



Volunteer Policy February 2023

Converse Free Library supports and appreciates the work that volunteers perform to facilitate the library's smooth operation. The library's volunteer program supports the work of library staff and helps to provide an outlet for Lyme and greater Upper Valley residents wishing to contribute to their community.

All potential volunteers ages 18 and older are invited to complete the [Volunteer Interest Form](#) on the library's website. Following this, the Library Director will provide an application form and a New Hampshire State Police criminal background check application. Converse Free Library will cover the cost of the background check. After the background check is cleared, prospective volunteers will meet with the Library Director or a designated staff person to be interviewed for placement.

Youth volunteers

Prospective volunteers under the age of 18 must have signed permission from their parent or legal guardian. Converse Free Library is unable to accept volunteers under the age of 14. The Library follows New Hampshire and United States Department of Labor child labor law and recommended procedures, as they relate to youth volunteers, and requires proof of age for all youth volunteers. *See Appendix A: Youth Volunteer Requirements for details.*

An exception to these provisions may be granted if the youth in question is volunteering through a group from an outside organization, in which case the organization in question must assume responsibility for ensuring the youth is eligible to work. *See Community Service Volunteers.*

All volunteers will work under the supervision of the Library Director. Volunteers are expected to work in a cooperative and professional manner with staff members and the public, and must follow all library procedures and policies.

All volunteers must annually sign a Volunteer Agreement stating the terms of their volunteer work, including tasks to be performed.

To ensure the greatest degree of confidentiality is accorded to Converse Free Library patrons, volunteers may not access Converse Free Library patron records or personal information through Converse Free Library's systems or patron database.

Training and Supervision

The Library Director coordinates the library volunteer program. Volunteers will receive specific training in their assigned duties from the library staff member who directly supervises their work. Individuals are asked to wear a name badge that identifies them as a volunteer while they are working at the library and are expected to refer all requests for information to the library staff, other than purely directional questions (e.g. where is the bathroom, where is the Children's Room, etc.). For a list of opportunities available to volunteers, please see the [Volunteer Interest Form](#).

Work Timetables

Volunteers shall work only during open library hours and when adequate support and supervision are available. Number of hours needed by the library is determined by the task or project. Individual timetables and specific time commitments will be mutually arranged in advance by the volunteer and the Library Director or immediate supervisor.

The Library asks volunteers to be reliable in their commitment to the library and to notify the library in advance if they are unable to work their prearranged times. In case of inclement weather, volunteers are asked to check the library website, Facebook page, call the library or check [Closings & Delays - WMUR 9 News](#) for library closing information.

Leaving Volunteer Service

A Volunteer selected for work on a special project will discontinue service when that project is completed or terminated, unless other arrangements have been made. Whenever possible, the library will try to reassign the volunteer; however, if no other mutually suitable volunteer position exists at the time, the volunteer will be asked to discontinue service. Their application will be kept on file for one year, subject to review should a suitable position become available during that time. In the event that a volunteer is unable to adequately perform the duties

assigned to them, no other appropriate positions are available, the volunteer may be removed from service.

Restrictions on use of volunteers

Volunteers shall not replace appropriately trained and paid staff, nor shall they be used to compensate for inadequate staffing patterns, failure to fill vacant posts, or cutbacks in library funding.

Volunteers may not hold a position wherein they are required to be at the library at a set date and time and their unexpected absence would adversely affect the library's regular operations.

Volunteers from outside organizations

Converse Free Library appreciates the support of other institutions in the community and encourages external organizations to consider bringing groups to volunteer at the library. Groups from outside organizations must be accompanied and supervised by a responsible adult. The person in charge of the group must sign an organizational Volunteer Agreement.

Community service volunteers

Converse Free Library will accept volunteers who need to perform community service for an external organization such as a school, church, or court diversion program, contingent upon the nature of the additional workload that may be imposed on the Library Director in verifying the volunteer's service with the external organization.

Community service volunteers must notify the Library Director that they wish to accrue community service credit for an external organization at the time of their application. The Library Director may not be able to assist volunteers who only request assistance in obtaining community service credit after they have begun volunteering.

