

# **Volunteer Handbook**

**Compiled by the Volunteer Advisory Network  
October 2004  
Fresno County Public library**

## **Greetings from the Interim County Librarian**

As a member of the corps of people who volunteer at the Fresno County Library, you are joining a group of men and women, from young people to seniors, who share their time and talents as members of our team. Welcome to you! All members of the team are glad to have you with us.

Volunteers make a difference to the library and the community we serve. I am committed to the development of volunteer positions that are satisfying to the individual and beneficial to the overall mission of the library. Our success depends on the teamwork of our coordinator, our staff, and you, our volunteer, working together in meeting the needs of our community.

Volunteering will offer you a personal opportunity for growth and fulfillment. Service at the library will give you a chance to help meet the learning and information needs of each person who comes in the library. While the best reward is seeing someone else grow, friendship, education, recognition, and genuine satisfaction in a job well done are among the rewards of volunteering.

This handbook highlights our policies for volunteers. The more familiar you become with the library, the more enthusiastic a volunteer you will be.

Again, welcome to our team!

Karen Bosch Cobb  
Interim County Librarian

## **Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948

Amended February 2, 1961 and January 23, 1980

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council

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## **I. Volunteers: A Valuable Source of Support**

Welcome to the Fresno County Public Library Volunteer Services Program. Prospective volunteers who successfully complete the application and interview process will provide valuable support for professionally trained librarians and staff throughout the system. Working under the supervision of library staff, volunteers provide assistance in a variety of ways:

**Adult Literacy Program**—volunteers are trained to be tutors in a one-on-one learner centered program for adults who want to improve their reading, writing, spelling and math skills.

**Grandparents/Grandreaders and Books (GAB)**—a program in which volunteer readers (seniors and adults) read to children one-on-one or in very small groups. This program currently operates at fifteen library locations: Auberry, Bear Mountain, Caruthers, Cedar-Clinton, Clovis, Fig Garden, Gillss, Kingsburg, Mosqueda, Orange Cove, Reedley, Sanger, Selma, Sunnyside, and Woodward. Contact staff at any library of the Volunteer Coordinator for training information.

**Teen Council**—is for teens (7th - 12th grade) interested in planning programs, selecting books, music and more and helping with other projects for the library, which benefit the teens of Fresno County. Check with the Volunteer Coordinator for the library branches with this program.

**Patron Assistance**—train patrons in the use of VALLEYCAT, the Library's computerized public access catalog, Internet, or Infotrack (magazine index). Assist patrons in finding library materials.

**Support Services**—prepare books for shelving, bulletin board, and window displays; maintain newspaper and neighborhood clipping files; routine repair of books; clear book drops; distribute surveys; shelf read; and other routine in-house tasks as requested by supervisors.

**Building and Grounds**—assist in gardening; clean outdoor and indoor areas at Central and branch libraries; painting and maintenance tasks.

**Homebound/Friends for Life**—please ask the Volunteer Coordinator for further information. Select and deliver library materials to homebound patrons.

## **II. The Library System: Our Mission and Services**

### **Mission Statement**

Your Fresno County Public Library provides books, technology, programs, services and more to inform, enlighten and entertain people of all ages.

### **Services**

Library programs are offered throughout the year so ask for a current schedule of event at your library. The library provides assistance in location information on any topic and answer simple questions over the telephone. For complicated questions you can visit, work with the online catalog (ValleyCat) and indexes, and ask Reference staff for assistance.

### **More Services**

Special services and programs are offered through grants and supplemental funding. For information about current literacy and library outreach, contact the Central Library. For library services to the blind and physically handicapped, call the Talking Book Library at 488-3217. For volunteer opportunities call (559) 252-VOLS (252-8657) or send an email message to [Elizabeth.Barg@fresnolibrary.org](mailto:Elizabeth.Barg@fresnolibrary.org).

### **Locations**

In addition to the Central Library in downtown Fresno, we have 34 other libraries located throughout Fresno County and two bookmobiles. You can borrow and return materials from any of these locations and the libraries in the (SJVLS) San Joaquin Valley Library System: Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Kern, and Tulare Counties and Coalinga, Porterville and Tulare.

## **III. Friends of the Library**

The Friends of the Fresno County Library is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering interest in the Library, promoting its welfare and addressing unmet needs.

The Friends serve as a connection between the Library and the community, and is the link between concerned citizens and the dedicated Library staff.

### **Programs include:**

- Community Awareness
- Fundraising
- Special Cultural Events
- Endowment Fund

### **You Are Invited to Join The Friends.**

Your membership goes to Library purposes via Friends special projects and activities. You will receive a newsletter and information about the Library.

### **Book Sale information:**

3rd Thursdays, 9am-12pm  
Thursday every month, 9am-7pm  
1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays every month, 10am-1pm

### **Book Sale location:**

Next to Sunnyside Regional Library  
5568 E. Kings Canyon Rd.

### **Correspondence to Friends of the Library (FOL):**

FOL President  
P.O. Box 4523  
Fresno, CA 93744-4523

## **IV. Volunteer Conduct**

### **General Working Procedures**

As a volunteer for the Fresno County Public Library, you will provide important support for the Library system and its patrons, You will be treated with the respect due to a member of the paid Library staff and, you are expected to, conduct yourself in a professional manner. The following guidelines provide an overview of what you can expect while serving the Fresno County Library.

### **Appearance**

The Volunteer Program has no formal dress code, but remember that you are a reflection of the Fresno County Library. Personal cleanliness should be above reproach and dress should be neat and appropriate to your tasks. Also avoid strong colognes and perfumes, which may cause problems for staff and patrons who have allergies to these items.

### **Badges**

Volunteer badges are available for all volunteers working on a regularly scheduled shift or project. You should wear your badge while you are on duty and return it to your supervisor when you are no longer an active participant in the program. Please wear these badges, especially if you are working in public areas.

### **Breaks**

Volunteers should be sure to take a 15-minute break during every 3 or 4 hour shift you work. You are welcome to take your break in the staff area. Just be sure to notify the staff person on duty before you take your break, so they can relieve you if necessary.

### **Changes in Personal Information**

Important information must sometimes be distributed to volunteers on short notice, so please report any changes in your personal information (i.e. address, phone number, etc.) to the Volunteer Coordinator and supervisor in a timely fashion.

### **Confidentiality**

Some things that you may hear or see in the library may be interesting or humorous. In fact, you may want to include these incidents in your everyday conversation. However, the uses that people make of the library and what they choose to check out—books, magazines, videos, and music—is considered confidential and should not be discussed with anyone.

We are here to direct our patrons to proper sources to find the information that they need to answer their questions. Personal opinions should not be expressed.

### **Drugs/Alcohol**

Use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace is prohibited, as is the abuse of any drug or alcohol, or reporting for duty under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### **Emergency Plans**

Your supervisor will identify emergency exits and plans for you. Also please make sure your personal "Emergency Contact" information is kept up to date at all times.

**Holidays**

Check with your supervisor for a list of days the library will be closed.

**Injuries**

If you are injured while on duty, please report immediately to your supervisor for appropriate action and, as soon as possible, notify the Volunteer Coordinator at (559) 252-VOLS (252-8657).

**Personal Belongings**

Secure, on-site storage/closet space is extremely limited and in some cases nonexistent, so you are encouraged to leave valuables at home and bring only what you need while on duty. Supervisor will show you where coats can be left. Theft does occur in these public buildings, so please be cautious about leaving personal belongings unattended.

**Public Contact**

A library patron is the most important person in our libraries either in person or otherwise. A patron is not an interruption of our work, the patron is the purpose of it. A patron brings us his/her information wants and needs, and it is our job to satisfy them as best we can.

Many volunteers will be in contact with Library patrons and may well be the first official contact a patron has with the Library; it is important, therefore, that you maintain a professional, friendly demeanor at all times. As a volunteer, you are not expected to have all the answers; it is perfectly acceptable for you to say "I don't know" in answer to a patron's question, and as a volunteer, *you are expected to refer patrons and all others to paid staff for specific assistance on reference and research questions, or on questions about Library policies or procedures.*

Always keep in mind that, to a library patron who comes in or telephones a question, the answer is important or he/she would not have gone to the trouble of asking. There are no trivial questions.

