

## **MOUNT VERNON CITY LIBRARY**

### **12. VOLUNTEER POLICY**

#### **12.01 PURPOSE**

The Mount Vernon City Library provides information, education and cultural enrichment for the citizens of Skagit County through a commitment to excellence in library services.

#### **12.02 ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteer workers are unpaid staff. They give of their time and energy to assist an organization or institution to conduct certain kinds of programs or specific services. Volunteers are generally part-time workers, giving time over periods of short or long duration. Volunteers often bring to an activity and an organization a new outlook, a different perspective, added talents, a fresh approach, and a stimulating concept. They also bring a different motivation.

#### **12.04 SELECTION OF VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications and the needs of the library at any given time. Selection of volunteers is the responsibility of the Library Director. A prospective volunteer must complete an application form (see appendix) and be interviewed by the Library Director and/or staff member who will be supervising the volunteer. Application forms of volunteers who are not selected will be kept on file for a period of one year, subject to review should a suitable volunteer position become available during that time.

#### **12.06 TRAINING AND SUPERVISION**

Volunteers will receive training in their assigned duties from a library staff member. The volunteer supervisor is the Library Director unless otherwise specified at the time of selection.

#### **12.08 WORK SCHEDULES**

Volunteers shall work during the hours when adequate supervision is available. Work schedules and specific commitments will be arranged individually by each volunteer and his/her supervisor.

#### **12.10 REMOVAL FROM SERVICE**

In the event that a volunteer is not able to adequately perform the duties assigned to him/her, that volunteer's supervisor may remove the volunteer from service. Whenever possible, the library will make an effort to reassign the volunteer. Should no other suitable volunteer position exist at the time, however, the volunteer will be asked to discontinue service and his/her application will be kept on file for one year, subject to review should a suitable position become available during that time. A volunteer selected for work on a special project will discontinue service when that project is completed, unless other arrangements have been made.

#### **12.12 PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS**

The following principles should be kept in mind when using volunteers:

1. Basic to the success of a volunteer program are prior planning and approval on the part of the staff and the governing body of the library.
2. All the principles and good practices that relate to sound manpower administration, such as planning, training, evaluation, and development, must be applied to volunteer workers. Planning for the use of library volunteers must include clarification of their status regarding such items as compensation for work-related injuries, insurance coverage when operating a library vehicle, and related benefits.
3. Library volunteers may have work-related expenses which are to be paid for or reimbursed by the library. The library's policies and procedures regarding such expenses should be established and made known to the volunteer before he/she begins library service.
4. If it is essential that a minimum or basic library program be initiated or developed by volunteers, this use of voluntary persons should be considered as a temporary measure pending the employment of staff.
5. Volunteers should not supplant or displace established staff position spaces.
6. Recognition and appreciation of all voluntary assistance is imperative. As volunteers receive no salary, other forms of appreciation and recognition are essential.
7. Volunteers should be assigned to meaningful work which makes use of their own talents, experience, training and interests.
8. Volunteers should be assigned to those jobs which they feel competent to do and for which they have been trained and given orientation.
9. Volunteer assignments should generally be for specific time periods to enable the library and the volunteer to review, evaluate, and reassign duties.
10. There should be a staff coordinator of volunteers.
11. Continued orientation and training is essential for volunteers to keep them informed of procedures, policies, etc., just as is the continued training of regular staff members.
12. The staff should have training on the use of volunteers and should share responsibility for the success of the volunteer program.
13. Written, detailed job descriptions for volunteers are necessary.
14. Realistic scheduling of volunteers is essential; this may mean some overlapping or duplication of personnel schedule, to cover emergencies and absences.
15. Programs and services must be planned bearing in mind the possible termination or unavailability of volunteer help.

Approved by the Board of Trustees November 2, 2000