

Revision Date: May 2026

Policy Type: Public Service

Approval Level: CEO

Distribution: All Employees

Review Schedule: 5 Years (or as required)

1. BACKGROUND

The Markham Public Library (“MPL” or “the Library”) recognizes volunteers as a valuable resource who support Library staff in delivering high-quality programs and services to the community. This policy establishes a clear framework for the recruitment, placement, management, and responsibilities of volunteers, ensuring a consistent, equitable, and safe volunteer experience aligned with organizational values and operational needs.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals participating in volunteer programs and services authorized by the Library.

This policy does not apply to:

- Members of the Markham Public Library Board, who are appointed by Markham Council in accordance with the Public Libraries Act.
- Unpaid internships or co-op placements, which are outside the scope of this policy due to the Library’s limited capacity to consistently supervise and manage such arrangements.

The number and nature of volunteer placements will be determined by the Library based on operational requirements, supervision capacity, and availability of meaningful volunteer work.

3. DEFINITIONS

Volunteer – An individual aged 14 or older who voluntarily donates time, skills, and/or services to support Library programs and activities without expectation of remuneration, employment, benefits, or other compensation.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Library’s volunteer program is guided by the following principles:

- Alignment with MPL’s Vision, Mission, and Values, and its Equity and Inclusion and Intellectual Freedom statements.
- Recognition of volunteers as contributors who enhance Library services and strengthen community connections.
- Commitment to providing a welcoming, inclusive, equitable, and respectful environment for all volunteers.

- Assurance that volunteers do not perform bargaining unit work, displace employees, or create an employment relationship.
- Confirmation that volunteers who apply for paid employment with MPL will be considered as external candidates.

5. TYPES OF VOLUNTEER PLACEMENTS

This policy applies to all individuals performing services for the Library without financial compensation, including but not limited to:

- Secondary school students completing mandatory community involvement hours.
- Individuals referred by social service, community or faith-based organizations.
- Individuals with special needs participating through work-experience or other community based programs.
- Community members supporting programs or services on a voluntary basis.

6. INSURANCE AND LIABILITY

All volunteers doing Library placements on Library premises are covered by the City of Markham's insurance policy for third party liability. Volunteers are excluded from WSIB benefits under the Ontario *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*.

Should the use of a personal automobile be required, adult volunteers must have their own auto insurance policy including minimum liability coverage of \$1M and must inform their insurance company of their status as volunteers for the Library, including the specific duties involved.

7. VOLUNTEER ELIGIBILITY AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All volunteers must:

- Be at least 14 years of age or older
- Create and maintain an online volunteer account with MPL's volunteer management software
- Participate in an interview process
- Successfully complete a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)
- Complete required orientation, including AODA training online

A Vulnerable Sector Screening Check (VSC) will be required for all volunteers. The VSC must be dated within 120 days at the time of submission, must be renewed every 2 years and is undertaken at the expense of the volunteer.

8. LIBRARY RESPONSIBILITIES

To support a positive and effective volunteer experience, MPL will:

- Provide an orientation to the assigned department and location
- Establish a clear role description with appropriate training and supervision
- Assign schedules that are mutually agreeable
- Provide a safe work environment and applicable safety instruction
- Maintain accurate volunteer work logs
- Offer volunteer roles that promote meaningful contribution and learning
- Provide ongoing verbal feedback regarding performance
- Complete required documentation in a timely manner

The Library may limit the number of volunteers at a location to ensure appropriate supervision and operational effectiveness.

9. VOLUNTEERS RESPONSIBILITIES

Library volunteers are expected to:

- Review and comply with the [City of Markham Volunteer Handbook](#), which provides a comprehensive overview of the City and Library volunteer program, including expectations.
- Attend scheduled shifts punctually.
- Notify the supervisor of absences in sufficient time to allow alternate arrangements. (Note: Unreported absences may result in termination of volunteer's status.)
- Accurately record hours worked and tasks completed.
- Understand and comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, the *Health and Safety Policy (City and Library)*, and WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) training provided.
- Report any safety hazards, incidents, or injuries immediately to the supervisor.
- At all times, support and maintain the reputation of the Library and the City of Markham, adhering to the Library's policies, procedures, and Code of Conduct.
- Dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties and wear an MPL identification badge during scheduled shifts.
- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding customer, employee and operational information.

10. PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

Volunteers will receive verbal feedback throughout their placement. The sponsoring agencies may require various types of evaluation or follow-up to each placement. Where required, the Library will

complete evaluations or documentation requested by sponsoring organizations or educational institutions, including confirmation of completed hours.

11. RESPONSIBILITIES

CEO / Directors shall:

- Ensure awareness of and compliant with this policy and related policies.

Managers / Supervisors shall:

- Implement and enforce this policy within their areas of responsibility.

Employees shall:

- Comply with and support application of this policy.

Library Administration shall:

- Develop, maintain, and distribute this policy;
- Review and update the policy according to the established review cycle.

12. RELATED LEGISLATION

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act, RSO 1990](#)

13. RELATED LIBRARY POLICIES / DOCUMENTS

- *Accessibility Policy* (POL-Admin)
- *Health and Safety Core Policy* (POL-HS)
- MPL / CUPE Collective Agreements

14. RELATED CITY OF MARKHAM DOCUMENTS

- [City of Markham Volunteer Handbook](#)