

Bowen Island Public Library

Volunteer Policy

Adopted November 15, 2011



Mission Statement

The Bowen Island Public Library Association promotes lifelong learning, the love of reading, and the exploration of ideas, culture and knowledge in a welcoming, lively atmosphere.

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1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of the Volunteer Policy is to provide information about the practices and conditions of the Bowen Island Public Library (BIPL) volunteer program. It is designed to help clarify the expectations and obligations of volunteers and of the BIPL.

2. INTRODUCTION

Volunteer Policy Purpose

The volunteer policy provides guidance and direction to management, staff and volunteers.

About the Volunteer Program

The volunteer program of the Bowen Island Public Library (BIPL) creates opportunities for individuals to actively contribute to the library's vision of excellence in library service by helping to accomplish the mission of the library. BIPL welcomes volunteers to participate in the operation of the library while performing a valuable service to the community and becoming more familiar with the library. Volunteers are used by the library to enrich and enhance library programs and services provided by BIPL staff, or to free library staff for other duties. Volunteers do not substitute for or replace paid employees, and are not considered employees of the library.

Definition of a Volunteer

- A volunteer is a person who performs tasks for the Bowen Island Public Library without wages, benefits, or compensation (including travel expenses).
- Volunteers may also include, but are not limited to, students required to perform community service as an educational requirement, individuals participating in work programs provided by community and social services agencies, and students requiring internships or cooperative placements.

3. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The minimum age requirement for volunteers is 15 years.

All volunteers are required to complete an application form and to provide two references. Additional documentation may be required by the library.

Prior to being accepted as a volunteer, all applicants will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for, interest in, and ability to successfully undertake a volunteer

position. If accepted as a volunteer with the library, all volunteers will sign a volunteer agreement with BIPL.

All volunteers working in children's programs are required to provide a satisfactory Criminal Record Check from the BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

Certain volunteer positions may require specific licenses or certification. Volunteers will not perform any task or duty for which a license or certification is required if the volunteer does not possess such license or certification.

4. VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information which they may view or have access to while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves staff members, other volunteers, library patrons, other persons, or involves the overall operations of the library. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in immediate termination of volunteer duties or other corrective action.

Volunteers are integral to the efficient operation of the library. Reliability is a key characteristic required of our volunteers.

Volunteers must be covered by their own vehicle insurance where their voluntary activity involves the use of a vehicle and are liable for their own mileage, operating costs, parking tickets and/or fines related to driving offenses incurred during volunteer assignments.

5. LIBRARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Each volunteer will perform duties in the library with at least one staff member present in the library building. The Chief Librarian has overall responsibility for volunteers; however, a volunteer coordinator or other staff may be responsible for direct supervision of volunteers.

Volunteers will receive a copy of the Volunteer Policy, or will be directed to the policy online, upon application to become a volunteer.

Volunteers are covered by liability insurance while serving in the library building.

BIPL will, upon request from the volunteer, provide a letter of reference to the volunteer when appropriate.

6. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Volunteers will be recruited through a variety of methods (newspaper advertisements, in-library publicity, requests through local groups), to meet specific as well as general library needs, and based on the suitability to perform a task on behalf of the library.

Volunteers will be provided with support in line with that provided for staff. They will receive a thorough orientation, performance assessments, appropriate training, and the proper tools for performing tasks.

7. PLACEMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Placement

After acceptance into the library's volunteer program and assignment of a volunteer position, each volunteer will undergo a probationary period of 6 months, during which time the volunteer's suitability and ability to successfully undertake the position will be assessed by library staff.

In placing a volunteer in a position, the interests, skills and capabilities of the volunteer will be taken into account.

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to create a contract between the volunteer or intern and BIPL or the Bowen Island Municipality. Both the volunteer and BIPL have the right to terminate the volunteer's participation in the volunteer program at any time, for any reason, with or without cause.

Position Assignment

BIPL has the right to determine the appropriateness of an assignment for any volunteer.

The Chief Librarian has the right to alter or make changes to the nature of a volunteer's assignment.

Volunteer positions are determined by senior staff. Suggestions for volunteer positions will be considered by the Chief Librarian.

Schedules & Absences

Volunteers will follow the procedures for absences as outlined in the Volunteer Procedure Manual. Regularly scheduled shifts will not be held for volunteers absent for more than 4 weeks.

Termination

Grounds for termination include, but are not limited to:

- a. unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission or policies of the library
- b. unwillingness or inability to obey library rules or staff direction
- c. breach of confidentiality
- d. illegal, violent or unsafe acts
- e. abuse, mistreatment or harassment of library patrons, staff, volunteers or board members.
- f. smoking in unauthorized areas
- g. being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- h. repeated absences without notice

8. GENERAL

All personal information is collected for internal purposes only. All information is collected under the authority of the Library Act [RSBC 1996] Chapter 264. Volunteer files will be retained for 3 years after the volunteer is no longer active with the library.

In the event of an opening for a paid position within BIPL, volunteers who apply for the position will be treated and evaluated on the same basis as all other external applicants.

All other terms of the volunteer arrangement are as outlined in the Volunteer Procedure Manual.

This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently as deemed appropriate.