

FLCPL VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Introduction

This is your library.

The Fayetteville-Lincoln County Public Library exists because of the support, passion, and involvement of our local community. For generations, we have proudly served as a hub for knowledge, creativity, and connection for the residents of Lincoln County and surrounding communities.

FLCPL is deeply rooted in the fabric of our community. Our programs, services, and volunteer opportunities reflect the unique spirit and needs of the people we serve. Whether it's helping with a special event, tidying up the grounds, or welcoming visitors with a smile, FLCPL volunteers play an essential role in bringing our mission to life.

We are committed to providing our volunteers with meaningful roles, guidance, and support. While our volunteers help us go above and beyond in serving our community, we ensure that no position is critical to library operations—so that volunteers can serve without pressure and with purpose.

At FLCPL, volunteers aren't just helpers—they're part of the team.

About the FLCPL Volunteer Handbook

The Fayetteville-Lincoln County Public Library (FLCPL) Volunteer Handbook is designed to provide guidance and information to our volunteers about the responsibilities, expectations, and policies associated with volunteering at the library. It also includes details about the FLCPL Volunteer Program and ways to further support the library's mission.

This handbook is a reference tool intended to help ensure a positive and productive volunteer experience for everyone involved. Please note that the information in this handbook is subject to change as needed.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the contents of this handbook, please contact the Library Director or a member of the FLCPL staff.

Definition of a Volunteer

By offering to serve as a Volunteer with any FLCPL location and/or event, the Volunteer understands and agrees that they are a volunteer as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, and any services they provide to FLCPL are provided solely on a voluntary basis. The Volunteer likewise understands and agrees that they will receive no compensation, wages, or benefits in exchange for their service, and that they do not expect or assume that such service will result in compensation, wages, or benefits in the future.

Furthermore, the Volunteer understands and agrees that no representative of FLCPL has made any promise or representation that volunteer service will lead to or result in the Volunteer receiving compensation, wages, or benefits.

Volunteer Application Process

Volunteers may be asked to perform a variety of duties, up to and including limited duties involving patron interactions. To apply:

- Complete a Volunteer Application to be considered for any Volunteer Position (the link to the volunteer application can be found on our website at www.flcpl.org/volunteers)
- Sign a liability waiver to be kept on file at FLCPL
- Agree to follow all Volunteer Guidelines

Only applicants who complete these steps will be considered for volunteer hours at the Fayetteville-Lincoln County Public Library. The Library Director and/or designated library staff are responsible for reviewing volunteer applications.

FLCPL does not provide volunteer opportunities to individuals seeking to complete court-ordered community service, or to individuals seeking to reduce outstanding fees on library card accounts.

Individuals who are seeking volunteer hours for TN Promise, scholarships, college applications, or etc. must contact the library prior to filling out a volunteer application. **Please note that FLCPL will not accept applications for the 2 weeks before the TN Promise Deadline(s).**

FLCPL reserves the right to decline volunteer applications or the service of a particular volunteer at any time, for any reason. Volunteers who violate FLCPL Volunteer Guidelines and/or FLCPL Policies will be asked to discontinue their service, as well as potentially facing further consequences based upon the policy in question and/or seriousness of the violation.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

General Guidelines

As a volunteer with the Fayetteville-Lincoln County Public Library you represent the Library and its mission every time you serve. Your conduct should reflect the values of respect, service, and community. Behavior that goes against the Library's mission or policies may result in dismissal from the Volunteer Program.

