



# WELCOME!

Dear Applicant,

We are very excited that you are interested in volunteering for the Bedford Public Library System. Our mission is to provide the adults and children of Bedford City and County with information and resources that support lifelong learning and enjoyment.

This informational handbook is an opportunity for you to see if volunteering for our system is something that you will enjoy. It will also be a helpful guide to you when you begin. The Volunteer Information Handbook is designed to help you understand the following:

- What you can expect from us
- What we expect from you
- Shift procedures and requirements
- Frequently asked questions

If there are volunteer opportunities available at the time your application is submitted, your application will be reviewed and you will be contacted by the Volunteer Coordinator to schedule an interview with the appropriate department manager. All applications will be kept on file for six months.

Thank you for your interest in our library. We look forward to working with you. If you have any questions or if you need any further information, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator at (540) 586-8911 ext. 1113.

Sincerely,

Peggy Bias  
Library Director

# WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

## 1. Equal Opportunity

- The Bedford Public Library System will not select a volunteer based on race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or the presence of sensory, mental, or physical disability. We will operate within the principles of equal opportunity guidelines set forth in federal, state and local laws and regulations.

## 2. Open Door Policy

- The Bedford Public Library System practices an open door policy in which any volunteer who wishes to meet with the Library Director can do so by setting an appointment through the Volunteer Coordinator.

# **OUR EXPECTATIONS: APPEARANCE**

The Bedford Public Library System is a public service organization and expects all volunteers to dress appropriately for a business environment. Each volunteer is expected to exercise good judgment and professional decision-making as he/she chooses workplace attire.

The following establishes general expectations regarding volunteer attire and are intended to serve as guidelines for volunteer and supervisory decisions:

- Volunteers will be clean, well groomed and demonstrate acceptable personal hygiene.
- Volunteers should wear clothing that is appropriate to the tasks being completed.
- Clothing, jewelry and accessories must not create a safety hazard for volunteers or others.
- All clothing must be clean and in good condition without holes, excessive wear, or staining from use.
- Clothing may not display implied or stated profanity.
- Clothing may not display advertisements or logos for alcohol, tobacco products and/or illegal, racial, sexual, religious, ethnic or other inappropriate connotations.
- Appropriate undergarments must be worn.
- Excessive or offensive (profanity, nudity, illegal acts, racial/ethnic slurs) tattoos must not be visible.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn.

Administrators and supervisors may approve alternate employee attire for a variety of reasons such as accommodations for medical conditions, religious practices, inclement weather, and library events or activities.

# OUR EXPECTATIONS: DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The Bedford Public Library System (BPLS) recognizes that the abuse of drugs and alcohol poses a serious threat to the safety of volunteers and employees, to the operations of the BPLS, and to the public. Accordingly, the use, possession, manufacture, distribution, or sale of such substances on library premises is not allowed. Volunteers may not work while under the influence or with a detectable presence of drugs or alcohol in their system. On-the-job or any off-the-job abuse of such substances which adversely affects a volunteer's performance or other library interests is prohibited. This prohibition includes any prescription or over-the-counter drugs unless the Volunteer Coordinator has expressly approved a volunteer's possession and use of such drug while at work.

Volunteers who violate this Drug and Alcohol Policy will be released from their volunteer responsibilities.

## 1. Definitions

- Drugs and/or alcohol: any substance with the potential to produce effects of intoxication and/or the potential to produce physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral changes that could adversely affect a volunteer's ability to safely and efficiently perform his/her tasks. These substances specifically include, but are not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, heroin, opium, and phencyclidine.
- Library premises: used in its broadest sense, and includes all land, property, buildings, structures, vehicles (owned or leased), or otherwise being utilized for BPLS business.

# **OUR EXPECTATIONS: INTERNET USAGE**

Computer workstations and the network system are the property of the Bedford Public Library System (BPLS) and are intended to be used for library business. In no event is a volunteer permitted to access sexually explicit sites or conduct commercial activities. The BPLS reserves the right to monitor use of this network to ensure network security and adherence to library policy as well as to respond to allegations of suspected volunteer misuse or misconduct.

The following establishes general expectations regarding volunteer Internet usage:

- Use of the BPLS Internet access must be supportive of organizational objectives and be consistent with the mission of the BPLS.
- Internet transmissions are not confidential; therefore, volunteers can have no expectation of privacy in anything that is sent or received via the Internet.
- User IDs and passwords help maintain individual accountability for Internet resource usage. Any volunteer who obtains a password or ID for an Internet resource from the library must keep that password confidential and must always use his or her own password for access unless permission to use an alternate password is granted for work related purposes.
- Use of the library's computers will be monitored as management deems appropriate.
- Use of the library's Internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in loss of this privilege and may result in a volunteer being released from his or her volunteer responsibilities.
- The display of any kind of sexually explicit image or document on any system is a violation of the BPLS policy on sexual harassment. In addition, sexually explicit material may not be archived, stored, distributed, edited, or recorded using the BPLS network or computing resources.
- The BPLS may block access to inappropriate or sexually explicit Internet sites from within the network. If a volunteer connects accidentally to such a site, he or she must disconnect from that site immediately, regardless of whether that site had been previously deemed acceptable by any screening, rating, or filtering program.

- Volunteers with Internet access may not use the library's Internet facilities to download images, music, or video unless there is an express business-related use for the material.
- Use of the BPLS resources for illegal activity is grounds for immediate dismissal and the BPLS will cooperate with any legitimate law enforcement activity.
- No volunteer may use the BPLS Internet facilities to disable or overload any computer system or network, or to circumvent any system intended to protect the privacy or security of another user.
- No volunteer may use the BPLS Internet facilities to propagate any virus, worm, Trojan horse, or trap door program code.
- No volunteer may use the BPLS Internet facilities to download or distribute pirated software or data.

