

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG
LIBRARY



VolunTeen Handbook



WELCOME!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. Your participation significantly impacts our ability to improve lives and strengthen the community. The Volunteer Handbook contains essential guidelines and information for your role, so please take the time to read it thoroughly.

ABOUT THE LIBRARY

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library serves over one million citizens in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, through 21 locations and online services. Its mission is to improve lives and strengthen the community while promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Founded in 1903 as a Carnegie Library, it remains dedicated to lifelong education and providing valuable experiences as a trusted community resource, inspired by its customers, staff, and supporters.

LIBRARY MISSION

To improve lives and build a stronger community.

VISION

The essential connector of a thriving community of readers, leaders and learners. Together, we will build a library system that not only meets the needs of today, but also anticipates the possibilities of tomorrow.

VOLUNTEEN PROGRAM

If you are between the ages of 13 and 18, you can apply to be a VolunTeen up to two times a year, at any one of our locations. Note: You can only apply to one location per session. Refer to the [VolunTeen FAQs](#) for a more comprehensive list of frequently asked questions and answers.

All VolunTeens should review the VolunTeen Handbook prior to their interview. If selected, the VolunTeen Coordinator at the respective branch location will provide the necessary orientation and training to set you up for success.



VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

GUIDLINES

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library aims to create a safe and welcoming space for all customers to read, learn, explore, create, and participate in programs. The guidelines are designed to ensure safety, enjoyment, and protection of Library equipment and facilities.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

All volunteers aged 18 and older at Charlotte Mecklenburg Library must pass a criminal history check. Volunteers committing crimes such as theft, vandalism, drug abuse, assault, making threats, or carrying concealed weapons on library property will be dismissed and reported to authorities.

DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO USE

Any Charlotte Mecklenburg Library volunteer found with alcohol, tobacco products, including vape products, or illegal drugs will be dismissed immediately, and authorities will be notified.

SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS/GUIDES/ASSISTANTS

Caregivers accompanying teen volunteers who need support must complete a volunteer application and a criminal background check (if over 18). This is in addition to the application for the individual volunteering. Both caregivers' and volunteers' hours will be counted, and caregivers must be present with the volunteer during their shift at a branch.



WELCOMING SPACE FOR ALL

Harassment, including racially insensitive or suggestive comments, will not be tolerated and may result in immediate dismissal.

COMPUTER, E-MAIL AND INTERNET USAGE

Library technology is designated for library business use. The library monitors access to computers, email, and internet services and prohibits disruptive or offensive usage, including viewing certain content on library or personal devices on library premises. Read the [Internet Policy](#).

MEDIA

You should not be in contact with the media or its representatives regarding a library issue without approval from the Chief Marketing and Communications Officer or the Chief Library Services Officer.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As a VolunTeen, you are representing Charlotte Mecklenburg Library to the public. All volunteers are expected to behave in a professional manner, especially when addressing library customers or staff. Customer and volunteer information at the library is confidential and must not be shared.

VOLUNTEEN GUIDELINES



ORIENTATION

Orientation is led by lead volunteer staff at each branch and covers duties, requirements, expectations, and library-specific issues.

RESIGNATION

Notify the VolunTeen Coordinator if you wish to resign or cannot fulfill your hours. While we understand emergencies happen, frequent cancellations may lead to reevaluation of your VolunTeen position at the library.

SERVICE HOUR APPROVAL

Service hours require approval from the VolunTeen Coordinator and must be logged on the volunteer sign-in form. Requests for approval will be based on branch-specific guidelines. Hours may be denied if library time was not used appropriately, as determined by the overseeing individual.

RECOGNITION

Each branch will provide recognition opportunities during Volunteer Appreciation Month.

ATTENDANCE

VolunTeens must complete at least 40 hours during the School Year session and 20 hours during the Summer session. This averages out to about two hours a week.

Teens are responsible for attending scheduled programs and community service as scheduled. Hours cannot be completed in a shorter timeframe.

Adherence to schedules and notifying supervisors of changes is required. Advance notice for vacations and absences is expected.

REFUSAL AND DISMISSAL

Dismissal of VolunTeens is at the discretion of the Volunteer Supervisor, Branch/Department Manager, or VolunTeen Coordinator.

VolunTeens will be discharged from the program after three strikes, with written notifications provided for each strike.