Volunteers are expected to:

- Be courteous, respectful, and welcoming to both patrons and library staff
- Arrive on time and be dependable for all scheduled volunteer shifts

- Notify the Library as soon as possible if you are unable to attend a shift or will be unavailable for an extended period (e.g., due to illness, vacation, or other obligations)
- Be open and honest about your skills, interests, and comfort levels—we're happy to match you with tasks that are a good fit

Volunteers are required to:

- Sign in and out for every shift to ensure accurate record-keeping
- Follow the direction and supervision of Library staff
- Maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of patrons, staff, and fellow volunteers
- Abide by all Library policies and Volunteer Program guidelines
- Refrain from reporting for duty under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or other prohibited substances
- Follow the Library's appearance guidelines while on duty
- Wear your volunteer badge at all times while volunteering so you are clearly identified as part of our team
- Remain out of "Staff Only" areas unless given specific permission by a Library staff member

When assisting patrons, volunteers should refer all questions beyond basic directional inquiries (such as "Where is the bathroom?" or "Where's the children's section?") to a Library staff member—unless you've been specifically trained to handle the request.

Volunteers may also have the opportunity to assist with special events throughout the year, such as Summer Reading, library celebrations, or community outreach programs. If you choose to participate in these events, you may be required to attend a brief orientation beforehand.

Personal Appearance Guidelines

At the Fayetteville-Lincoln County Public Library (FLCPL), volunteers are seen as representatives of the Library and its mission. To maintain a welcoming, professional, and safe environment for all, volunteers are expected to follow our personal appearance guidelines while on duty.

General Expectations

- Volunteers should maintain good personal hygiene and avoid offensive odors. This includes body odor, strong perfumes, scented body sprays, and lingering smells from tobacco or nicotine products.
- Volunteers must wear their **Volunteer badge** at all times during their shift. This helps staff and patrons easily identify who is actively serving in a volunteer role.
- Clothing should be appropriate for an active role. Volunteers may be asked to bend, reach, lift, or assist with physical tasks.

Examples of Inappropriate Attire

Please avoid wearing:

- Clothing that is overly ripped, stained, or worn out
- Short shorts, mini-skirts, or short dresses
- Revealing garments, including strapless, sleeveless, backless, see-through, or low-cut tops or dresses
- Shoes with open toes (closed-toe shoes are required for safety)
- Excessively loose or flowing clothing that could catch on shelves or furniture
- Excessive or dangling jewelry
- Clothing with offensive language, graphics, or images
- Clothing that promotes or opposes political, religious, or commercial messages

Note: Some fashion styles include minor decorative wear. Jeans with small, non-revealing worn patches that do not expose skin are acceptable.

Examples of Appropriate Attire

We recommend:

- Clean jeans or pants in good condition
- Knee-length shorts or durable skirts
- Comfortable, solid-colored tops free from logos or offensive text/images
- Closed-toe shoes with low heels (for safety and comfort)
- Durable clothing if volunteering outdoors or with materials that may get dusty or dirty

Additional Guidelines

- Volunteers are asked not to wear items that promote or oppose specific brands, political candidates or causes, or religious messages—including pins, buttons, lanyards, stickers, and similar items.
- Tattoos with offensive images, language, or symbols must be covered while volunteering.
- Certain events may have specific dress codes, which will be communicated in advance by event organizers.

If you're ever unsure whether something is appropriate to wear, we recommend choosing an alternative option. The Library reserves the right to ask volunteers to adjust their attire if it is deemed unsuitable for their assigned duties or for representing FLCPL.

For any questions about these guidelines, please speak with the Library Director or a member of our staff.

Record Keeping Guidelines

Volunteers are expected to sign in at the start of each shift and sign out when finished, using either a paper log or electronic timekeeping system, depending on what is in use at the library. Library staff will let you know which method to follow.

Accurate time records help FLCPL in several important ways. These logs ensure we know who is in the building in case of an emergency, and they also allow us to track volunteer contributions by department, project, or location. This information helps the library demonstrate community involvement when applying for grants and funding, and it supports our reporting to local and state officials when requested.

Volunteer Complaints

FLCPL is committed to ensuring that all volunteers have a safe, respectful, and positive experience while serving our community. If you have any concerns about your volunteer role, duties, or the overall process, please reach out to the Library Director as soon as possible. While every effort will be made to respond promptly, response time may vary depending on the nature of the concern and staff availability.

