

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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**BARRINGTON
AREA LIBRARY**

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WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Message from the Library

Welcome to the Barrington Area Library's volunteer program! We are excited to have you join us. Volunteers like you play an essential role in helping us bring exceptional services, programs, and experiences to our community. Your willingness to contribute your time, energy, and talents makes a real difference, and we are grateful you have chosen to share them with us. We look forward to collaborating with you and seeing the positive impact of your contributions!

Mission, Vision & Values

Our Mission

The Barrington Area Library strives to stimulate imagination, develop information fluency, foster lifelong learning, and create young readers.

Our Vision

We bring our mission to life through great service, great experiences, and great stewardship.

Our Values

- **Empathy:** We seek to understand and acknowledge all perspectives and create an environment that supports a diverse range of needs.
 - **Respect:** We respect others by treating their humanity with dignity and integrity.
 - **Trust:** We pride ourselves on being a trusted organization that acts with thoughtful stewardship of community resources.
 - **Curiosity:** We are inherently curious about the world and use that curiosity to drive innovation and support our users as they explore and learn.
 - **Delight:** We strive to provide joy and satisfaction through the experiences we design for our visitors.
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Why Volunteers Matter

Volunteers are truly at the heart of the Barrington Area Library. Your time, energy, and unique talents help us offer more programs, host larger events, and provide richer experiences than we could on our own. You bring fresh perspectives, strengthen our connection to the community, and inspire others to get involved. Most importantly, your support allows the Library to remain a welcoming, engaging place where people of all ages can learn, explore, and feel a sense of belonging. We are deeply grateful for the role you play in shaping our Library's impact and future.

Purpose of the Volunteer Program

The Barrington Area Library's volunteer program is designed to engage community members in meaningful service that supports our mission, vision, and values. Volunteers help us expand our ability to provide high-quality services, events, and experiences for all. This program exists to:

- support and enhance Library services;
- create opportunities for community involvement;
- strengthen the Library's impact; and
- encourage lifelong learning, curiosity, and civic participation.

Volunteers are valued partners who make a genuine difference while gaining rewarding experience along the way.

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Eligibility Requirements

We welcome volunteers who are 14 years of age or older. Volunteers under the age of 14 may only be accepted with prior approval from the Executive Director. Applicants are asked to provide basic information such as skills, interests, and availability to help us match volunteers with appropriate opportunities.

Application & Background Check

To get started, complete our volunteer application: go to the Library's website at balibrary.org – click the Jobs & Volunteering link. Submit your completed volunteer application by email (volunteer@balibrary.org) or drop it off at the Customer Service desk.

Volunteers who are age 18 and older must complete a standard criminal background check to help us maintain a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. After we receive your application, our background check partner, Paycom, will email you an authorization link. You'll need to complete this step before the background check can proceed.

Once your background check is complete, our Volunteer Coordinator will confirm your approval. You will be added to our volunteer contact list and notified by email or through postings on our website when new opportunities are available. There is no obligation to participate. You are welcome to volunteer only for the opportunities that best fit your interests and schedule.

VOLUNTEER ROLES & STATUS

Typical Volunteer Activities

We offer a wide variety of volunteer opportunities that support the Library and the community. You may be invited to help with tasks such as:

- Supporting special events such as Fandom Fest, Creator Fair, Harvest Fest, and Snow Ball
- Assisting with our Summer Reading program
- Digitizing materials from our local history collection
- Sorting and packaging seeds for the Seed Library
- Helping prepare craft materials or program supplies
- Assisting Library staff with administrative or project-based tasks

Inactive Status

To ensure we are reaching out only to those who are currently interested in helping, volunteers who have not participated in any activities for two years may be moved to inactive status. This means their name will be removed from the active contact list for future volunteer needs. Volunteers are always welcome to reapply at any time if they wish to become active again.

EXPECTATIONS & CONDUCT

Code of Conduct

Volunteers are valued ambassadors of the Library. We ask that you collaborate with staff, maintain a positive attitude, and help create welcoming experiences for all.

