Norton Public Library
L.G. and Mildred Balfour Memorial
68 E. Main Street, Norton MA 02766, (508) 285-0265

Volunteer Policy

The Norton Public Library welcomes and appreciates volunteers from the community whose contributions expand and enhance the goals of the library. A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the library.

Volunteers generally provide support services to paid staff or work on special projects. It is important to emphasize that the use of qualified volunteers in the library program is a supplement to, not a substitute for, paid staff.

Volunteer opportunities are offered based on current library needs and our staff's capacity to provide training and supervision. All volunteers must be interviewed, screened, and trained by library staff under the supervision of the Director prior to volunteering.

Nothing in this policy or in the volunteer's service to the library shall constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement.

The library reserves the right to forgo the provisions of this policy for groups volunteering as part of a specific event or program, such as a community cleanup day, Friends of the Library fundraiser, or the Town of Norton’s Senior/Veterans Tax Abatement Program.

This document serves multiple purposes:

- To create a structured and rewarding volunteer experience while fostering a collaborative and impactful relationship between the Norton Public Library and its volunteers.
- To establish the library’s standards for selecting, training, and supervising volunteers.
- To clearly communicate the role and expectations of library volunteers.

Application and Selection

Volunteers are selected based upon their qualifications in relation to the needs of the library at any given time, the availability of proper supervision, and the volunteer’s ability to commit to a consistent schedule. The library accepts volunteers who can commit to long-term support, as well as those who are participating in community service activities for a definite term of service.

The library is not able to guarantee placement of any prospective volunteer and has the right to decline any application without cause. If there are no suitable volunteer opportunities available, application forms will be kept on file for six months. Applicants will be contacted if there is a project that matches their interests and qualifications.

To safeguard the public, Norton Public Library requires all volunteers ages 18 and older to complete and sign a Criminal Offender Record Inquiry (CORI) and a Sex Offender Registry Inquiry (SORI). Placement is contingent upon the outcome of these checks.

A system of records will be maintained on each volunteer, which may include applications, CORI and SORI forms, dates of service, positions held, duties performed, and evaluation of work. Volunteer personnel records will be accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

Training and Supervision

Volunteers will not be assigned tasks that could cause a disruption in library service if there is an unanticipated absence. Making effective use of volunteers requires considerable staff time and effort; therefore, there will be a maximum number of volunteers that can be utilized at any given time.

Volunteer Tasks

Appropriate tasks for volunteers include but are not limited to:

- Shelving
- Shelf Reading
- Light cleaning
- Assembling informational packets
- Looking for items on the shelf

Roles and Responsibilities

- As representatives of the library, volunteers are expected to act in accordance with library policies and to reflect positive customer service attitudes with the public.
- It is expected that a volunteer's dress and grooming be appropriate for representing the library in a public setting, and in keeping with their work assignment. Many volunteer tasks require lifting, reaching, bending, and kneeling.
- Volunteers are expected to refer all requests for information to library staff, other than purely directional questions (e.g. where is the bathroom; where is the Children's Room).
- In order to keep an accurate record of volunteer hours, volunteers are required to sign in on the library's Volunteer Time Sheet each time they volunteer.
- Volunteers should only enter non-patron areas of the library when instructed by their supervisor. Please note that volunteers do not work at library service desks, per SAILS Library Network policy.

Schedules

Volunteers only work during regular library hours when adequate supervision is available, except at the discretion of the Director. Volunteers will be scheduled for shifts that meet the needs of the library first

and foremost. A typical volunteer shift is 1-2 hours per week, but may be shorter or longer depending on the project.

We ask that volunteers be reliable in their commitment to the library and notify the library in advance if they are unable to work their regularly scheduled shift. In turn, volunteers will be notified when the library opens late or closes early for any reason.

Safety

Volunteers should immediately report any safety hazards to a staff member. Volunteers should notify library staff of any assignment which causes physical discomfort or which could lead to personal injury. All injuries, whether minor or serious, incurred during volunteer service should be reported to a staff member.

Community Service

Persons who seek volunteer assignments at the Norton Public Library to meet a requirement set by an outside agency for the performance of community service shall be subject to the above recruitment and selection process and all other provisions of this policy.

Teen Volunteers

Teen volunteers report to the Youth Services Librarian and are not subject to background checks. We track teen volunteer hours and are happy to sign your forms or provide a letter as proof of your community service upon request. During the school year, volunteers in grades 6-12 may view and sign up for volunteer opportunities on the library's website. Teen volunteer opportunities in the summer are reserved for the Summer Volunteer Crew, which has an application process and is open to those entering grades 7-12.

Program Volunteers

Volunteers who lead or assist with library programs represent a distinct category and are selected at the library's discretion based on their relevant experience, credentials, subject matter expertise, and the library's current programming priorities.

Leaving Volunteer Service

A volunteer selected for work on a special project will discontinue service when that project is completed or terminated, unless other arrangements have been made. Whenever possible, the library will make an effort to reassign the volunteer. However, if no other mutually suitable volunteer position exists at the time, the volunteer will be asked to discontinue service and their application will be kept on file for six months.

In the event that a volunteer is unable to adequately perform the duties assigned to them, and no other appropriate positions are available, the volunteer may be removed from service.

Volunteers should be aware that the library may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the library.

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Volunteer Application Form

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Norton Public Library. Please complete this application and return it to the library. All volunteers age 18 and older must complete CORI and SORI background checks prior to volunteering.

Personal Information

Legal Name:	**Preferred Name:**

Address:
City, State, ZIP:

Phone Number:	**Email Address:**

Are you 18 or older? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Emergency Contact Information

Emergency Contact Name:

Relationship:	**Phone Number:**

Availability and Schedule

Please indicate your general availability (check all that apply):

☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday

☐ Mornings ☐ Afternoons ☐ Evenings

How many hours per week can you volunteer?
How long do you expect to volunteer with us?

Volunteer Interests

Please indicate which volunteer activities interest you (check all that apply):

- ☐ Shelving books and materials
- ☐ Shelf reading (checking books are in order)
- ☐ Light cleaning and organization
- ☐ Assembling informational packets or materials
- ☐ Retrieving items from shelves for holds
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

Other volunteer interests or special skills:

Experience and Background

Have you volunteered before? If yes, please describe:
Why are you interested in volunteering at the Norton Public Library?

Community Service

Are you volunteering to fulfill a community service requirement?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the name of the organization or program:
Number of hours required:
Completion deadline:

Agreement and Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Norton Public Library Volunteer Policy. I agree to abide by all library policies and procedures while volunteering. I understand that my volunteer service may be terminated at any time.

I understand that volunteers are required to sign in and out for each shift to track volunteer hours. I agree to notify the library in advance if I am unable to work my scheduled shift.

I understand that many volunteer tasks require physical activities including lifting, reaching, bending, and kneeling. I will notify library staff if any assignment causes physical discomfort or could lead to personal injury.

Applicant Signature:	**Date:**

For Office Use Only

Date Application Received:
Interview Date:
CORI/SORI Completed: ☐ CORI ☐ SORI Date: _____
Status: ☐ Approved ☐ Not Approved ☐ Waitlisted
Assigned Supervisor:
Notes: