

Wilson County Public Library

Volunteer Policy

Purpose

Volunteer opportunities at the Wilson County Public Library (hereafter “WCPL”) are intended to:

- Supplement the efforts of paid library staff in meeting the demands for quality public service.
- Serve as a method for encouraging citizens to become familiar with the library and the services being offered.

WCPL may make use of the services of interested volunteers to supplement, but not replace, regular services provided by library staff. Volunteers will not be used in place of hiring full- or part-time staff. Volunteers may apply for paid positions under the same conditions as other outside applicants.

Definitions

Volunteer: Any individual, 16 years of age or older, who assists with work done at WCPL without remuneration. All volunteers must be formally accepted by the library prior to the performance of assigned tasks (see selection of volunteers).

Student Intern: Any high school or college student who performs volunteer work without remuneration as part of an authorized school program to earn academic credit. All interns must be formally accepted by the library prior to the performance of assigned tasks and are accepted under the same conditions as volunteers (see selection of volunteers).

Selection of Volunteers

Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications in relation to the needs of the library at any given time and based on the individual’s ability to commit to a consistent schedule of volunteer hours.

Interested individuals must complete a WCPL volunteer application and shelving test which will be reviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteer applications can be obtained at the Circulation Desk or through contact with the Volunteer Coordinator. Any volunteer under the age of 18 must have written permission from a parent or guardian to work at the library. Applicants will be interviewed to determine suitability for the service required. A brief operational orientation and overview will be delivered to the volunteer by the Volunteer Coordinator or appropriate supervising staff member. The volunteer, if accepted at this time, will be given their assigned workday(s) and time.

WCPL may check references and has the absolute right to decline anyone as a volunteer without cause or statement of reason. All volunteers must be free of criminal convictions. All personal information requested by the library and provided by volunteers is considered necessary for the normal conduct of business and is confidential in nature. It will not be

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disclosed to anyone, outside the course of normal business, without the volunteer's permission, except in cases of subpoena, court order, or other appropriate law enforcement request.

Volunteers will be given a copy of the description of volunteer tasks that apply to them specifically. Reasonably accurate documentation of duties performed is important to the organization and the volunteer. It also establishes the boundaries of responsibility for the volunteer.

Descriptions of volunteer tasks are subject to change depending on need. Over time, as the volunteer's interests, training, experience, performance, and the library's needs indicate, volunteers may change or add other responsibilities, thereby increasing their value to the library.

If there are no suitable volunteer opportunities, the volunteer is welcome to apply at another time.

Expectations

Volunteer expectations are as follows:

- Familiarize and abide by all Library procedures and policies.
- Present a positive image to the public as an ambassador of the library and of Wilson County. This includes always maintaining a professional, friendly demeanor and conducting interactions with dignity, courtesy, and consideration.
- Dress and groom appropriately for the environment and in keeping with work assignments.
- Regard all personal information or library use information about patrons or library staff as confidential. No information learned is to be discussed or transmitted to anyone except in the course of their official duties as a volunteer.
- Volunteers are not allowed in staff-only areas without direct supervision.
- Be open and honest regarding intent, goals, and skills.
- Accept only realistic assignments and have a clear understanding of the job.
- Carry out duties promptly and reliably.
- Cooperate with the staff and accept the guidance and direction of the supervisor and other library staff.
- Participate in any training required by the library.
- Discuss satisfactions, dissatisfactions, or any other concerns with the Volunteer Coordinator or supervising staff member so that they may be resolved.
- Understand the function of the paid staff, maintain a smooth working relationship with them, and stay within the bounds of volunteer responsibility.

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- Be punctual and notify your volunteer supervisor of absences as much in advance as possible.
- Complete all volunteer work within normal library hours when a supervisor is readily available. Exceptions may be made by the Library Director.
- Notify the volunteer coordinator if you change or end your volunteer time with the library.
- Keep a record of volunteer hours by signing in and out of the Volunteer Log.
- Be alert, sober, and drug free while volunteering and adhere to the WCPL commitment to maintain a drug and alcohol-free work environment.
- Respect that library-owned equipment and supplies are for library use only and may not be used for personal business.
- Understand that visits and telephone calls from family or friends during your assigned volunteer hours are generally not appropriate and should be kept to a minimum.
- Refrain from soliciting the public for support or contributions to any event or activity while working as a volunteer.
- Refrain from representing themselves as anything other than a volunteer while on assignment for the library, unless specifically authorized and to the extent specified in writing for a specific purpose.
- Refrain from using his/her affiliation as a volunteer with the library in connection with partisan politics, religious matters, or community issues.

General Provisions

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to create a contract between the volunteer or intern, WCPL, and Wilson County. Both the volunteer and WCPL have the right to terminate the volunteer's association with the library at any time, for any reason, with or without cause. Volunteer recognition is based on quality of performance and length of service. WCPL may, upon request, provide letters of reference for the volunteer, if deemed appropriate. Neither the County of Wilson nor the library provides any medical, health, accident, or worker's compensation benefits for any volunteer. In the event of an accident, an injury, or a medical situation occurring while working for the library, an Incident Report Form would need to be filled out by staff.

Examples and Descriptions of Volunteer Assignments

This list of assignments is not exhaustive and can be altered due to the needs of the library:

- Shelving: Sorting recently returned books, DVDs, and audiobooks and returning them to their appropriate shelf location.
- Shelf Reading: Reading the spines of the items on the shelf and rearranging any materials that are out of order.

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- Straightening Shelves: Straighten the materials on a shelf for uniformity.
- Patron Assistance: Assist patrons with matching books with their reading interests, book retrieval, and catalog searches.
- Program Help: Cutting, counting, organizing materials needed for programming.
- Processing materials: Preparing new items for checkout.
- Book Sale: Assist the WCPL Friends of the Library in their book sales.
- Library Decoration/Display and Maintenance: Help organize and set up displays throughout the library.
- Discards: Physically pull titles from shelves that have been tagged for removal from the collection. This may also include using a computer to remove these titles from the library catalog.
- Special projects/events assistance: Help with long-term projects. Help with special events that may occur outside library hours.
- Book Reviews: Writing reviews for other patrons on library materials.
- Exterior or Yard Maintenance: Picking up trash around the outside of the library and parking lot.