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**Provide leadership for volunteer engagement:**

**The role of the volunteer coordinator**

**Identify the Need**

With your colleagues, Manager, Outreach Services & Volunteer Resources (OSVR), and/or the Volunteer Resources Supervisor you will develop how volunteers can support staff and The Library’s mission. The library has Position Descriptions for Program Support, Collection Support, Public Computer Support, Gardener, Program Co-leader, and Teen Advisory which cover the needs for all branches. If a role is outside of these opportunities, a new position description will need to be created in partnership with OSVR before the volunteer’s first shift.

**Recruitment**

OSVR, in collaboration with Communications, maintains the Volunteer Opportunities page of the IndyPL website. Please let OSVR know each time your volunteer recruitment needs change. We want to avoid turning potential volunteers away simply because our website is out of date. We post on other recruitment outlets as well, such as, IndyHub, United Way of Central Indiana, and VolunteerMatch. Branches may choose to recruit directly at their location since many individuals choose to volunteer in their immediate community or “home” branch.

OSVR will also forward you any relevant volunteer inquiries received through the IndyPL website, phone calls, or service fairs.

**Respond to Volunteer Inquiries**

As the coordinator, you will respond to volunteer inquiries via telephone, in person, or e-mail. Doing so in a timely manner, 24-48 hours, will keep the volunteer’s enthusiasm and interest.

**Pre-screening**

A great deal can be learned from an initial telephone conversation with a potential applicant. Before scheduling an interview, you may wish to conduct an initial assessment for things like:

* Availability (is the individual available when you need help)
* How long does the individual plan to volunteer? (4 hours, a month, indefinitely, etc.)
* Is the individual interested in helping in the way you need help?
* Is the individual wishing to volunteer for service hours?

E-mail the inquirer the relevant Volunteer Position Description(s) so they can decide their interest before moving forward. Include dates and times when you are available for the volunteer interview.

*Note:*

* *Volunteer applications for ongoing placements are completed by an applicant after the interview. When OSVR receives the interview form from the volunteer coordinator the volunteer will receive an email with the onboarding next steps including the application link. The links to the Better Impact volunteer applications are distributed* ***only*** *by the OSVR team.*
* *Also, one value of a criminal background check is letting an inquirer know before the screening interview that one will be conducted. This may help the individual with their decision to volunteer for IndyPL.*

**Screen volunteers - the volunteer interview – a casual conversation**

* Begin with the Volunteer Interview Form. This document provides some initial questions to get the conversation going. Focus on the candidate’s skills and the ways they can support our work. You may discover a talent you weren’t expecting which will support a new program or project.
* Share the Volunteer Position Description(s) with the candidate. Set expectations. This will help you and the candidate in determining if this is the right placement for the volunteer.
* Take notes on the Volunteer Interview Form and provide a summary of your assessment after the volunteer interview is concluded. Please write clearly as this document will be part of the volunteer’s file for the duration of their service.
* Before the interview is over, do one of the following; approve, approve with conditions, deny, or postpone acceptance, and communicate your decision with the applicant.
* If approved, use the Volunteer Onboarding Tracker to ensure you have completed all the steps for the interview including taking the volunteers photo for their ID badge and reviewing the Volunteer Onboarding Next Steps document.
* Discuss their schedule and a tentative start date.

**Immediately following the volunteer interview**

* Send the completed & signed originals of the following to OSVR/Central
  + Completed Volunteer Onboarding Tracker (checklist)
  + The completed Volunteer Interview Form – don’t forget to fill out the Summary
  + Send a digital photo to OSVR for the volunteer’s ID badge
* Complete an Emergency Contact Card & keep this where you and the PIC can access
* Communicate with all branch/department staff the addition of their new volunteer and the volunteer’s assigned tasks and schedule. Posting a photo & short biography (only if the volunteer agrees) helps staff identify and welcome new volunteers by their name.

You may keep a *copy* of the Volunteer Interview Form and your interview notes, though keep this information in a locked location. It’s confidential. Shred all paperwork when the volunteer goes inactive. OSVR will maintain the originals.

OSVR will initiate the remainder of the volunteer’s onboarding process:

* Sending the link to the Better Impact application.
* Sending an invitation to complete the background check. Results are typically received within 48-72 hours of submission by the prospective volunteer.
* OSVR will e-mail you when the Volunteer has completed the application, agreed to the Youth Protection Policy, the Photo Release, and the Terms & Liability, and the background check results have been returned. At that time, you and the volunteer can set their start date for volunteer orientation and training. Should there be any issues with the volunteer onboarding process or background check, OSVR will contact you.

**Offer of interview support**

If you suspect a volunteer interview may be difficult, or if you are new to the volunteer coordinator position and wish to observe a volunteer interview before going solo, a representative from OSVR is available to co-conduct the volunteer interview. Just give us a call.

**Volunteer Orientation & Training**

* Meet and greet the new volunteer on their first day.
* Introduce them to staff, show them where to store their belongings, give them a tour.
* Show them how to log their hours.
* Initiate the orientation and on-the-job training protocol.
* Orientation and training can be conducted by the volunteer coordinator or can be assigned to other Library staff.
* Monitor the volunteer’s ability to learn and work independently.

Most Volunteer Position Descriptions state *“Upon completion of training and a reasonable time on task, volunteers must be able to perform tasks independently with limited supervision.” Remember, it may take longer for a volunteer to learn a task as they are only on-site for a limited number of hours a week.*

**Staff / Volunteer Integration**

* Educate and communicate with all staff the role and expectations of branch volunteers.
* Invite your colleagues to be welcoming and helpful to volunteers. Staff should *always* take the initiative to introduce themselves to new volunteers and say “thank you”.
* Be watchful that well-intentioned staff members do not ask volunteers to work ‘off job description’.
* Listen to and consider Library staff and volunteer suggestions for volunteer activity changes.
* Create a working environment that promotes positive staff/volunteer relationships. Dedicated volunteers stay dedicated because of the people and not the place or role. Unfriendly, unwelcoming, and unprepared environments drive volunteers away.

**Provide leadership for ongoing positive engagements**

* Monitor volunteer performance objectively and coach when appropriate.
* Check-in regularly with volunteers regarding their progress & satisfaction with the assigned role.
* Investigate when a volunteer does not show up to volunteer.
* Communicate task changes and/or additional training requirements to volunteers.
* Be kind, honest, and timely when giving feedback; bad as well as good.
* Terminate volunteer when warranted *(please* do this in conjunction with OSVR).
* Confirm the volunteer signs in and out regularly.
* Problem-solve issues quickly! An unresolved problem builds ill-will for everyone.

**Volunteer Appreciation**

* Plan appreciation initiatives (nothing big required). Birthdays, National Volunteer Week in April, etc.
* Communicate with staff the importance of thanking volunteers daily by name.

**Library Express**

*Library Express* volunteers may select your branch as their preferred branch for picking up/dropping off materials for their assigned patron. In this instance, please make the staff aware of this volunteer’s participation in the Library Express Program. A “thank you” and welcoming support as needed will go a long way in the volunteer’s role satisfaction.

**Paws to Read, Teens, and Adult Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities**

Branches may choose to separate volunteer coordination for Paws to Read, Teens, or Adults. Paws to Read coordinators receive specialized program instructions through the CAP leadership. Should the branch divide Teen and Adult volunteer coordination, then both individuals will need to attend volunteer coordinator orientation provided by OSVR. OSVR will direct volunteer inquiries to the appropriate coordinator.