**Punctuality**

In order for our Volunteer program to be successful, we expect you to report for duty on time and complete the hours you have agreed to unless prevented from doing so by an unexpected illness or family emergency. Volunteers who are unable to work as scheduled are requested to provide as much advance notice as possible to their supervisor.

**Resignations**

A volunteer desiring to resign from a position is asked to notify the on-site supervisor no later than two weeks (10 working days) prior to the date of separation so that the pending vacancy can be filled. Also, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator of the resignation.

**Safety Procedures**

Because safety is everyone's job, please be alert at all time to safety hazards. Unsafe acts or conditions should be reported to a supervisor rather than trying to handle it yourself. Also notify your supervisor of any assignment which causes physical discomfort or which could lead to personal injury so that the situation can be rectified, or you can be transferred to a more suitable assignment.



**Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed in library facilities.

**Supervision**

Each volunteer will have an on-site supervisor and is expected to follow the procedures established by that supervisor. Disagreements with the supervisor should never be discussed in public; they should be resolved in private between the two individuals. Unresolved disputes should be referred to the Volunteer Coordinator for final action.

**Telephone Use**

Because library telephones are heavily used for patron services, telephone use should be limited to very short calls.

**Time Sheets**

Each day you work, please record the total number of hours you worked on your time sheet. Time sheets are available from on-site supervisors or through the Volunteer Coordinator. We need this information to measure the success of our volunteer program, for our annual report for the State Library, and for volunteer awards and recognition.

**Training**

The general orientation/training session offered by the Volunteer Coordinator, combined with the information in this handbook, is meant to provide the basic information needed by volunteers before they begin their service within the Library system. Additional training will be provided as needed for specific projects, and attendance at these sessions is required for some of the assignments. A volunteer desiring further assistance is encouraged to discuss special training needs with the supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

**V. Workplace Policies****Check-out Policy for Volunteers**

The check-out policy for volunteers is defined in the Fresno County *Library Manual*, Chapter 500: Circulation VI. Fines. A. i. "Staff, volunteers, institutions, and homebound patrons are not charged fines. However, they are expected to return materials on time." The exceptions to the above, "no charge find privilege" are court referrals, youth, and students with short term hours (40 hours or less). These "assigned volunteers" may receive this privilege when they become fully committed volunteers, It is up to the discretion of the staff at each site to give this privilege to any volunteer.

**Employment Policy**

Volunteers who are interested in paid employment within the Fresno County Library system should ask for a copy of *How to Get a Job with the Fresno County Library* from the Library Business Office.

**Equal Opportunity**

The Fresno County Public Library does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, ethnicity, age, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, sexual

orientation, ancestry, marital status, medical condition, or other non-merit factors. Volunteers have equal access to available positions and are limited only by the ability to do the job.

### **Filing Applications**

Anyone interested in applying for volunteer positions will be asked to complete an application form. Applications will be accepted on a continuing basis so that an adequate pool of volunteer help can be maintained at all times. Applicants may be asked to supply reference information.

### **Work Expectations**

Volunteers, in their capacity as unpaid staff, are expected to meet the same standards of professionalism required of Library staff. Because an unsatisfactory volunteer is an unfair burden upon fellow volunteers and Library employees, those who fail to meet the requirements of their job descriptions or violate the policies established in this handbook will be asked to quit their volunteer assignment. Effort to correct problems of this nature will be discussed by the volunteer and the supervisor; supervisors must report serious problem issues to the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible. Unresolved situations will be referred to the Volunteer Coordinator for review and a final decision.

### **General Recruitment Methods**

Every effort shall be made to secure top quality volunteers. Notice of opportunities will be circulated through appropriate departments/branches; through media and volunteer recruitment centers; and through presentations to community groups.

### **Interviews/Placement of Volunteers**

The Volunteer Coordinator or Branch Supervisor will hold an initial interview with each prospective volunteer to determine possible placement. Those volunteers who are being considered for placement will then be invited to an orientation session conducted by the Volunteer Coordinator and other Library staff members. Volunteers will meet with their prospective supervisors before placement is finalized.

### **Job Descriptions and Qualifications**

Most volunteer positions have written job descriptions identifying the general function, qualification requirements, primary responsibilities, and time requirements. Volunteers are required to possess the experience and other requirements as specified in their job descriptions, and will receive appropriate training from their supervisors.

### **Minimum Time Requirements**

The Library staff is making a commitment to your training. We encourage you to make a commitment to us depending on your assignment. Please commit to a set schedule and honor it to the best of your ability. Be sure you know the name and telephone number of your supervisor for emergencies or when it is necessary to change your schedule. Let us know your plans for personal leave at least two weeks in advance. We encourage you to make at least a 6 month commitment to the library, so be open with your supervisor regarding your reason for volunteering and how your time fits with your commitment to the library.

**Sexual Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of Fresno County that there shall be no sexual harassment in the work place. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, slurs, jokes, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual or demeaning nature.

In addition to being responsible for their own conduct, supervisors must ensure that their employees and volunteers contribute to a work environment that is free of sexual harassment. It is, therefore, extremely important that any volunteer who believes sexual harassment has occurred report immediately to the direct supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator, so it can be dealt with appropriately.

**Volunteer Rights**

As a volunteer, you will not be an employee of Fresno County Public Library. Your service will be strictly voluntary and you will not be required to do any work you do not wish to do. No County Workers' Compensation insurance will apply to you in the event of injury. You will need to provide your own medical health insurance, or pay your own medical costs, in case of an accident at your volunteer job site. If you are injured in the course of completing assigned duties, contact the appropriate on-site supervisor and also contact the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible.

**Fresno County Public library**  
**Headquarters and Central Library**  
 2420 Mariposa Street, Fresno, CA 93721  
 Information (559) 488-3195  
 Karen Bosch-Cobb, Interim County Librarian

Auberry Branch	33049 Auberry Road	855-8523
Bear Mountain Branch	30733 E. Kings Canyon	332-2528
Big Creek Branch	51190 Point Road	893-6614
Caruthers Branch	13382 S. Henderson	864-8766
Cedar-Clinton Branch	4150 E. Clinton Ave.	442-1770
Clovis Regional	1155 Fifth Street	299-9531
Easton Branch	25 E. Fantz	237-3929
Fig Garden Regional	3071 W. Bullard @ Marks	438-4071
Firebaugh Branch	1315 O Street	659-2820
Fowler Branch	119 E. Merced St.	834-3114
Gillis Branch	629 West Dakota	225-0140
Ivy Center Branch	1350 E. Annadale	264-6119
Kerman Branch	15081 Kearney Plaza	846-8804
Kingsburg Branch	1399 Draper	897-3710
Laton Branch	6313 DeWoody Street	923-4554
Mendota Branch	667 Quince Street	655-3391
Mosqueda Cntr. Branch	4670 E. Butler	453-4072
Orange Cove Branch	523 Park Blvd.	626-7942
Parlier Branch	1130 E. Parlier Ave.	646-3835
Piedra Branch	25385 Trimmer Springs Rd	787-3266
Pinedale Branch	7170 N. San Pablo	439-0486
Politi Branch	5771 N. First	431-6450
Reedley Branch	1027 E Street	638-2818
Riverdale Branch	20975 Malsbary	867-3381
San Joaquin Branch	8781 Main Street	693-2171
Sanger Branch	1812 Seventh Street	875-2435
Selma Branch	2200 Selma Ave.	896-3393
Shaver Lake Branch	41344 Tollhouse Road	841-3330
Sunnyside Regional	5566 E. Kings Canyon Rd	255-6594
Talking Book		
Library for the Blind	770 N. San Pablo Ave.	488-3217
Tranquillity Branch	5831 S. Juanche Ave.	698-5158
Woodward Park Regional	944 E. Perrin Ave.	433-3135

**Regional Services**

Literacy Services Center	521 W. Dakota	224-7094
Volunteer Services		252-VOLS (8657)
Coordinator email		elizabeth.barg@fresnolibrary.org
Bookmobile Office	Sunnyside Library	456-7323
Dial-A-Story		896-8253, 299-8253 & 332-2220
TTY		488-1642
Toll Free Number		1-800-742-1011
Library Home Page on the World Wide Web		<a href="http://www.fresnolibrary.org">www.fresnolibrary.org</a>
Internet-telnet to ValleyCat (our online catalog)	<b>pac.sjvls.lib.ca.us and enter "library" at the login prompt</b>	

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