

Staff employment policy

Adopted and approved March 18, 2021
Amended and approved, June 19, 2025

Information:

1. All staff shall have a minimum of a high school diploma or its equivalent. As an employee, each person should be aware of his/ her duties and responsibilities, benefits included with the job, and a general understanding of library operations as a whole. Teens still in school who are employed as pages or interns shall be exempt from the education requirement.
2. Each employee shall dress appropriately for his or her duties.
3. Staff members are to meet the State Library of North Dakota recommendations for professional development.
4. The director will determine work hours and approve time off for all staff members.
5. Grievances and disciplinary action begin with the director (or in her/his absence the assistant director) and the staff person. If further action is needed, the president of the board will resolve the situation.
6. Staff members will be expected to be helpful and courteous to all patrons and fellow staff members and act as a library advocate within the community.
7. The library will pay for membership to the North Dakota Library Association, American Library Association, Public Library Association, and Association of Rural and Small Libraries for management staff.
8. No employee of VCBC Public Library may be closely related to any other employee or member of the board of trustees without the approval of the director and library board.
9. Employees are expected to give a minimum of fourteen days written notice before resigning.

Staff guidelines:

- To maintain the principles of the American Library Association (ALA) Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read statement.
- To learn and execute the policies and procedures of the VCBC Public Library.
- To maintain an objective and open attitude of understanding, courtesy, and concern for patron's needs.
- To protect the confidential relationship which exists between library users and the library.
- To serve all patrons equally, according to their needs.
- To make the resources and services of the library known and easily accessible to all users.
- To carry out those activities assigned under the policies of the library in a spirit of cooperation. To share knowledge and expertise with others.

Applications for all positions shall be without regard to color, race, religion, creed, gender, age, disability, marital or military status, sexual orientation, national origin, or any other legally protected status.

1. Each new staff member shall be on probation for three months. If the director wishes to terminate employment during that initial period, s/he may do so without appeal.
2. Regular leave: vacation, etc. shall be subject to approval by the director.
3. Extended leaves of absence shall be subject to approval by the board.
4. All staff members are covered under the Valley City workmen's compensation insurance, if injured on library property or at a library sponsored event.
5. All staff members will receive paid time off/sick leave and vacation time per the employee pay and benefits policy.

Staff Information and Conduct:

1. Evaluations of the director and staff shall be done once a calendar year. The board will evaluate the director, and the director will evaluate the staff. A short summary of the employee evaluations will be given to the board.
2. No employee shall accept money or gifts for an act which the employee is required or is expected to render in the course of the employee's regular duties as a library employee.
3. Staff members shall be able to lift 40 pounds and stand for an indefinite amount of time. Shelving materials may require the use of a footstool or possibly kneeling.
4. In the case of accidents that result in staff injury the following steps will be taken:
 - a. Fill out accident/injury form
 - b. Notify the director or assistant director.
 - c. For situations requiring medical attention more than first aid (EMS called, clinic or hospital visit) notify board president within 24 hours
5. No alcoholic beverages or controlled substances shall be stored or consumed in the library by staff members. A violation of the policy will result in the immediate suspension and/or termination of the employee.
6. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when: 1) submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition of employment either explicitly or implicitly; or 2) submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting the individual's employment; or 3) that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment or work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Any reported allegation of sexual harassment will be investigated promptly by the Board, and appropriate discipline, up to and including termination, will be imposed (for more details see sexual harassment policy addendum of this policy). Employees who believe they have been victims of sexual harassment may also file a complaint with the EEOC,

and/or North Dakota Department of Labor and Human Rights, and/or any other local, state, or federal agency authorized to investigate such allegations.

7. Theft, misuse of library property or money is prohibited, and may result in termination and referral to law enforcement.
8. Failure to satisfactorily and consistently perform the duties of the position, negligence, or inefficiency will result in disciplinary action.
9. It is a violation of library policy for any staff member to reveal confidential library records, violate the privacy rights of patrons, or misuse staff authority.

If any policies are deliberately or repeatedly violated by staff the following actions will be taken.

1. Violations by staff members will be addressed by the employee's direct supervisor, assistant director, or director at the earliest opportunity. At that time, the following actions may take place:
 - a. A verbal warning with redirection and/or solutions will be given on the first offense.
 - b. A written warning will be given on the second offense.
 - c. Another written warning from the director will be given on the third offense. Termination of employment will be discussed, and dismissal can occur.
2. Violations by library director will be discussed at the next board meeting in executive session according to North Dakota Century code (44.4.19.2). Depending on the severity of the violation, the board can decide by majority vote to
 - a. Issue a verbal warning with redirection and/or solutions.
 - b. Issue a written warning.
 - c. Discuss termination of employment and immediate dismissal.

Policy Addendum, Sexual Harassment

The library will not tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace.

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other sexually-oriented conduct, which is offensive of objectionable to the recipient and/or others including, but not limited to: patting, pinching, brushing up against, hugging, or kissing; derogatory or suggestive comments, slurs or gestures, and offensive posters, cartoons, pictures, drawings, or e-mail.

A policy violation to provide a workplace free of sexual harassment would occur when:

- 1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for any employment decision affecting such individual, or
- 3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment, whether committed by a staff member, either supervisor or coworker, or a non-staff member such as a patron, board member, vendor, service person, or any other library visitor is against library policy.

Management, at all levels, is responsible for taking action against acts of sexual harassment regardless of whether the specific acts complained of were sanctioned or specifically forbidden and regardless of the manner in which the agency became aware of the conduct.

Management, at all levels, is responsible for taking corrective action to prevent harassment in the workplace.

An employee has the legal right at any time to raise the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Allegations of sexual harassment will be promptly investigated giving due regard to the need for confidentiality.

Procedure

Employee:

Complaints of sexual harassment should be brought to the appropriate management personnel (including at least one male and one female). If the alleged harasser is the employee's supervisor or one of the designated management personnel, the employee should feel free to bypass the supervisor or designated management personnel and go to the library board.

Supervisor:

After notification of any employee's complaint, the supervisor will immediately contact any one of the above listed contacts.

Employee Relations:

After notification of the employee's complaint, a confidential investigation will immediately be initiated to gather all facts about the complaint by one of the designated management personnel.

After the investigation has been completed, a determination will be made by the appropriate management regarding the resolution of the case. If warranted, counseling, suspension and, if necessary, discharge will be taken.

When evaluating the severity of the alleged harassment, the person investigating this should focus on the perspective of the victim. A woman states a case of hostile environment sexual harassment when she alleges conduct that a reasonable woman would find abusive. Under the "reasonable woman" standard, the individual investigating this should understand that the conduct may be unlawful sexual harassment even when the harasser (presumably a male) does not realize it. Therefore, when investigating the complaint, the manager should ask, in addition to what happened, how the conduct made the victim feel.

It is understood that any individual utilizing this complaint procedure will be treated fairly, and the registered complaint will not be used against the employee, nor have an adverse effect on the individual's employment status.