

Union County Library Volunteer Guidelines & Procedures

Union County recognizes there are benefits to members of the community being involved in the delivery of programs and services primarily for civic, charitable and/or humanitarian reasons. Individuals have an interest in assisting public agencies by applying their knowledge, skills, and experiences to worthwhile endeavors on a volunteer basis. Also, the community and County Government receive enhanced services because of the individual's specialized skills and commitment.

Volunteers at the Union County Library support its mission and enhance its services through community outreach. Volunteer opportunities within the library provide a chance for residents to become a part of the library and is considered an element of the library's services.

Mission Statement

To inspire our residents to explore, create, and learn.

Vision Statement

Union County Library will be at the heart of our community's educational and cultural interests, enriching the lives of all people through diverse services and programming.

Overview

Volunteering can, and should, be a rewarding and exciting experience. Volunteers give their time, with no expectation of compensation, in support of the library's operation, services, and programs. The volunteer program strengthens the relationship between the library and the public by fostering good will and community involvement. Volunteers will not be used as a means of replacing work done by paid library staff.

Volunteer Programs

The Library has both virtual and in-person volunteer programs for community members. The virtual volunteer program(s) focuses on the creation of content for the Library's various digital platforms. The in-person volunteer program(s) focus on assisting with the day-to-day operations of the Library.

Volunteer Placement

Volunteers are recruited for the Library based on the needs of library locations and/or departments. Any community member interested in volunteering with the Library must complete an online application and submit any supplemental materials needed to be considered for placement.

- Teen applicants are those persons who are 14-17 years old.

Union County Library

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- Teen applicants must have consent from a parent/guardian and provide one reference letter from an adult who can speak to the teen's character and responsibility. References from a parent/guardian and/or a friend will not be accepted.
- Adult applicants are those persons at least 18 years old.
- All applicants must have a Union County Library card in good standing.
- All applicants interested in volunteering in-person must score a minimum of 90% on the Library Volunteer Knowledge Check which goes over basic alpha-numeric sorting to be considered for an extended in-person volunteer placement.

All volunteers are expected to contact their Volunteer Staff Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinators about any need or request regarding transferring their volunteer commitment to a different location and/or department. Failure to do so may result in the cancellation of the volunteer agreement.

Volunteer Time Commitment and Attendance

The Library offers various commitment options for community members interested in volunteering.

- 1 Time Commitment: 1 Day
- Limited Time Commitment: 2 Days - 1 Week
- Extended Commitment: 1 Week - 2 Month
- Long Term Commitment: 3 + Months

Virtual Volunteer Program(s) Time Commitment

Virtual Volunteers work on materials in accordance with their own schedule (as long as they adhere to deadlines provided by the Volunteer Coordinators or Volunteer Staff Supervisor). When making revisions, volunteers have forty-eight (48) hours upon receiving feedback to submit their updated documents. Failure to meet deadlines may result in the cancellation of a Volunteer Agreement.

Due to the nature of these volunteer opportunities, the Library does not have a required time commitment for virtual volunteers. While there is no time commitment, the Library requests volunteers inform a Volunteer Coordinator or Volunteer Staff Supervisor when they wish to no longer volunteer.

In-Person Volunteer Program(s) Time Commitment

The schedule for volunteers will be made by the Volunteer Coordinators or the Volunteer Staff Supervisor(s) at the designated locations (Main Library in Monroe, Edwards Memorial Library in Marshville, Union West Regional Library in Indian Trail, and Waxhaw Library). Below are the guidelines for volunteering time lengths:

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- A minimum commitment of 3 months is requested of in-person volunteer applicants prior to completing volunteer training with their Volunteer Staff Supervisor.
- A volunteer shift is normally 2 hours in length. This, however, can be adjusted by the Volunteer Coordinators or Volunteer Staff Supervisor.
- One-time and limited in-person volunteer commitment(s) applications are approved on a case-by-case basis by the Volunteer Coordinators.

Regular attendance and punctuality are requirements of all volunteers. It is the responsibility of each volunteer to work their volunteer shift as scheduled. It is expected that volunteers communicate adjustment requests for their schedule to a Volunteer Coordinator or Volunteer Staff Supervisor with a minimum of two-week' notice.

