

VOLUNTEER



HANDBOOK

FOR ADULTS

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Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to the Denver Public Library volunteer team. We are so excited you're here! Our volunteers are one of the library's most valuable resources and assist in a variety of tasks and projects to support our work in the communities we serve.

We hope that all of our volunteers have a positive and valuable experience. In the following pages you will find tools and information you need to make that happen. Included are:

- Information about DPL and our volunteer program
- Guidelines and expectations
- Details on training and appreciation

Never doubt the important role you have and the meaningful ways you help us fulfill our mission- to create welcoming spaces where all are free to explore and connect. Whether you're working at the Central Library or a branch location, with the public or behind the scenes, your time is a gift and we are grateful you have chosen to share it with us.

Sincerely,

Michelle Jeske
City Librarian & Executive Director

About Denver Public Library

The Denver Public Library (DPL or Library) is an independent City Agency, and is governed by an eight member [Library Commission](#) appointed by the Mayor. The City Librarian is the chief executive officer of the Library and leads our senior leadership team. The Library Commission selects the City Librarian, who is responsible for the overall operation of the Library.

Our [2023 Action Plan](#) includes commitments to expand our organizational capacity, enhance programming and service offerings, and refocus our community engagement efforts.

Mission, Vision, Values

our **VISION**

A strong community where everyone thrives.

our **MISSION**

Together, we create welcoming spaces
where all are free to explore and connect.

our **VALUES**

WELCOMING We make our resources, services and expertise accessible for all, recognize the inherent dignity in each person, and provide safe places where everyone can be themselves.

CURIOSITY We foster a culture of exploration, innovation and forward thinking by creating environments that support learning and growth.

CONNECTION We are neighbors. We foster relationships, listen and act to build and strengthen our community. We bring people together to share information, ideas and experiences.

EQUITY We work to change practices, structures and policies, and the attitudes that drive them, to provide opportunities for every person in our community to thrive. As we do so, we actively examine our roles in perpetuating inequitable systems.

STEWARDSHIP We are accountable to our community, using our resources responsibly. We lead with honesty and integrity, protect privacy and preserve and share the full history of our Denver community.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

DPL lists equity as one of its five organizational values and works to actively challenge inequities through cultivating an inclusive organization that focuses on equitable outcomes and services for the community. DPL works to change inequitable practices, structures and policies, and attitudes that drive them, as well as actively examine our role in perpetuating oppressive systems. This work is led by DPL's Director of Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (EDI), who serves on the nine-person executive team of the Library, and is supported by a growing EDI Department and an EDI Advisory Committee, which includes staff from across the organization.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and honor all Indigenous communities, especially the 48 contemporary tribal nations that inhabit the lands that make up the state of Colorado including the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Ute people whose land upon which Denver Public Library stands.