If your concern involves the behavior of a patron or staff member during your shift, please notify a staff member right away. Staff can provide the appropriate contact information.

FLCPL takes all reports seriously and values the health, safety, and well-being of every volunteer. However, not all complaints will result in direct action. The Library is a public space, and only individuals who violate FLCPL's established policies can be asked to leave. Reporting issues helps staff remain aware of potential problems and take timely action if a situation escalates or further attention is needed.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your concern, you are welcome to submit a follow-up request for review to the Library Director. While this may lead to internal discussions, policy clarification, or staff training, please understand that due to privacy protections, details of any resulting actions may not be shared with you directly. The decision of the Library Director regarding such matters is considered final.

FLCPL maintains a zero-tolerance policy for retaliation. Any attempt to retaliate against a volunteer, staff member, or patron involved in a complaint will result in removal from the Volunteer Program.

Volunteer Usage of Library Materials and Resources

FLCPL expects all volunteers to treat library materials and collections with care and respect. Volunteers should not remove, relocate, or handle any library items without direct instruction or approval from library staff. Materials should never be treated in any way that could cause damage or deterioration.

Volunteers are held to the same circulation policies as all patrons. This includes rules about loan periods, item limits, renewals, and late fees. No items should be taken from library shelves or removed from the building without being checked out through proper procedures using the volunteer's own library card. Volunteers must present either their FLCPL card or a valid photo ID when checking out items.

Volunteers are also subject to the same computer use policies as patrons. This includes policies regarding public computer access, reservation systems, and any applicable charges for printing, scanning, or faxing.

Use of staff-only equipment, including computers, phones, and other devices, is strictly prohibited unless express permission is given by a staff member. Volunteers may only use FLCPL resources (such as collections, supplies, equipment, and facilities) while actively working a scheduled volunteer shift and only for tasks related to library service. When not on duty, volunteers are welcome to enjoy the library and its services just like any other patron.

Volunteers may not represent themselves as employees or official agents of FLCPL. The use of FLCPL's name, logo, or identity for personal benefit or representation is not allowed. You are welcome to include your volunteer service on a résumé or application, but it must be clearly identified as a volunteer role. Please note that FLCPL does not provide professional references for volunteers.

Personal Electronic Device Usage

To minimize distractions and maintain a professional environment, volunteers at FLCPL are asked to silence or turn off personal electronic devices during their volunteer shifts.

Unless there is an emergency, calls, texts, and other notifications should be checked and responded to only during designated breaks or personal time. Devices set to vibrate are considered appropriately silenced under this policy.

Smoking and Tobacco Use

To support a healthy and welcoming environment for all library visitors, staff, and volunteers, **the use of tobacco and smoking products is strictly prohibited in all FLCPL buildings, on library property, and in any library-owned vehicles.** This includes but is not limited to:

- Traditional cigarettes and cigars
- E-cigarettes and vape pens (including tobacco-less versions)
- Chewing tobacco and all other tobacco products

Visitors who violate this policy will be asked to stop immediately. Continued noncompliance may result in a request to leave library property.

Volunteers who do not adhere to this policy may be asked to end their volunteer service with the library.

Conclusion of Volunteer Service

In the interest of maintaining a positive, safe, and effective environment for all patrons, staff, and volunteers, FLCPL reserves the right to decline any volunteer application or to end a volunteer's service at any time, with or without prior notice. In the event that a volunteer is dismissed, they will

receive a notice outlining the reason for the dismissal and a summary of their contributions to the Library.

Volunteers are also free to resign from their role at FLCPL at any time and are not required to provide a reason. However, we kindly request that volunteers notify the Library Director or staff at least two weeks in advance of their intended final shift (if applicable), when possible.

Certificates of Volunteer Hours can be requested by contacting the Library Director within one year of your final volunteer date. For privacy and record-keeping purposes, FLCPL does not retain volunteer hour records beyond one year.