# **OUR EXPECTATIONS: HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of the Bedford Public Library System to promote a productive work environment and to be intolerant of verbal or physical conduct by any volunteer, employee, or patron that harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment.

Volunteers are expected to maintain a productive work environment that is free from harassing or disruptive activity. No form of harassment or other offensive conduct will be tolerated, including harassment for the following reasons: race, national origin, religion, disability, pregnancy, age, military status, sexual orientation, or gender.

All complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly and in as impartial and confidential a manner as possible. Volunteers are required to cooperate in any investigation. Retaliation against any person for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

Any volunteer who is found to have violated the harassment policy will be released from his or her volunteer responsibilities. A volunteer may also be subject to dismissal if he or she has made a capricious or unfounded charge of sexual harassment.

Each supervisor has a responsibility to keep the workplace free from any form of harassment, and in particular, sexual harassment. No supervisor is to threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that a volunteer's refusal or willingness to submit to sexual advances will affect the volunteer's terms or conditions of service.

Individuals who experience sexual harassment should make it clear to the offending person that such behavior is offensive to them. If such behavior continues, the offended volunteer should bring the matter to the appropriate supervisor's attention or to the attention of other appropriate officials.

# **OUR EXPECTATIONS: VOLUNTEER CONDUCT**

All volunteers are expected to represent the Bedford Public Library System (BPLS) to the public in a professional manner, which is courteous, efficient and helpful.

The BPLS expects basic tact and courtesy towards the public and staff, and adherence to library policies, procedures, safety rules, and safe work practices. Compliance with directions from supervisors and providing orderly and cost-effective services to BPLS patrons are also required. In addition, volunteers are expected to preserve and protect library equipment, grounds, facilities, and resources.

The following establishes general expectations regarding volunteer conduct:

- Volunteers are required to notify the Volunteer Coordinator within seven (7) business days of any change of address, telephone number, or emergency contact information.
- Library telephones are available for limited personal use for local calls.
- Volunteers must limit eating and drinking to designated areas out of view of the public and away from computers.
- A volunteer may not release information about a patron, an employee, or another volunteer, including borrowing records, addresses, and phone numbers. All inquiries must be directed to supervisory or administrative staff.
- Volunteers are prohibited from campaigning or displaying partisan political or religious badges, posters, or other materials while on duty.
- In the event of the fire alarm sounding, volunteers will evacuate the building immediately.

# SHIFT PROCEDURES

## 1. Beginning your shift

- Arrive 10 minutes before you shift begins.
- Notify the Volunteer Coordinator that you have arrived.
- The Volunteer Coordinator will give you an identification pin and explain what is on the agenda for the day.
- Sign in.

## 2. During your shift

- See pages 3-8.
- If you complete your task or tasks, ask for something else to do. If there are no other tasks available, you may either end your shift or find a good book to read.

## 3. Ending your shift

- Notify the volunteer coordinator that your shift has ended and you are leaving.
- Sign out and leave your identification pin with the Volunteer Coordinator.

# **VOLUNTEER/SHIFT REQUIREMENTS**

1. Volunteers must be at least 12 years old.
2. Volunteers should plan on working for a minimum of 2 hours per shift.
3. If you are selected to participate in our volunteer program, the Volunteer Coordinator will contact you to create a work schedule.
4. Volunteers should make every effort to come when they are scheduled to work. Notify the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible if you are unable to come. (540) 586-8911 ext. 1113
5. Volunteers are expected to sign in and out every time they work. The work log is kept in the Volunteer Coordinator's office.
6. Wear your identification pin at all times.
7. Refer all reference questions to the Public Services or Youth Services staff.
8. Help us keep the library tidy. Pick up and throw away any trash. Gather unwanted books from tables and shelves and deliver them to the Public Services staff.
9. Friends and family members are not allowed to join you while you are on duty.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 1. How will I know if the library is closed due to inclement weather?

- In order to determine whether or not the library has been closed or delayed due to inclement weather, check local radio and television stations or call our main number. (540) 586-8911

## 2. Does the Library close for holidays?

- The Bedford Public Library System is closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in January
President's Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in February
Easter Sunday	
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in September
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday in November
Day after Thanksgiving	Following Friday
Christmas Eve	December 24
Christmas Day	December 25
Day after Christmas	December 26

*\*The library will be closed on any other day appointed by the Library Board.*

## 3. Will I get a lunch break?

- Lunch breaks may or may not be given depending on the length of your shift as well as the time of day you are scheduled to work. Therefore, the supervising manager will determine whether or not a lunch break is necessary.

## 4. How will I know if what I am wearing is appropriate?

- See our policy on **Appearance** on page 3 for details. Generally, if you are questioning whether or not your dress is appropriate, it probably is not. However, for a definitive answer, you may ask the Volunteer Coordinator.

**5. What happens if I am unable to come in when I am scheduled and I forget to call?**

- When you are scheduled to work, the Bedford Public Library staff members rely on you to help get tasks completed. It is an inconvenience to our staff when you are expected to show and fail to notify someone that you will not be able to make it. Therefore, if you fail to notify the Volunteer Coordinator that you are unable to work when scheduled on more than one occasion, you will be relieved of your volunteer duties. See #4 of **Volunteer/Shift Requirements** on page 10.