Locations and Holidays

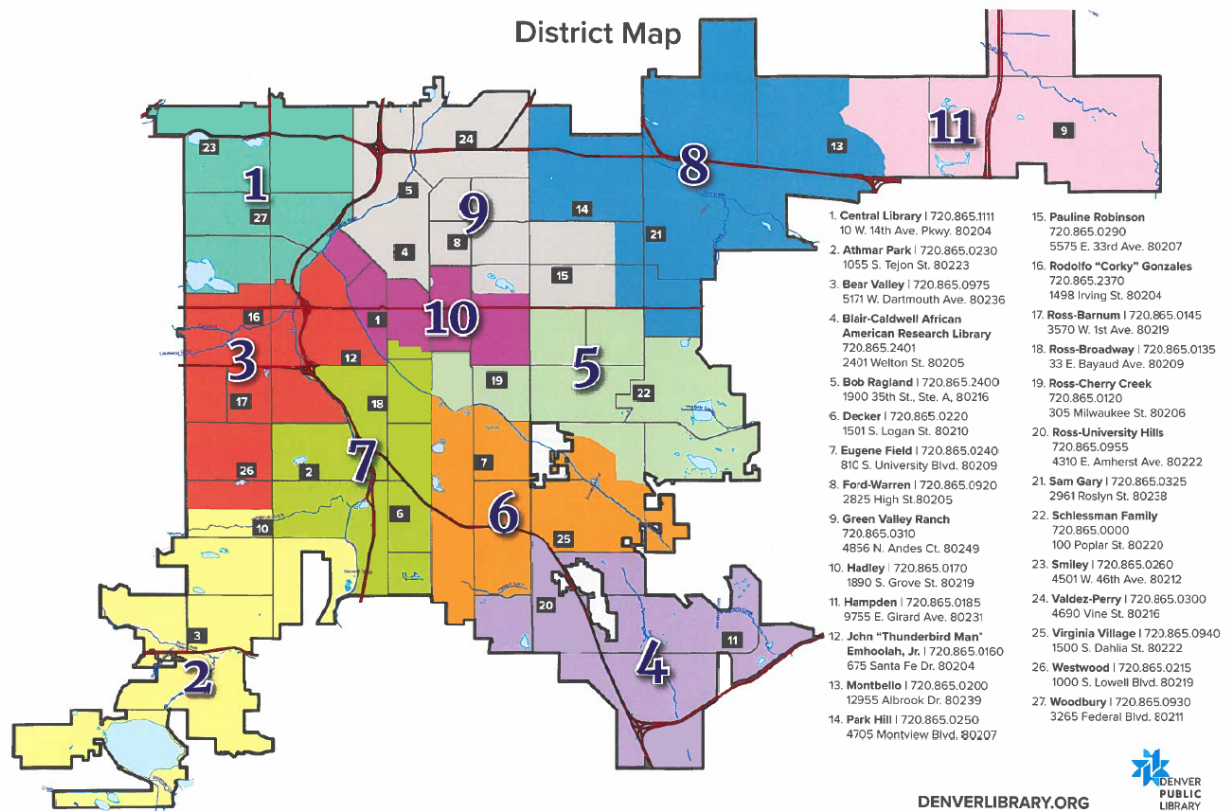
The following holidays are observed by the Library and Library branches are correspondingly closed:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Indigenous Peoples' Day
President's Day	Staff Day
Cesar Chavez Day	Veteran's Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day
Juneteenth	Christmas Day
Independence Day	

When a holiday occurs on a Saturday, it is observed on the preceding Friday; when a holiday occurs on a Sunday, it is observed on the following Monday.

Locations

DPL has 27 branches located throughout the city.



Volunteer Program Overview

The Denver Public Library's 27 branches (which includes the Central Library) serve our community in a variety of ways. Our volunteers share their love of our library services with customers and work to support the valuable work we do. We hope you enjoy working with staff to assist customers in carrying out our mission.

This handbook will provide you with guidelines and expectations for your role as a DPL volunteer. We also welcome suggestions for improving our volunteer program. Feel free to contact me with your concerns or ideas.

Megan (MJ) Petersen - Volunteer Services Administrator

Phone: 720-354-6090

Email: mpetersen@denverlibrary.org

What the Library Expects of Our Volunteers

- We expect a commitment to the DPL Mission, Vision, and Values and for our volunteers to be advocates for the Library in an appropriate and responsible way.
- We expect our volunteers to observe the same Library policies as staff, including maintaining confidentiality in all issues pertaining to Library customers.
- We expect our volunteers to treat customers, staff, and other volunteers in an ethical and respectful manner.
- We expect our volunteers to participate in training that is required or pertinent to their volunteer duties.
- We expect volunteers to communicate clearly with their supervisor pertaining to scheduling, responsibilities, and any challenges that may arise.
- Volunteers and Library staff supervising them will agree upon the time and duties for which a volunteering commitment is made.

What You Can Expect From the Library

- As a volunteer, you can expect a variety of options for involvement, and a chance for growth in knowledge and skills when appropriate.
- As a volunteer, you can expect clear and specific directions and communication and sufficient, on-going training will be made available.
- As a volunteer, you can expect a job description outlining your volunteer role
- DPL will maintain volunteer records and provide verification of volunteer service as requested
- DPL will recognize volunteer service and accomplishments in both formal and informal ways.

Library Commitments and Policies

Please review and become familiar with our [Library Policies](#), as you will be required to follow their requirements. You will also need to review and execute the DPL [Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability](#) as a condition of your Volunteer program participation. The Library would like to emphasize the importance of following these guidelines, for the failure to do so may result, at the sole discretion of the Library, in your immediate dismissal.