Occasionally volunteers may need to miss a volunteer shift. If a volunteer needs to be absent, or cannot make a shift commitment, they must notify a Volunteer Coordinator or Volunteer Staff Supervisor. If they are not available, any library staff member can take a message. More than two (2) absences for in-person volunteers and more than 1 month without submission of work for virtual volunteers without notification to the library may result in a cancellation of the volunteer agreement.

Volunteer Service Hours

All volunteers must log their work and hours using the Track it Forward platform to earn volunteer service hours. The Library uses the Track it Forward Kiosk to track and log volunteer service hours. All volunteers are responsible for checking in on the Kiosk while they are working on volunteer project(s) or volunteering at the library.

Virtual Volunteers

To earn service hours as a virtual volunteer, one must check in using the Track it Forward Kiosk at the beginning of their time working on their volunteer project(s). All volunteer project materials must be submitted as outlined in the Union County Library Volunteer Guidelines and Procedures and approved by a Volunteer Coordinator or Volunteer Staff Supervisor for content and clarity.

In-Person Volunteers

To earn service hours as an in-person volunteer, one must check in at a designated Track it Forward Kiosk station upon their arrival at the library and check out at the end of each shift. If a volunteer does not check in upon their arrival at the library or check out at the end of their shift, they must notify their Volunteer Staff Supervisor.

If any volunteer needs a report of the hours worked they must notify their Volunteer Staff Supervisor and Volunteer Coordinators a minimum of two weeks in advance.

Dress Code

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The Library requires all of our in-person volunteers adhere as closely as possible to the Union County Employee Dress Code. Volunteers are asked to remember that the library works with the public in a business setting. A volunteer badge/lanyard must always be worn while volunteering within all locations and departments.

T-shirts	Shirts must not be excessively tight or excessively loose fitting. No crop tops. No obscene graphics/texts on shirts.
Jeans and Pants	Jeans must not be excessively tight or excessively loose fitting. Jeans should be free of holes. No sweatpants, pajama pants, leggings, or athleisure should be worn.
Shorts and Skirts	Shorts must be fingertip length and must not be excessively tight or excessively loose fitting. Shorts and skirts must be free of holes.
Athletic Shoes and Sandals	Sandals must have a back.
Hats	A small manufacturer's logo on the side or back is acceptable, but not on the front. Always wear the bill forward. Hat must be clean and free from snags. Hats may only be worn during work outside of the library.

Cell Phone Usage

In-person volunteers must leave cellphones in the designated space at each library location or keep them set to 'Do Not Disturb' or 'Silent' during volunteer shifts to keep the workplace professional and to not distract from volunteer duties.

Safety and Accommodations

The Library is open to and serves the public. If a library visitor violates the Safe Environment Policy, volunteers should immediately notify any library staff member.

In-person volunteer work may involve lifting and carrying. It is important to let library staff know if you will need assistance while working on physical tasks. Notify the Volunteer Coordinators if you require any accommodations for any reason after applying for the volunteer program or anytime during your volunteer commitment. If you are unsure if you need accommodations, please refer to the U.S. Department of Labor's [website](#).

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Benefits and Courtesies

The Library values volunteers and encourages them to utilize all the resources provided, especially circulating materials. While returning materials on time is expected, as a courtesy and token of our appreciation for the time spent volunteering, any current and active volunteer may have overdue fees waived during their time as a library volunteer. Any other fees accrued on accounts, such as for lost or damaged materials, must still be paid. A note will be added to library volunteer accounts by Volunteer Coordinators or Volunteer Staff Supervisors at the start of their volunteer commitment and removed at the end of their commitment.

End of Volunteering Commitment

The Library requests volunteers let a Volunteer Coordinator or Volunteer Staff Supervisor know when they wish to end their volunteer commitment. Letters of recommendation, beyond a report of hours worked, may be given based on any assessments of the volunteer. The letters of recommendation can be written by Volunteer Coordinators or Staff Supervisors.

The Volunteer Coordinators reserve the right to discontinue a Volunteer Agreement at any time. The following circumstances can result in cancellation of the Volunteer Agreement:

Virtual Volunteers

- Turning in submitted materials without completed revisions.
- Submitting revised documents past the predetermined time frame.
- Turning in materials that do not adhere to guidelines or fail to meet the quality desired by the library.
- Submitting plagiarized materials without proper citation.

