



WALLINGFORD  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
**Volunteer**

Volunteer Handbook

# Volunteer Handbook

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## **WELCOME TO WALLINGFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Thank you for volunteering at Wallingford Public Library. We know there are many places in our community where you can donate your valuable time and we are honored that you have chosen to volunteer at the Library. The service our volunteers provide is critical to our success as an organization. You make this a better library and we are grateful!

You were selected to volunteer at Wallingford Public Library because we believe you have the qualities we look for in our volunteers: dedication, thoroughness, and a commitment to the Library's mission and values. We strive to make Wallingford Public Library a pleasant place for you to volunteer and a place where you know that your efforts are appreciated.

This handbook has been prepared to help acquaint you with the Library's purpose and basic policies and practices. As you read this handbook and become more familiar with Wallingford Public Library, we encourage you to ask questions and to make suggestions for improving your volunteer experience.

We are delighted to have you on our team.

Sincerely,

***Sunnie Scarpa, Director  
Coordinator***

***Kasey Goggins, Volunteer***

### **Notice and Disclaimer**

*This volunteer handbook is designed to acquaint you with Wallingford Public Library and provide you with information about the Library and some of the policies. You should read, understand and comply with all provisions of this handbook.*

*Under this relationship, neither the volunteer nor the Library is bound to continue the relationship if either chooses, at its will, to end the relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without notice.*

## **Equal Opportunity Policy**

Wallingford Public Library's policy is to provide, in accordance with applicable law, equal employment opportunities to all volunteers without regard to race (including ethnic traits historically associated with race such as hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religious creed, age, sex, pregnancy, marital status, national origin, ancestry, past or current mental or physical disability, genetic information, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, civil union status, status as a victim of domestic violence, or any other legally protected status.

## **ABOUT WALLINGFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY**

### **Mission**

By offering a wide array of resources and experiences and by connecting people in our community with ideas and with each other, Wallingford Public Library ensures every resident has the opportunity to be inspired, enriched, and informed.

### **Vision**

- Wallingford Public Library will be viewed as the hub of the community where all are welcome.
- The collection will evolve to meet the changing needs and demographics of our community, including the continued expansion of digital materials.
- Our programs will act as opportunities to bring community members together – to learn together, to support one another, and to be inspired.
- We will expand the array of supports for access to online information and materials, for both consumption and creation, and continue to be a go-to place for helping our community with technology.
- The configuration of our facilities will be assessed to best meet the needs of our patrons and to ensure the building's long term maintenance.
- As one of our strongest assets, our staff will feel valued and will have opportunities for professional development.
- Our Board of Managers will be a committed, engaged group of community members, representative of our diverse community.
- We will work in collaboration with our community partners to ensure our collective efforts address the needs of the community.
- The Library will foster a strong sense of community identity, spirit and pride through its collections, programs, facilities and other services.

## **Values**

- Access for All: We provide equal access to our collections, programs, facilities and services.
- Excellence: We maintain high standards of customer service and strive for excellence in the services and resources we provide.
- Respect: We embrace people from all walks of life and treat individuals with respect and dignity.
- Personal Growth: We strive to provide all people with the opportunity to grow and achieve their life goals.
- Kindness: We show compassion and offer support to our patrons.
- Innovation: We actively seek out opportunities to blend new ideas and methods into our work.
- Responsibility: We offer high quality services in a safe, secure and fiscally responsible environment.

## **LIBRARY POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

### **Volunteer Conduct and Library Rules**

To ensure orderly operations and to provide the best possible environment, Wallingford Public Library expects volunteers to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the library. The following are a few examples of infractions of rules of conduct, and may result in being dismissed from the volunteer program.

- Multiple no call/no shows and tardiness to assigned events and tasks (please see the subsection "Attendance" for the full policy).
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.
- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Fighting or threatening violence in the library.
- Possession of a firearm or other weapon in the library, regardless of lawful licensure for possession elsewhere.
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of Wallingford Public Library-owned property.
- Disrespectful conduct.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment.

Volunteers working directly with library patrons should display respect and kindness. Be attentive and helpful when in roles serving patrons. Volunteers are asked to refrain from discussions that could be offensive or disrespectful to the feelings or views of patrons or other volunteers.

## **Background Check**

In the unusual event that adult volunteers are assigned to work directly with children in an unsupervised setting, they are required to pass a State of Connecticut criminal background check.

A State of Connecticut Motor Vehicles background check is required for all volunteers who use their personal vehicles for library business.

Prospective volunteers must submit the information required for the library to conduct the background check. Volunteer assignments will not begin until the background check is complete.

## **Training**

On a date agreed upon by the volunteer coordinator and the volunteer, new volunteers will be given a tour of the library to gain a sense of the departments in the library and the location of various events, programs, and other services. On this day, volunteers will also be shown the location of safety exits, fire alarms, and fire extinguishers in the case of emergency. When the volunteer has been assigned a department or program to work with, specific instructions to the designated tasks will be given by the volunteer coordinator or the person-in-charge. Should a volunteer choose to assist in a different department or program, additional training will be given as necessary.

## **Attendance**

Volunteers are expected to report to the volunteer coordinator or the designated supervisor on time to sign in for their expected volunteer shift. Signing in for a shift may be on a designated time sheet in your volunteer area of the library or it may be through an online service. Signing in is expected to ensure that volunteer hours are accounted for, both for the benefit of the library and the volunteer. Volunteers are also expected to wear the volunteer badge when they are working in an area of the library that patrons frequent.

At Wallingford Public Library, we appreciate your commitment to volunteering. Should you expect to arrive late or are suddenly unable to volunteer on a given day, please contact us at (203) 265-6754. We may not be able to extend ongoing volunteer opportunities if you have excessive absences or late arrivals without notice.

