

## **VOLUNTEERS**

### **General Objective**

Volunteers enhance the Amery Area Public Library's ability to fulfill its mission of enriching the community by connecting people with information, ideas and experiences. Volunteers also strengthen the library's relationship with the community. Volunteers are not used to replace the work done by paid library staff.

### **Volunteer Qualifications**

Individuals who volunteer with the Friends of the Amery Area Public Library Foundation, Inc. are not considered volunteers under this policy. The library does not accept volunteer work for community service fulfillment, or school mandated volunteers who need to complete their hours to meet a disciplinary requirement.

Volunteers under the age of 18 must have documented parental consent in the form of a signed youth library volunteer waiver form and cannot work more than three (3) hours per day. Generally, the library will not accept volunteers under the age of 12.

Individuals interested in volunteering at the library must fill out an application and a waiver form. Candidates will be accepted based on the library's needs matched with the candidates' qualifications. The library may not accept every volunteer application. A background check and, where applicable, reference check are required before any candidate can begin an assignment.

### **Screening and Background Checks**

Consistent use of appropriate application screening and background checks will help ensure that properly qualified individuals are selected to perform volunteer activities. Such techniques will also help screen out individuals whose background may render them unsuitable for particular activities. These are critical for volunteer positions that involve work or contact with youth, elderly, or other vulnerable groups.

As part of the screening process, it may be necessary to obtain the applicant's authorization to conduct appropriate background checks. The scope of these checks will be determined by the particular volunteer activities and may include:

- Personal and employment reference checks;
- Criminal background checks, including the use of information from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), state crime information center and state/local sex offender registries, and any applicable municipal court(s);
- Motor vehicle records checks;
- Prior employment and military background checks;

- Verification of education, training, certification and licenses; and,
- Personal, face-to-face interviews.

### **Liability**

The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, which includes volunteers who act on behalf of public entities, provides that no volunteer of a public entity is liable for harm caused by an act of omission when working on behalf of the entity. In order for a volunteer to be protected, the following requirements must be met:

- The volunteer must have been acting in the scope of their responsibilities for the library;
- Where appropriate or required, the volunteer must have been properly licensed, certified or authorized to perform the activity by state authorities;
- The harm must not have been caused by willful, reckless or criminal misconduct, gross negligence or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual who suffered the harm; and,
- The harm must not have been caused by the volunteer's operation of a vehicle for which the state requires the vehicle's owner or operator to possess a driver's license or to maintain insurance.

### **Compensation**

Volunteers are not employees of the library. A volunteer is a person recognized and authorized by the library to perform services for the library without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered. Per the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (29 CFR 553.103), library employees are prohibited from volunteering without pay to perform the same type of services the individual is employed to perform.

Neither the city of Amery nor the library provides any medical, health, accident or worker's compensation benefits for any volunteer.

### **Vehicle Operation**

Volunteers who operate their own motor vehicle during the course of their volunteer work will need a valid driver's license and proof of insurance.

### **Volunteer Expectations**

Each volunteer has an on-site supervisor and is required to follow the work procedures established by that staff member. The supervisor is responsible for management and guidance of a volunteer's work and for establishing a work schedule and tracking hours. All volunteers should keep their supervisor informed of their projects and work status and of any schedule changes. Volunteers are expected to perform in cooperation with library staff and comply with the same work rules, policies, and procedures applicable to library employees. Volunteers can be released from volunteer duties at any time at the discretion of the library.

*Approved by the Board of Trustees of the Amery Area Public Library, August 1, 2016*