

**Ames Public Library Policy**  
**Section: Administration**  
**Subject: Volunteer Services Policy**

**Board of Trustees**  
**Approved: 2/08**  
**Reviewed:**  
**Revised: 2/11, 3/14, 2/16**

Ames Public Library (APL) will utilize volunteers in order to enhance library services, programming and resources.

The Library will not be dependent on volunteers for daily operations. Volunteers will not replace or displace employed staff.

### **Definitions**

- Adult Volunteers: Individuals who are 18 years of age or older.
- Youth Volunteers: Students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Regular Volunteers: Individuals who are assigned long term, ongoing tasks in which shifts are scheduled on a regular weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis.
- Ad Hoc Volunteers: Individuals who volunteer for a single event or short term basis without intention or consideration of long term placement.
- Community Service Program: Participants include people who have a court-ordered community service obligation, people involved in court diversion programs, and students under disciplinary action from a school or APL.
- Fine Alternative Program: This program is offered to library patrons who would like to volunteer in order to reduce their library fines.

### **Eligibility**

Adults and students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade or older may participate in Volunteer Services programming, with the following exceptions:

- Groups of children younger than the 5<sup>th</sup> grade who are completing a service learning assignment through school or another organization. Adult supervision from the school or organization may be required.
- A child younger than the 5<sup>th</sup> grade accompanied by his/her parent, grandparent, or guardian.

### **Application Process**

1. Volunteers will complete an application and agree to the program guidelines and expectations. If the applicant is a minor, a parent or guardian must sign the application and agree to the terms stated in the guidelines.
2. The volunteer will also complete an interview with the Volunteer Services Coordinator or designee. Certain volunteer positions will also include an interview with the staff person responsible for supervising the specific volunteer activities.

The application process will not be required by service organizations that volunteer as a group and are supervised by an organization staff person or representative, and/or for which the volunteer activity is a single event.

## **Background Checks**

Regular volunteer applicants 18 years and older will be subject to a background check. The National Sex Abuse Registry will be checked for all regular volunteer applicants. Other agencies may be accessed depending on the library activity in which the volunteer is engaged. Background checks may be repeated during the volunteer's tenure at APL.

All volunteer applications indicating a criminal history (misdemeanor, felony, deferment) will be reviewed by designated APL staff.

- Applicants with a criminal history will only be accepted if the designated staff determines that the placement of that applicant will not jeopardize the safety of APL patrons and staff or the integrity of APL resources.
- Any applicant with a criminal history, including sex or child abuse convictions or deferments, will automatically be denied volunteer placement.
- A volunteer or applicant under investigation for or charged with child or sex abuse or criminal acts will be suspended or disqualified from volunteering until the issue is resolved.

The background check process will not be required for service organizations that volunteer as a group and are supervised by an organization staff person or representative, and/or for which the volunteer activity is a single event.

## **Documentation**

A record will be maintained for each volunteer. The volunteer record may include the following information: volunteer application; results of background checks; copy of driver's license, if required; copy of any other licensure, if required; results of probationary period; and progress notations. Additionally, APL staff will maintain records of each volunteer's hours of service and job performance.

## **Volunteer Placement**

All new volunteers at Ames Public Library will be assigned a regular task or activity according to their interests, skills, and APL needs. Placement may be contingent on a valid driver's license and the results of a background check.

## **Probationary Period**

All volunteers will be subject to a probationary period as determined by each workgroup and/or immediate supervisor. Continued volunteer service at APL is contingent on the successful completion of this probationary period.

## **Supervision**

All volunteers are under the supervision of the Volunteer Services Coordinator. Volunteer workflow, training and job performance may be conducted by any APL staff. The Volunteer Services Coordinator will be responsible for designating a trainer, as well as for direct oversight of a volunteer's performance.

## **Dismissal**

Volunteers may be terminated for failure to perform assigned job duties, failure to meet minimum standards of performance, or for violation of library rules. The library staff reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer at any time.

## **Staff as Volunteers**

Library staff, or former staff, may be eligible to volunteer under the following circumstances:

- The volunteer work is being performed under the umbrella of a separate Library organization (e.g. APL Friends Foundation).
- The volunteer is serving as a representative of an outside organization (e.g. ISU) which is participating in an event sponsored by the Library.
- Former staff members have not been employed by the Library for a period of at least three months and are not assigned to their previous job responsibilities.