complete an incident report. The library does have a general liability insurance policy.

In the event of a fire drill or actual fire, leave the building immediately using the exit designated for the location/department. Emergency exit floor charts are located in each department. Also, use the stairs rather than the elevator or escalator. In the event of a tornado, follow the instructions from your supervisor.

Please stay aware of your surroundings and if you notice anything of concern, alert staff and/or security. If you are uncomfortable walking to your car, please ask a member of security to escort you to your car.

Volunteers working one on one with customers and feel that the customer is being hurt, harming themselves, or engaging in illegal activity must report their concern to their volunteer supervisor and security. Volunteers can also report their concern of child abuse or neglect to Richland County Department of Social Services.

Customers and staff who feel a volunteer's behavior or actions are aggressive, harmful, sexual or illegal must report their concerns to library staff and security. Following an investigation, law enforcement will be requested if necessary and the volunteer terminated.

## **Corrective Action**

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

- Verbal discussion;
- Additional coaching;
- Transfer to another location or volunteer position;
- Possible suspension, and/or;
- Dismissal from the volunteer program.

## Refusal and Dismissal

Library staff has the right to refuse or dismiss a volunteer. Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures of the program are subject to dismissal. Active volunteers who violate any Richland 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 will be considered as a resignation from your volunteer position and/or dismissal. Dismissal is within the discretion of the Volunteer Supervisor, Branch/Department Manager and/or Volunteer Coordinator.

Possible grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Gross misconduct or insubordination;
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Theft of property or misuse of library materials;
- Failure to abide by library procedures;
- Failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties;
- Habitual absenteeism and tardiness, and;
- Failure to follow Richland Library Volunteer Agreement.

South Richland is an at-will state. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Katy Watkins, CVA, Volunteer Coordinator at 803.929.3436 or by email at [kwatkins@richlandlibrary.com](mailto:kwatkins@richlandlibrary.com). Your feedback is always welcome and helps us strengthen our volunteer program.

# KEY LIBRARY POLICIES

## Policy of Non-Discrimination

Volunteers, like employees, are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Richland Library provides a working environment free from discomfort or pressure resulting from jokes, slurs, unwanted physical conduct and any harassment related to any protected status, including race, color, religion, national origin, gender, physical ability or age. If any volunteer feels that this policy has been violated by any person in the library (including another volunteer, staff person, or a member of the general public), he or she should report the alleged violation immediately to the volunteer supervisor or volunteer coordinator. Any investigation that is required will be kept as confidential as possible consistent with appropriate inquiries.

## Code of Conduct for Library Customers

It is the responsibility of each volunteer to be familiar with the Code of Conduct for Library Customers, however, this Code of Conduct also extends to staff and volunteers. All customers, staff, and volunteers must follow the guidelines set forth by the library.

The Board of Trustees of Richland Library adopted the Code of Conduct to provide a safe and comfortable environment for those using and working in the library facilities and utilizing its resources. Warnings are at the discretion of library staff. Ejections and loss of privileges are possible.

By using library facilities, all persons have consented to be searched in the event that the theft detection alarm activates upon exit. When you use the library, you agree to:

## Respect Staff, Volunteers and Customers

Conduct not permitted includes:

- Any action or behavior that is disruptive, disturbing or potentially harmful to others, including but not limited to fighting, challenging to fight or provoking violence;
- Loud talking and other noisy activities, including use of cell phones or other electronic devices;
- Blocking or interfering with the free movement of individuals;
- Offensive personal hygiene;
- Any acts or conduct in violation of federal, state or local laws, ordinances or regulations, including but not limited to: disorderly conduct; sexual activity; possession of illegal weapons of any type; and possession, consumption or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- Use of tobacco or electronic cigarettes in library buildings;
- Sleeping, loitering or remaining at the library for no obvious reason. Users must be engaged in a library activity such as reading, studying, doing research or participating in a library program;
- Soliciting, surveying, political campaigning, petitioning, selling of any kind, distributing or posting of materials not specifically authorized by the Executive Director are prohibited on library property;
- Using libraries for child-care services; leaving a child under 11 years of age for any amount of time (children 10 and under must be attended by someone 16 years of age or older); or leaving a child under the age of 18 for an excessive period of time or after closing;
- Leaving personal possessions unattended on library property; and
- Not wearing shoes or shirts in the library at all times.

## Respect Materials and Equipment

Conduct not permitted includes:

- Damaging, destroying or stealing any property of the library, library staff or customers;
- Taking library property or materials outside buildings without following established loan procedures or other authorization; and,
- Violating library procedures or policies.

## Respect Buildings and Property

Conduct not permitted includes:

- Acting in a manner that is potentially harmful to library buildings, property, users, staff (or *volunteers*) such as unauthorized use of another person's library card for any purpose;
- Improperly using furniture, equipment or materials;
- Bringing in any items, backpacks or other personal baggage that take up an excessive amount of space (limited to two pieces, each no larger than 20 inches in length, width or height), that restrict the movement of individuals, that present a potential harm, danger or distraction, or that have no usefulness in the library. Luggage, bedrolls, musical instruments, sports equipment, skateboards, skates (includes heellies), scooters and bicycles are examples of items that are prohibited;
- Consuming food outside designated areas or consuming drinks around library computers or equipment;
- Improperly using restrooms, including solicitation, meetings, bathing or shaving;
- Using or monopolizing library equipment, materials or facilities in an unauthorized manner that prevents others from using them, including but not limited to: library computers; library telephones; printers; copiers; and fax machines;
- Using non-public doors or any other non-public areas in an unauthorized manner;
- Using parking areas or other property in an unauthorized, improper or unsafe manner, including but not limited to use of skates or skateboards, bicycles and scooters. Vehicles parked improperly are subject to being towed at the owner's expense; and,
- Bringing animals, except service animals, into library facilities.

Any of these actions may result in the customer being asked to leave the library. Those who persist and refuse to leave the buildings and grounds when requested will be subject to their behavior being reported to local police. Repeat violators are subject to loss of library privileges.

## **CHILDREN'S USE OF THE LIBRARY POLICY**

In order to maintain a safe, orderly and proper environment for library use, the following policy is in effect:

- Parents or caregivers are responsible for the behavior, safety and supervision of their children at all times in the library and on library premises.
- Parents or caregivers must provide such reasonable supervision of their children as is appropriate based on the age and level of responsibility of each child.
- The library staff is not responsible for the safety, care, or supervision of children of any age, whether in the library or on library premises.
- Children age 10 and younger must be accompanied by an individual age 16 or older at all times and in all areas of the library except when participating in a library sponsored program. During programs, parents or caregivers of children age 10 and younger must remain in the library.
- Parents or caregivers should be aware of library opening and closing times and make suitable arrangements to meet and/or transport their children.
- Library staff is not responsible for the care and supervision of children prior to opening or after closing of the library. Law enforcement will be notified in the event of an unattended child at closing time.
- Staff will not transport children home or to any other destination under any circumstances.
- If the library must close in an emergency, library staff will make an effort to alert parents to make sure children will be picked up.
- Parents should not direct their children to the library in the event of emergency school closings in that the same conditions that have caused a school closing will probably also affect library operations.
- Children, like all other library users, are required to respect library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the library.
- Children engaging in disruptive or inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the library. Law enforcement will be requested if necessary.
- Parents or caregivers should be aware that the behavior of young children may at times be disturbing to other patrons; in this event, staff may request that they temporarily remove their children from the library to ease the situation.

*Reviewed April 27, 2020*