Ethics

All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest ethical standards.

No volunteer member will use their volunteering position within the Library for personal gain, or will engage in any business transaction or have a financial or other interest, which is in conflict with the proper discharge of their duties.

Compensation

All volunteers are unpaid positions, and no compensation (including, without limitation, reimbursement of any incurred costs or expenses) shall be provided to any volunteers due to their participation in the volunteer program.

Harassment

DPL prohibits any and all harassment in the workplace. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin/ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender identity and expression, disability, genetic information, military status, age, marital status, political affiliation, pregnancy or related condition, or any other status protected by federal, state and local laws. These characteristics are referred to as “protected characteristics.” All such harassment and discrimination is prohibited in any form, including verbal, physical and visual conduct. Violations of this section may subject the violator to legal consequences, which may include termination of volunteer position, loss of Library privileges, expulsion from Library facilities, or referral to the appropriate legal authorities.

Smoking

The Library recognizes the importance of health and safety in the work environment. Therefore, smoking or use of other tobacco products is permitted only in designated smoking areas outside Library buildings during normally scheduled meal periods and breaks.

Drug Free Workplace

In compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act and the City's Executive Order No. 94,, the Library prohibits the possession, use, manufacture or distribution of illegal drugs in any Library property or vehicle.

Political Activities

At no time may electoral political activity be engaged in during working hours or on Library premises.

A volunteer of the Library will not sign, in the name of the library or on behalf of the Library any petitions or circulars being distributed by any government agency, private organization or individual. A volunteer who signs any petition or circular does so in their own capacity as an individual and shall not list the Library as a permanent address on any legal forms, petitions, circulars or applications.

Selling

All volunteers of the Library are prohibited from engaging in any solicitation or selling activities on Library property.

Confidentiality

The privacy of Library customers and co-workers must be respected at all times.

State law requires that information regarding staff members, Library operation, customers and registered users stored in any form—whether hard copy, computer records or microfiche—is confidential and is made available only to Library staff and volunteers as a part of their official duties and to others only in response to a lawfully-issued subpoena. This includes what people are reading, requesting and viewing on computer screens with the Library's facilities. If you're approached by police, media or others for any type of information described in this section, please refer them to your branch or department manager.

Safety

The Library makes every effort to ensure the safety of customers and to provide safe working conditions for staff and volunteers. Volunteers can help by becoming conscious of the safety practices in their department or branch and observing every reasonable precaution while working. Volunteers are requested to provide the name of a person to contact in case of an emergency.

Volunteers are expected to immediately report all accidents and unsafe or hazardous conditions to their responsible supervisor and a Library Security Officer if possible.

Volunteers must remain neutral, and refrain from personally sharing any medical, homeopathic substances, materials, food or beverages (medicinal, herbal, aromatherapeutic, etc.) with our customers. If a customer needs medical assistance,

volunteers should immediately direct them to a Library staff member or a Security Officer or contact a staff member or security officer themselves.

Volunteers are not covered under the Worker's Compensation Act (Colorado Revised Statute) if injured while performing their volunteer duties. Volunteers are not covered by employees' insurance at the Denver Public Library. Volunteers are required to inform the Central Library Volunteer Supervisor of any physical or medical condition known to the Volunteer that could threaten, harm, inhibit or otherwise impact his/her performance while completing his/her assigned hours at the Library; such information shall be kept confidential by the Library in accordance with applicable law. Each volunteer is encouraged to provide their own complete personal accident and liability coverage. We ask that any on-the-job accident, sudden illness, or injury be promptly reported to a member of the Library staff and/or the Volunteer Services Administrator.

Any volunteer member believed to be, or found to be, under the influence of alcohol or other drugs must be reported to the responsible Library manager or the volunteer's direct supervisor who will immediately contact the Security Team.

Severe Weather

The Library expects each volunteer to make reasonable efforts to report to work in various weather situations, which includes inclement weather. If weather or traveling conditions delay or prevent a volunteer's reporting to their shift, they should notify their supervisor as soon as possible.

