Policy Type: **Human resource**

Policy Number: HR – 07

Policy Title: **Volunteer policy**

Policy Approval Date: June 12, 2023

Policy Review Date:

SEVERN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY

The volunteer program of the Severn Township Public Library creates opportunities for community members to actively contribute to the library's vision of excellence. The library welcomes volunteers to participate in the operation of the library while performing a valuable service to the community, becoming more familiar with the library, and supplementing the efforts of paid staff. This volunteer policy provides guidance and direction to management, staff, and volunteers.

Section 1: Scope

1. Volunteers are used by the library to enrich and enhance library programs and services. Volunteers do not substitute for or replace paid staff.
2. This policy applies to all volunteers, including within activities that take place outside the library's primary facility.

Section 2: Responsibility for the program

1. The Chief Executive Officer, or designate, oversees and coordinates the volunteer program by:

- planning for effective volunteer utilization
- assisting staff in identifying productive and meaningful volunteer assignments
- recruiting suitable volunteers
- training staff to supervise volunteers effectively
- managing corrective action of volunteers
- tracking and evaluating the statistical data reflecting the contribution of volunteers to the library
- officially recognizing volunteers for their contributions
- maintaining liaisons with other volunteer-utilizing programs and organizations in the community

2. A system of records is maintained on each volunteer. Volunteer records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as paid staff personnel records.
3. The library will take responsibility for ensuring that liability insurance covers volunteers.

Section 3: Volunteer Position Descriptions

1. Opportunities for volunteers are proposed by staff to the CEO or designate.
2. Written volunteer proposals include a description of the volunteer assignment, duration of assignment, and a proposed start date. All staff should understand that successful recruitment of volunteers is enhanced by valuable and engaging volunteer work.

3. Volunteer position descriptions are developed in consultation with staff before proceeding with recruitment.
4. Volunteer position descriptions include a title, a summary of the assignment, a list of responsibilities, qualifications and benefits, any training requirements, the time commitment needed for the assignment, and the name of the supervisor to whom the volunteer reports.
5. The library's volunteer position descriptions are reviewed and updated at least every three years, or as needed when volunteer position descriptions substantially change.

Section 4: Tasks that may be performed by Volunteers
1. Volunteers will not perform any task or duty for which a license or certification is required if the volunteer does not possess such license or certification.
2. Volunteer tasks may include but are not limited to:

- shelf reading and shelving
- delivery of materials to home service patrons
- customer service for special service areas
- special projects
- care of library plants and/or gardens
- reading buddies
- advisory committees
- supporting staff in preparation for programs (crafts, etc)

Section 5: Eligibility for Volunteering
1. The term "volunteer" refers to a person who performs services for the library without compensation or expectation of compensation (beyond reimbursement for pre-approved specified expenses) and, who performs a task at the direction of, and on behalf of, the library.
2. The library also welcomes volunteers who are participating in student projects, corporate volunteer programs, and other volunteer referral programs.
3. The service of paid staff members as volunteers is accepted provided that the volunteer service is:

- initiated by the staff member
- provided voluntarily
- involves work that is outside the normal scope of duties and working hours for that staff member

4. Family members of paid staff can volunteer with the library but will not be placed under the direct supervision of their family members who are employed by the library.
5. The minimum age requirement for volunteers is 14. For positions that require handling of money or supervision of children, volunteers must be at least 16 years of age.

Section 6: Recruitment & Assignment
1. Volunteers are recruited on a proactive basis with the intent of broadening and expanding the involvement of the community in their library.

2. Applications to volunteer are also given appropriate consideration.
3. Volunteers are interviewed to ascertain their suitability for, and interest in, an assignment prior to being accepted. The interview determines the qualifications of the volunteer and their commitment to fulfill the requirements of the assignment. The interview should also answer any questions that the volunteer has about the library and the assignment.
4. A reference check may be made if appropriate for the volunteer assignment.
5. Volunteers in certain assignments may be asked to submit a Police Vulnerable Sector Check (PVSC). This cost will be reimbursed by the library should the volunteer be accepted for assignment. Potential volunteers who do not agree to the background check may be refused acceptance in the library's volunteer program.
6. No volunteer will begin their assignment until they have been officially accepted for that position and have completed all necessary screening as determined by the CEO or designate. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer must have submitted a volunteer application and received a copy of their volunteer position description.
7. Volunteers perform their duties in the presence of at least one paid staff member. Each volunteer will have a specific staff member to whom they report and who will be responsible for day-to-day support and supervision.
8. All volunteer placements begin with a 30-day probation period. During this time, the CEO, or designate, will support the volunteer with periodic informal check-ins. As well, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform the CEO, or designate, of any issues of concern. At the end of the probationary period, a formal interview between the CEO, or designate, and the volunteer will take place to evaluate the extent to which the objectives of both the library and the volunteer are being satisfied.
9. The library strives to meet volunteer expectations and offer a satisfactory volunteer experience for both parties. However, it may be deemed necessary to explore options such as renegotiating terms of the assignment, reassignment, referral to another organization or to the local volunteer centre, or placement termination.
10. Volunteers who are at any time reassigned to a new assignment will be interviewed for that assignment and receive all appropriate training for success before they begin.

Section 7: Orientation and Ongoing Training
1. Within the first three (3) months of becoming a volunteer, all volunteers are required to attend a general orientation session on the nature, purpose, and mission of the library and on the volunteer program; and, will be given a tour of the library.
2. Volunteers receive training to provide them with information on:

- knowledge and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment
- the operation of the program or service to which they are assigned
- the purpose and requirements of the assignment
- any health and safety hazards that may be encountered during the course of the assignment

3. Volunteers are required to complete training mandated by legislation. Additional library training may be made available to volunteers such as attendance at conferences and workshops that are relevant to their volunteer assignment.

Section 8: Responsibilities of Volunteers

Volunteers should actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and remain committed to the mission, vision, and values of the library. Further, volunteers are expected to abide by the established policies and procedures of the library.

1. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as volunteers, whether this information involves staff, volunteers, users or other persons, or involves overall library business. Failure to maintain confidentiality could result in immediate dismissal from the volunteer assignment and/or program
2. Volunteers should understand that the library may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to end the volunteer relationship. As well, the volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to end their volunteer relationship with the library; notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor.
3. When expecting to be absent from scheduled duty, the volunteer should inform their supervisor in advance so that a replacement may be found. Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer's assignment and may result in dismissal from the volunteer program.
4. Volunteers must obtain approval from the CEO, or designate, prior to taking any action or making any statement which might affect or obligate the library. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the media, lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations.
5. Volunteers are responsible for presenting a positive public image and must dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Volunteers must wear their volunteer identification badge while performing their duties.
6. Volunteers are expected to submit all timesheets and any other required information to the CEO, or designate, in a timely and accurate fashion.
7. Volunteers must be covered by their own vehicle insurance where their assignment involves the use of a vehicle. Volunteers are responsible for their own parking tickets and fines incurred during volunteer assignments.

Section 9: Dismissal

1. Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures of the library or who fail to satisfactorily perform their assignments may be dismissed.
2. While on Trillium Public Library property and/or while performing volunteer activities on behalf of the library, volunteers are expected to maintain a professional level of behaviour. If the behaviour of the volunteer is deemed to drop below acceptable standards, the supervisor will issue a written warning. If the volunteer's performance has not improved during a given time period, the volunteer will be dismissed from the program.
3. Grounds for immediate dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- insubordination
- unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission, vision, and values of the library
- theft of library property
- illegal, violent or unsafe acts
- abuse or mistreatment of library users, staff, partners, or other volunteers
- smoking in unauthorized areas
- intoxication during assigned shifts
- being under the influence of, possessing, selling, or otherwise being involved with illegal drugs
- behaviour that would reasonably be construed as harassment