Any volunteer organization (such as the Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Kiwanis Builders Club and other such community service organizations which focus on youth of all ages volunteering) wishing to have their youth volunteers provide a volunteer service to the library shall have a written agreement with the library for instances of volunteer service at the library. In addition, the organization shall have a sign-in sheet for youth that shall be administered by an adult

representative to the volunteering group. The sheet shall include date, time in, time out, child's name, and emergency contact phone number.

Converse Free Library reserves the right not to accept a community service volunteer whose service is required by a court, court diversion program, or similar entity, depending upon the details of the potential volunteer's case.

Conclusion

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to create a contract between the volunteer and Converse Free Library or Town of Lyme. Both the volunteer and Converse Free Library have the right to terminate the volunteer's association with the Library at any time, for any reason, with or without cause.

Neither the Town of Lyme nor Converse Free Library will provide any medical, health, or accident benefits for any volunteer. Volunteers will not be eligible to receive any worker's compensation benefits for any injuries sustained while functioning as a volunteer.

Converse Free Library is an Equal Opportunity Employer and will consider all applicants equally, regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or transgender status), age (over 40), disability, genetic information, retaliation for engaging in Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) activity, marital status, political affiliation, and status as a parent.

Appendix A: Youth Volunteer Requirements

Converse Free Library follows the recommended best practices for youth volunteers as spelled out by the New Hampshire State Library's Best Practices for New Hampshire Libraries - VOLUNTEERS, revised December 2019 (NHSL)

Converse Free Library must comply with the NH Department of Labor and US Department of Labor regulations regarding youth volunteers and follow the same guidelines as Employers. "While [NH RSA 276-A](#) specifies age 12 as the minimum age for employment, [US DOL Child Labor Bulletin 101 WH-1330](#) specifies age 14. According to the Supremacy Clause within Article VI of the US Constitution, federal law is the supreme law of the land...." (NHSL)

"A Youth Employment Certificate, specified by [NH RSA 276-A:5](#) for youths aged 12 to 15, is required even if the work is 'casual.' 'Casual' is defined in [NH RSA 276-A:3-VII](#) as 'employment which is infrequent or of brief duration or productive of little or sporadic income or not commonly held to establish an employer or employee relationship.' (NHSL)

The New Hampshire Department of Labor provides the following answer to the question, What is casual work? "Casual work shall mean employment of a brief duration of no more than 3 calendar days for any one employer. [RSA 276-A:4-II\(b\)](#) and [New Hampshire Administrative Rules Chapter LAB 1001.02 Brief Duration](#)."

"Youth volunteers have specific hours/days that they can work/volunteer. For 14- and 15-year-olds, see [US DOL Child Labor Bulletin 101 WH-1330](#); for 16- and 17-year-olds, see [NH RSA 276-A](#). To comply with both state and federal laws, the library shall have on file for all youth volunteers that are volunteering under the auspices of the library:

- A copy of the [Youth Employment Certificate](#) for any volunteer under the age of 18
- Proof of age (photocopy of birth certificate, passport or driver's license if 16 or 17) that shows the volunteer is 14 years old or older. Proof of age must be kept for all minors under the age of nineteen.
- As recommended by the NH Department of Labor, each volunteer shall have a volunteer

agreement signed by the youth, the parent(s), and the library director which shall state duties and that no monetary payment for the completion of those duties is expected. The agreement shall be updated annually.

- A copy of these documents shall be kept in a file for all volunteers in a locked cabinet for the duration of the volunteer period.

Resources Consulted and Cited:

[New Hampshire State Library's Best Practices for New Hampshire Libraries: Volunteers](#),
Revised 09/2019 (NHSL)

[New Hampshire Department Of Labor What You Need To Know Before Hiring Minors: A Reference Guide For New Hampshire Employers](#) (NH DoL)

[State of New Hampshire on Federal and State Child Labor Laws](#)

Definition of casual employment: <https://www.nh.gov/labor/faq/youth-employment.htm>

Employer's Request for Child Labor form: <https://www.nh.gov/labor/documents/employer-request-child-labor.pdf>