If weather conditions make it necessary to close one or more Library branches earlier than the regularly scheduled time, DPL staff will make every effort to notify volunteers as soon as the decision has been made to close. A volunteer should monitor the local news weather stations for closing information regarding the Library.

Security

Security is the responsibility of everyone. The Library's Security Officers carry radios and are available for emergencies as well as routine security tasks.

If a volunteer has any reason to believe that there is a threat to the safety or security of Library staff, customers or property, the volunteer must alert a member of the Security Team as soon as possible.

Guidelines

Name Badges

All volunteers are required to wear name badges when on duty to provide easy identification to customers, Library staff and security personnel.

Clothing/Attire

All volunteers are required to wear appropriate attire for their volunteer assignment while on duty, as well as any uniforms/hats/shirts/name badges provided by the Library to indicate that the volunteer represents the Library.

Tracking Hours

Your supervisor will input your hours into the Library's internal tracking system. Please let them know if you require a record of your volunteer hours, and they will be provided.

Communication

Volunteers are expected to regularly communicate with their supervisor regarding missed shifts and schedule changes. Continually missed shifts or unexcused delays with no communication may be grounds for dismissal from your volunteer position. Volunteers are expected to: 1) communicate as directed or appropriate with specific program supervisor and/or facility/site personnel; 2) complete the assigned program, site or activity-specific assignments and expectations as directed; 3) acquire and maintain contact information and follow chain of command for the specific volunteer assignment or activity; and 4) acquire equipment and access to appropriate Library spaces from Library staff required for completion of the volunteer assignment, appropriately maintain such equipment and spaces during the volunteer assignment, and then return such equipment and space access back to Library staff when volunteer assignment is completed.

Personal Possessions

Volunteers are encouraged and expected to use safe places for their clothing and other personal possessions, such as a locker or locked drawer, while they are at the Library. The Library does not assume responsibility for the loss or theft of personal items.

Food and Drink

Please feel free to use the kitchen facilities and the staff room during breaks or your lunch/dinner time. Please clean up thoroughly after you have finished in these areas. Unless otherwise authorized by your supervisor, food and drink should only be consumed in the Library kitchen(s) and the staff room(s).

Phone and Computer Usage

Library telephones and computers are intended only for Library business. The use of all Library telephones and computers shall be subject to then-current Library policies. Volunteers should keep personal calls and cell phone usage to a minimum while performing your volunteer duties. Friends and relatives of volunteers should be discouraged from calling during your volunteer shift except in the case of an emergency.

If you have any questions about the completion of your Volunteer assignment, please ask your supervisor or any available Library staff member.

The Library reserves the right to end a Volunteer assignment or reassign Volunteers at the discretion of the Volunteer supervisor, or if the Volunteer is not complying with Library policies, procedures and guidelines.

Orientation and Training

After completing our general orientation, you will be trained on your volunteer responsibilities in your chosen branch or Library department. Your volunteer supervisor will go through expectations and any other related information needed to perform your volunteer duties. You may also complete several shadowing sessions, depending upon your position.

The Library also provides programs for job-related skills training as an enhancement to professional and personal development. Throughout the year, we will offer trainings related to various topics like working with customers and technology, trauma-informed care, setting boundaries, and working with youth. If of interest to you, you may participate in such trainings – please coordinate with your volunteer supervisor to be included in these opportunities.

Appreciation and Recognition

There are many ways we strive to celebrate and acknowledge our volunteers' contributions through both formal and informal recognition and rewards. Throughout the year, there will be opportunities for appreciation and recognition of your hard work, including gatherings with other volunteers, recognition in our internal communication, and items of appreciation.

Closing & Contacts

This Volunteer Handbook describes the policies, guidelines, and expectations for volunteering with the Denver Public Library and is intended to be a useful resource throughout the time you volunteer with us. It is possible that there are situations that arise that aren't covered in this handbook. Please ask your volunteer supervisor or the Volunteer Services Administrator if you need further information or clarification as to how any of these policies or guidelines apply to you. We appreciate you taking time to read through this handbook and for volunteering at the Denver Public Library!

Contacts

Volunteer Services Administrator
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