Key Expectations:

- **Punctuality & Reliability:** Please arrive on time and communicate promptly if you need to cancel or will be late. Missing a scheduled shift without notice may result in removal from the volunteer list.
- **Dress Code:** While volunteering, wear clothing that is comfortable, clean, and appropriate for your role, setting, and audience. Professional, community-appropriate attire is expected for most programs. Some programs may encourage themed clothing or costumes when appropriate, and guidance will be provided in those cases. To maintain a welcoming and neutral environment, clothing or accessories displaying political messages, advocacy or activist slogans, or offensive or inappropriate language or imagery should not be worn.
- **Professionalism:** Approach tasks with enthusiasm, be open to guidance, and take pride in your contributions.
- **Respect for All:** Treat staff, volunteers, and customers with kindness, patience, and courtesy.

- **Confidentiality:** Respect customer privacy and manage any sensitive information responsibly.
 - **Adherence to Policies:** Follow Library volunteer guidelines and staff instructions to help maintain a safe and positive environment.
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Attendance & Communication

We strive to make volunteering both flexible and enjoyable. Whether you volunteer regularly or occasionally, we deeply value your time and contributions. If your schedule changes or you are unable to fulfill a commitment, please notify us as early as possible by email or phone. Failure to show up for a volunteer event you have committed to may result in removal from the active volunteer list, as we rely on volunteers to plan programs and deliver services. Missed commitments can affect the flow of events and limit our ability to provide quality experiences for the community.

Substance-Free & Anti-Harassment Policy

The Library is committed to providing a safe, respectful environment for everyone. Volunteers may not use or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while volunteering at the Library. Harassment of any kind – verbal, physical, or otherwise – is not tolerated. We expect all volunteers to help us maintain a positive and inclusive space.

Volunteer Agreement & At-Will Status

By volunteering, you acknowledge that your service is unpaid and that volunteering does not create an employment relationship. You are not entitled to employee benefits. Volunteering is at-will, meaning either you or the Library may end the volunteer relationship at any time, with or without notice.

SAFETY & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Safety Guidelines

Your safety is our top priority. While volunteering, please take a moment to review the Library's safety guidelines and emergency procedures, and be prepared to call 911 in the event of a serious emergency.

- **Emergency Exits:** Take note of the nearest exits when you arrive. In the event of an emergency, follow posted evacuation routes and instructions from Library staff or emergency personnel.
- **Medical Emergencies:** If someone is injured or becomes ill, call 911 if it is a serious emergency, or alert a Library staff member immediately. First aid and AED kits are in

designated areas throughout the Library. If you personally experience an injury or medical situation that requires assistance, we may contact the emergency contact you provided on your volunteer application.

- **Fire or Other Emergencies:** In the event of a fire, severe weather, or other emergency, remain calm and follow the instructions of Library staff or emergency personnel.
- **Hazards:** If you notice unsafe conditions, spills, or other hazards, notify Library staff right away so they can be addressed promptly.
- **Personal Safety:** Volunteers should use caution when moving materials, handling equipment, or performing tasks that could present a risk. Ask staff for guidance if you are unsure or are uncomfortable using material or equipment.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Feedback

We want your volunteer experience to be positive and rewarding. If you wish to share feedback, please contact Julie Ary, HR Manager and Volunteer Coordinator, at jary@balibrary.org or 847-382-1300 x2020. Your input is valued and will be handled respectfully and confidentially.

General Contact Information

Barrington Area Library

505 N. Northwest Highway

Barrington, IL 60010

volunteer@balibrary.org

847-382-1300

- Jason Pinshower, Executive Director (x 2000)
- Jason Katsion, Deputy Director (x 4000)
- Julie Ary, Human Resources Manager/Volunteer Coordinator (x 2020)
- Hayley Schommer, Head of Adult Services (x 3000)
- Aly Prchal, Head of Youth Services (x 6000)
- Michael Campagna, Digital Services Manager (x 2040)

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with us. We are excited to have you as part of our team and look forward to the incredible work we will accomplish together. Your support and commitment help us enrich our Library community, and we are so grateful for the positive impact you will make.

Thank You!