In-Person Volunteers

- Repeated tardiness or absences without notifying library staff.
- Continual errors while working on shelving and other library tasks.
- Texting, hanging out with friends, and being inactive during assigned volunteer shifts.

Virtual and In-Person Volunteers

- Disrespectful behavior or interactions with library staff and/or community members visiting the library.

Volunteer Responsibilities and Duties

Under the immediate supervision of the Union County library Volunteer Staff Supervisors or general library staff volunteers are responsible for a variety of duties dependent on their



volunteer placement. All volunteers are responsible for abiding by all requirements of the Union County Volunteer Policy. Below is an illustrative but not an exhaustive list of what Union County Library volunteers may be expected to do during their volunteer commitment.

General Virtual Volunteers

- Check-in to the *Track it Forward Kiosk* at the beginning of their time working on virtual volunteer projects and check-out once they have completed, and submitted, their virtual volunteer projects.
- Be detail-oriented and ensure work is free of grammatical and rhetorical errors to the best of their abilities.
- Remain cognizant of all community members to avoid bias when crafting materials.
- Perform corrections to documents in a timely manner by adhering to deadlines/recommendations.
- Ensure submitted documents are devoid of plagiarism by creating unique content and/or citing all sources in APA format.
- Volunteers will receive feedback on their submitted work one (1) time. If revisions do not meet the standards of the Volunteer Coordinators or Volunteer Staff Supervisor, materials will be rejected. Additional revision opportunities are at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinators or Volunteer Staff Supervisor(s).

Goodreads Virtual Volunteers

- Keep book reviews under 500 words and follow all formatting techniques established in the [book review template](#). Additional book review samples can be found [here](#).
- Submit content using the [Virtual Volunteer Work Submission Form](#).

Teen Bookworm Blog Virtual Volunteers

- Submit a blog post idea form monthly by the 4th Friday using the [Bookworm Blog Post Idea Form](#).
- Have blog posts drafted one (1) week prior to their scheduled posting date.
- Adhere to standards and guidelines outlined in the Bookworm Blog Handbook for the creation of blog content.
- Communicate with Bookworm Blog Team members regularly about deadlines, extensions, and any other questions regarding the Bookworm Blog.
- Attend quarterly workshops for the Bookworm Blog as offered by the Library.
- For an overview of Bookworm Blog Workflow, please review these [flow charts](#).
- For examples of Bookworm Blog submissions, please review the [blogsite](#).

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General In-Person Volunteers

- Efficiently and accurately shelve library materials using alphanumeric sorting and filing.
- Arrange returned materials on book trucks as needed.
- Shelf-read and straighten materials on the shelves or in the collection while shelving and in other assigned areas.
- Refer reference and other non-directional questions to appropriate staff member(s).
- Assist with library programs, displays, and decorations.
- Commit to an assigned schedule (changes such as leaving early, coming in late, switching days or times, etc. must be approved by the designated Volunteer Staff Supervisor).
- Notify the library staff of any absence as far in advance as possible (preferably 24 hour notice).
- Assist in other support tasks or projects as assigned.

Departmental In-Person Volunteers

Depending on where in-person volunteers are placed, there will be additional responsibilities and duties. Below is a list overviewing documents that contain departmental duties for assigned volunteers.

- [Acquisitions and Collections Department](#)
- [Children's Department](#)
- [Circulation Department](#)
- [Community Engagement Department](#)
- [Genealogy and Local History Department](#)
- [Homebound Services Department](#)
- [Reference and Information Services Department](#)
- [Teen and Technology \(STEAM\) Services Department](#)

Teen Advisory Group Volunteers

The Teen Advisory Group (TAG) is a special program coordinated by the Teen Services Department and run under the umbrella of the Library's Volunteer program.

- Attend monthly meeting(s).
- Communicate regularly with other TAG members, library staff, and community members.
- Contribute a minimum of 1 blog post per month to the Teen Bookworm Blog.
- Assist with the creation of promotion and marketing materials for UCL's Teen Services.

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- Plan, lead, or assist with library programming, events, activities, or initiatives for teens.
- Assist in other support tasks or projects as assigned.

Volunteer Knowledge and Abilities

All volunteers should understand the expected knowledge and abilities of their volunteer position. Below is an illustrative but not exhaustive list of volunteer knowledge and abilities.

