

SECTION:	PS 2	OPERATIONS
SUBSECTION:		
POLICY:	PS 2.4	RECRUITMENT AND USE OF VOLUNTEERS
REVISIONS:		01/10/90, 04/28/2018

The Ashtabula County District Library System Board of Trustees encourages individuals or groups to volunteer their time and efforts in the service of the Ashtabula County District Library.

The library's volunteer program is designed to expand and enhance public service to the community. Volunteers generally provide support services to paid staff and/or work on special projects. The many benefits to volunteering include: credit toward educational community service requirements, work that can be counted as experience on resumes and job applications, opportunity to meet new people and expand networking, or simply a way to serve our community. Volunteers learn more about the library and its place in the community and observe first-hand the way the library serves the community's needs.

Due to Ohio Ethics Laws concerning patron confidentiality, library volunteers may not assist staff with tasks that involve confidential patron information such as checking books in or out, calling patrons, or handling patron records. Volunteers must also respect the privacy of patrons—which means not discussing patrons or their library activities with anyone other than library staff.

Potential volunteers must complete a Volunteer Application, review the Guidelines for Volunteering, and attend a general library system orientation. If a volunteer offer is made and accepted, volunteers will be required to submit to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) background checks. The Library will bear the cost of an initial check. Pending the outcome of results, the volunteer's information will be shared with a supervisor who will assign tasks, establish a schedule, and train and supervise the volunteer.

All volunteer applications indicating a criminal history (misdemeanor, felony, deferment) will be reviewed by the Director. Applicants with a criminal history will only be accepted if the Library Director determines that the placement of that applicant will not jeopardize the safety of ACDL patrons and staff, or the integrity of the ACDL collections.

An 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.

Volunteers may be asked to submit to additional background checks at any time throughout the volunteer assignment.

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

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Submitting a volunteer application does not guarantee placement or engagement as a library volunteer. If there are no suitable volunteer opportunities, application forms will be kept on file for one year. Applicants will be called if a project is identified which matches their interests or qualifications. Once accepted as a volunteer, an assignment can end at any time at the discretion of the Director.

Teens 13-17 may volunteer with written permission from a parent or legal guardian. Permission forms are available at any public service desk at either the Ashtabula Public Library or the Geneva Public Library.

Where possible, in appropriate circumstances, and at the sole discretion of the library, the library may choose to assist the local courts and other social service agencies by providing community service and/or library work experience for individuals. Community Service volunteers must make arrangements in advance with our Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteers are expected to:

- be positive, patient, and polite;
- schedule their time in advance with their library supervisor;
- follow the library's Code of Conduct, posted on our website;
- maintain appropriate personal appearance at all times;
- keep personal phone calls and visits to a minimum;
- record the hours worked as a volunteer as directed;
- respect the confidentiality of our library patrons.