THREE STRIKE RULE

Strikes may occur for reasons such as:

- No-show for a VolunTeen shift without prior notice (24 hours required).
- Habitual absenteeism or cancellations of VolunTeen shifts.
- Inappropriate attire.
- Unsatisfactory performance of duties
- Non-compliance and or violation of the Library and Volunteer Guidelines.

Note: Missed events due to emergencies or illness do not count as strikes.

VOLUNTEEN GUIDELINES

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

VolunTeens, just like library staff, must present a professional appearance to the public.

- Appropriate attire includes a t-shirt, pants/jeans, and closed-toe shoes.
- A VolunTeen t-shirt will be given to you during orientation.
- During shifts, no shirts with unsuitable messages, revealing garments, or torn clothing are allowed.
- Sleep- and lounge-wear is not allowed.
- For safety, slippers and sandal flip-flops are not allowed.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

There are times when a library may be closed due to inclement weather or an emergency. Please call your location if there are any questions about hours.

The inclement weather line is **704-416-0191**.

The number for general information is **704-416-1000**.

SAFETY, ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

Your safety is a priority. If you feel unsafe while volunteering, inform library staff. VolunTeens should share safety ideas or concerns with the VolunTeen Coordinator.

Injuries to volunteers or staff must be reported immediately to a staff member, who will complete an Accident Report Form.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In emergencies like power failure, gas odors, explosions, water damage, or fire, do not use the elevator. Report to staff immediately and exit the building via the nearest exit.

VOLUNTEEN RIGHTS

As a VolunTeen, you should:

- Get a clear job description.
- Be interviewed and assigned appropriately.
- Receive training.
- Engage in meaningful work.
- Have support in your role.
- Ensure safety on the job.
- Get feedback on your performance.
- Receive recognition for your contributions.

VOLUNTEEN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Check in with staff upon arrival to plan the shift. Notify staff before leaving early.
- Store personal items in designated places.
- Record activities and tasks completed in the VolunTeen binder.
- Wear the assigned nametag during the shift.
- Assist library staff with projects and ask questions as needed.
- Avoid eating/drinking in public areas (water bottles allowed).
- Refrain from using devices for gaming, music, or messaging unless permitted. Check with the VolunTeen Coordinator on guidelines for cell phone use during shifts.
- Keep conversations short and politely inform friends that volunteering takes priority.
- We encourage teens to work together and have friendly conversations in teen spaces when appropriate.
- Avoid staff-only work spaces and other assigned areas unless directed.

TEEN VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

As a Teen Volunteer at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, I, _____, agree to the following:

1. I will arrive on time, sign in, and notify a staff member that I am here. If I am unable to do this, I will email the volunteer supervisor, giving 24 hours' notice when possible.
2. I will remain on task until my time slot has ended (except for restroom breaks) unless a staff member has asked me to do another task, and I will notify a staff member when I am taking any sort of break or leaving for the day.
3. I will speak with my Teen Volunteer Contact if I need to make changes to the schedule.
4. I will perform my duties as assigned in a pleasant manner. If I have any questions about what I am to do, I will ask a staff member.
5. I will refer customers to the staff members on duty when questions arise that are not directly related to my job.
6. I will be courteous and respectful to library customers, staff, and other volunteers at all times.
7. I will use the phone only with the permission of a staff member.
8. I will wear a volunteer nametag when I am working.
9. I will wear appropriate attire to the library (no bathing suits, no bare mid-riffs, no short shorts, no short skirts, no clothing with offensive or threatening messages).
10. I will limit cell phone use to permitted times and circumstances.
11. I understand that any use of drugs, alcohol, weapons, or any form of theft, violence, or bullying are a violation of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Patron Code of Conduct and are grounds for immediate termination and/or prosecution.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date



PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE & PARTICIPATION FORM

For good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I, _____, [parent/guardian of _____], on my behalf and/or the behalf of my child, do hereby grant to Charlotte Mecklenburg Library unlimited right to use and/or reproduce my photographs, videos, likenesses or voice of me/my child in any legal manner for the internal or external activities of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. I grant permission to Charlotte Mecklenburg Library to use, reprint and publish these photos/videos for promotional purposes in print and online.

I also agree to allow myself and/or child to be interviewed, recorded, videoed and/or photographed by representatives of the external news media in relation to any and all coverage of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library and the activity in which the Library is involved.

I further understand that by signing the release, I waive any and all rights, claims, demands or actions I or my child may have against the Library arising out of its use of the above material, including any right to present or future compensation or any right of privacy.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