General Virtual Volunteers

- Effectively present information in a graphic and/or text format.
- Receive feedback and make improvements when needed.
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Word or Google Docs.
- Adapt to new applications and software.
- Maintain professionalism when writing and creating content for distribution.
- Sitting or standing for a long length of time.
- Viewing a digital monitor for a prolonged period of time.

General In-Person Volunteers

- Effectively present information and respond to questions from library community members.
- Sort efficiently in alphabetic, numeric, or alphanumeric order.
- Develop a working understanding of the Dewey Decimal and other systems of library materials arranged.
- Bending, twisting, and reaching.
- Climbing: ascending and descending short footstool.
- Handling: picking up and shelving books.
- Lifting and carrying: 50 pounds or less.
- Sitting, standing, walking, stooping, kneeling, crouching.
- Reading down to the ground in lower lighting.
- Interpersonal skills and ability to maintain and foster a cooperative and courteous working relationship with the public, peers, and supervisors.

Note on In-Person Volunteers: Volunteers ages 18+ are limited to assisting in the adult areas of the library and should not assist in the children's or teen areas without a background check approved by the Union County Government.

Teen Advisory Group Volunteers

- Interpersonal skills and ability to maintain and foster a cooperative and courteous working relationship with the public, peers, and supervisors.

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- Effectively present information in a graphic and/or text format and verbally.
- Advocate for the Library and the services it offers for teens in the community.
- Lead discussions and meetings.
- Receive feedback and make improvements when needed.

All Volunteers

- Follow detailed directions.
- Working knowledge of English grammar and spelling.
- Adequate vision: Reading font size 12 or smaller.
- Work cooperatively with all levels of staff.
- Understand and perform assigned library procedures and tasks.

Note on Virtual and In-Person Volunteers: Volunteers should not use any library tools that have access to library patron personal identification information.

Volunteer Onboarding and Training

All volunteers new to Union County Library are required to go through onboarding and training. The training process is dependent on volunteer placement. This list is illustrative, not exhaustive. Additional training will be determined by the library's Volunteer Coordinators. Upon successful completion of the training, each volunteer will be assigned to fill open placements or assist on special projects.

Goodreads Virtual Volunteers

Training will be coordinated by the Goodreads Volunteer Staff Supervisors.

Bookworm Blog Virtual Volunteers

Training will be coordinated by the Bookworm Blog Volunteer Staff Supervisors. Training consists of:

- Introduction to the Library, Teen Services Department, and Teen Bookworm Blog.
- Review of the blog post idea submission and blog scheduling process.
- Introduction to the Wix platform and blog post drafting process.
- Overview of the Bookworm Blog Team and workflow.

In-Person Volunteers

Training will be coordinated by the library's Volunteer Coordinators or forwarded to the Staff Supervisor at the designated locations (Marshville, Indian Trail, Waxhaw). Training consists of:

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- Completing the training module and orientation.
- Tour of library and department/collection areas.
- Introducing the volunteer to all library staff.
- Shelving practice at a library location.
- Use of color strips as a short term evaluative method.

Teen Advisory Group Volunteers

Training will be coordinated by the Teen Services Department staff. Training consists of:

- Review of library values and the Teen Advisory Group's purpose.
- Introduction to the Library and its history.
- Review of the Library and Teen Advisory Group policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Review the organization and communication workflows of the group.
- Introduction and assignment of teen engagement opportunities and projects.

All Volunteers

All volunteers will be required to review a tutorial on *Track it Forward* and how to use it to log and track volunteer hours and projects. Only approved volunteers should sign up with *Track it Forward* once they have been contacted and confirmed by library staff.

Evaluation

Volunteers will periodically be evaluated by a Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Staff Supervisor, or assigned library staff member based on their submitted and/or observed work. Evaluations will occur for virtual and in-person volunteers according to the following:

Virtual Volunteers

- First piece of submitted work.
- Third piece of submitted work.

In-Person Volunteers

- 1 month point of volunteering.
- 3 month point of volunteering.

Teen Advisory Group Volunteers

- 3 month point of volunteering.
- 6 month point of volunteering.

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Further evaluation can be done as deemed necessary by Union County Library Volunteer Coordinators or Volunteer Staff Supervisor.

Assessments and Evaluations will be conducted through Email, Zoom, and/or Telephone by a Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Staff Supervisor, or assigned staff member.