For those volunteering in the Book Seller, we ask that you call in a substitute to cover your shift should you become unavailable on a given day. If you are unable to find someone to cover your shift, please call the library at (203) 265-6754 at least an hour in advance so that we can close the Book Seller for your shift. We also ask that you inform your shift partner of the substitution or the closure. If you are in need of long-term shift coverage, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (203) 284-6458.

If we are faced with inclement weather, Book Sellers on a given shift should call each other to determine the best course of action. The library often remains open during

difficult weather, but we understand that that safety comes first for our volunteers. If the decision is made to close the store, one of the volunteers must call the library and inform them with the results of their decision. If there is a second shift that day in the Book Seller, call those volunteers as well to inform them that the first shift decided not to open.

For student volunteers needing forms signed by the volunteer coordinator confirming their number of hours performed, please give the form to the volunteer coordinator with ample time to spare. Hours cannot always be confirmed immediately, and allowing for extra time before the due date of the form will ensure successful completion of the task for both parties. Service hours may not be approved if it is found that volunteer time was not used appropriately, which is determined by the individual, the Volunteer Coordinator, or other supervisor overseeing the volunteer event or task.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

Wallingford Public Library believes that our patrons have a right to privacy concerning the library books they read, the films they view, the services they receive, the questions they ask, the programs they attend, and the things they search for on our computers. Volunteers are expected to keep confidential any library records they encounter that can be used to identify any library user, or link any user to a library transaction, regardless of format. Examples of such records include borrowing records, program sign-up sheets, overdue notices, reserve requests, and anything else that attaches a person's name to library materials and services.

### **Photography and Videography**

Volunteers assisting with library programming or social media may be asked to take photos or videos involving patrons. In these cases, volunteers are expected to ask patrons whether they are comfortable being on camera and with the potential of the photo/video being uploaded to the library's social media or incorporated in promotional content.

### **Personal Appearance**

Acceptable personal appearance is an ongoing requirement of volunteering at the Library. Volunteers are expected to dress in a manner that is acceptable in similar public service surroundings. Tops should not be cropped. Shorts may be worn considering that the length matches that of the hand when held by your side. Volunteers should not wear any inappropriate attire that does not present an appearance suitable for a library environment. Inappropriate attire includes any attire that contains any profane, derogatory, obscene, or vulgar language or art. Volunteers are expected to wear clean and practical footwear suitable for public service assignments. WPL is also a scent-free area, and as such, we ask that volunteers do not wear heavy fragrances or have excessive body odor.

## **Cell Phone Use**

Calling or texting during volunteer hours should be kept to a minimum during volunteer hours. We understand that volunteers may have extenuating circumstances in their personal lives that may require messages to be checked. However, the use of a cell phone should not limit your ability to complete the task(s) assigned. The use of headphones and earbuds are generally not allowed, but can be up to the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator or supervisor depending on the task assigned on a particular shift. If allowed, the volume should be kept at a low volume to allow for others to catch your attention and to generally be aware of your surroundings.

## **Smoking**

In keeping with Wallingford Public Library's intent to provide a safe and healthy environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the Library and on the grounds. This policy applies equally to all employees, patrons, volunteers and visitors.

## **Drug and Alcohol Use**

Drug and alcohol use is highly detrimental to the safety and productivity of volunteers in the library. No volunteer may be under the influence of any illegal drug, alcohol or marijuana while in the library or while operating equipment owned by Wallingford Public Library.

The unlawful manufacture, possession, distribution, transfer, purchase, sale or use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on Wallingford Public Library property is strictly prohibited.

## **Safety**

Your safety and security matter to us. If during the course of your volunteer work you feel unsafe in any way, please inform the Volunteer Coordinator or the person-in-charge.

Each volunteer is expected to obey safety rules and exercise caution in all activities. Volunteers should report any unsafe condition to the volunteer coordinator or the person-in-charge.

In the event of an injury to a volunteer, patron, or staff, volunteers should be aware of the location of the first aid kit. Volunteers will be shown the locations on the day of their training and will be updated should the kit move to another location. Volunteers are not expected to provide first aid, but should be able to retrieve it in the case of injury to another person.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, volunteers should notify the volunteer coordinator or the person-in-charge who may ask you to complete an injury report.

## **Emergency Closings**

In the event of bad weather please contact the library to see if we are open. If the Library closes early or has a delayed opening due to severe, inclement weather conditions or other emergencies, it will be listed on our website. Notification may also be provided on television and/or by calling our main number (203) 265-6754.

Any volunteer who judges that their safety is endangered by weather conditions may notify the library that they do not intend to volunteer that day.

## **Fire Procedure**

If you hear the fire alarm:

- Follow the instructions of the person-in-charge.
- Go out the nearest exit. If the nearest exit can't be used due to fire or smoke, use an alternate exit.
- Meet in the far southwest corner of the parking lot.

If you discover a fire:

- Pull the nearest fire alarm pull station
- Notify the person-in-charge or any staff member
- Go out the nearest exit. If the nearest exit can't be used due to fire or smoke, use an alternate exit.
- Meet in the far southwest corner of the parking lot.

## **Notice and at Will Disclaimer**

Under this relationship, neither the volunteer nor the library is bound to continue the relationship if either chooses, at its will, to end the relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without notice. Volunteers may voluntarily leave, for common reasons such as schedules becoming busy, hours needed for school being completed, feeling as though they have been fulfilled by their volunteer work, and more. Likewise, the library may let go of volunteers for reasons such as, but not limited to, actions not being in accordance with this handbook or completion of the task being worked on.

A meeting between the volunteer and the volunteer coordinator may be held to discuss the reasoning behind the ending of the relationship, regardless of which party prompts it.