

## **BEALS MEMORIAL LIBRARY VOLUNTEER POLICY**

**GENERAL POLICY:** Volunteers provide important support to Beals Memorial Library staff and perform a wide variety of tasks that are critical to the mission of the library. Volunteers supplement, but do not replace the work done by employees. They may perform a wide variety of duties, a range limited largely by the talents and interests of the volunteers themselves and by where the library can make productive use of their assistance.

A Beals Memorial Library volunteer performs a service of his or her own free will, contributing time, energy and talents directly or on behalf of the library. Volunteers are not paid by library funds, and must be accepted by the director of the Beals Memorial prior to performance of assigned tasks. There are three basic categories of volunteer:

**VOLUNTEER:** Any individual, fourteen years or older, who assists with work done at the Beals Memorial Library, without remuneration.

**STUDENT INTERN:** Any middle school, high school, college student, or organization (like boy or girl scouts) working on advanced awards, who performs volunteer work, without remuneration, as part of an authorized school or organizational program to earn academic credit or merit awards.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE:** Persons who seek volunteer assignments at the Beals Memorial Library to meet a requirement set by an outside agency for the performance of community service shall be subject to the volunteer selection process and all other provisions of this policy.

### **RESTRICTIONS:**

- Volunteers will not take the place of paid staff already employed by the library.
- Volunteer duties will not replicate a major portion of a paid staff person's job description.
- Volunteer tasks are not critically tied to a specific time or duration.
- Volunteer tasks are typically those that are more flexible as to specific scheduled times.

While it is important for the library to be able to rely on the dependability of volunteers, the non-arrival of a volunteer will not adversely impact its regular day-to-day operation.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) does not permit an individual to perform hours of volunteer service for a public agency when such hours involve the same type of services which the individual is employed to perform for the same public agency.

Outside organized non-profit groups who volunteer to carry out a specific project at the library have the burden of complying with federal and state labor laws. For example, if a Boy Scout troop asks to paint the library's fence as part of a badge project, the Boy Scout organization would be responsible for complying with child labor laws for that volunteer project.

**APPLICATION / APPOINTMENT:** Prior to engaging in any volunteer activity, each volunteer will be required to submit a library volunteer application form and speak with a supervisory staff member. Upon approval of the Library Director or supervisory staff, the volunteer may be scheduled for training and work assignments. Each individual who participates in this volunteer program agrees and acknowledges that as volunteers, they are not employees of the Beals Memorial Library or the Town of Winchendon. Each individual who participates in this volunteer program shall sign a document releasing the Beals Memorial Library from liability for injuries sustained by him/her.

**BACKGROUND CHECKS:** As part of the appointment process, the library may investigate an applicant's work and personal history, which may, depending upon a prospective volunteer's assignment, include a Criminal Offender Record Inquiry (CORI) and/or a Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) check.

**VACANCIES:** Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications in relation to the needs of the library at any given time and their reliability. Unsolicited volunteer applications are generally routed to the Senior Library Technician to determine if a vacancy exists that matches the skills of the applicant. If there are no suitable volunteer opportunities, application forms will be kept on file for a period of one year. Applicants will be contacted if a project is identified that matches their interests or qualifications.

**SUPERVISION:** Volunteers work directly with library staff members to receive training and complete projects. All volunteers will be assigned a staff member, generally a Senior Library Technician, to guide them in their work, however other staff may offer guidance to any of the volunteers.

**HOURS OF SERVICE:** All volunteer work must be completed within normal library hours unless exceptions have been made by the Library Director. Hours of volunteer service are at the mutual convenience of the volunteer and supervisory staff member. Because supervisory staff often take steps to prepare meaningful volunteer assignments, volunteers are asked give reasonable notice if they are unable to report to work for the agreed upon schedule.

**STUDENT INTERNS:** Student interns will be sought by supervisors through educational contacts in area schools and colleges. A job description will be tailored for each intern, stressing the value of the project for both student and Library. A representative of the school or college will usually be involved in developing the job description and outline of the project. The supervisor

who shapes an individual project will be responsible for the training and supervision of the student intern. While interns may be very valuable to the library, the library must also offer a genuine educational opportunity. Because much staff time will be required, each project must be carefully planned and approved by the Library Director before an intern is accepted. Participation in student internship programs shall be considered a privilege which may be revoked at any time by the Beals Memorial Library or the student intern. All schedules will be worked out between the student intern and the supervising staff person and should not conflict with school schedules. A method and schedule for evaluation will be agreed upon between the library director and the school or college representative before the student intern is accepted. The supervising library staff person will follow this schedule and report student progress to the representative.

**UNAVAILABLE INSURANCE:** Neither the Town of Winchendon nor the Beals Memorial Library provides medical, health, accident or worker's compensation benefits for any volunteer. In addition, volunteers will not be eligible to receive any worker's compensation benefits for any injuries sustained while functioning as a volunteer.

**PUBLIC SERVICE:** While library volunteers typically have limited public service exposure, they are expected to act in accordance with library policies and to reflect positive customer service attitudes to all library patrons.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Librarians' professional ethics require that personally identifiable information about library users be kept confidential. While library volunteers typically have limited exposure to library records, they are expected to respect the confidentiality of library users.

**TERMINATION:** Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to create a contract between the volunteer or intern and the Beals Memorial Library and the Town of Winchendon. Both the volunteer and the library have the right to terminate the volunteer's association with the Beals at any time, for any reason, with or without cause. There will be no formal evaluation process for volunteers.

