

VII. STAFF & VOLUNTEER POLICY (Last Reviewed and Amended 10/1/2026)

A. Library Employee Categories

1. Exempt
 - a. Library Director
2. Non-exempt
 - a. Full-time Librarian positions
 - b. Regular Part-time Library Assistants (20+ hours/week)
 - c. Temporary/Substitute Library Assistants (less than 20 hours/week)
 - d. Library pages (8-12 hours/week)

Job descriptions and salaries for positions listed above are reviewed annually by the Library Director and the Library Board.

B. Personnel Policies

All employees of the Washington Public Library are administrative employees of the City of Washington and must adhere to the rules, regulations and policies outlined in the City of Washington Personnel Manual.

C. Educational Benefits

Regular full-time Library employees are eligible to apply for Educational Benefits for continuing education and for college credit as specified in Chapter 28 of the City of Washington Personnel Policies. In order to cover tuition costs more completely, when a regular, full-time Library employee wishes to enroll in college coursework leading to Librarian certification (or re-certification) from the State Library or for undergraduate or graduate coursework necessary for a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science at an accredited college or university, the Library Board may grant approval for Library Educational Benefits that will allow for up to 100% reimbursement of the employee's tuition costs through the WFPL Foundation's education fund.

Employees should still apply for Educational Benefits allowed through the City of Washington policy; Library Educational Benefits will supplement what is provided through the City program up to 100% of tuition costs. Approval for Library Educational Benefits will normally be arranged in advance. In addition, an Educational Assistance Agreement form (see appendix) will be executed by the Employee and the Library Director and approved by the Library Board. In order to receive reimbursement, the employee will provide prompt documentation of accredited college or university courses completed, including grades, as well as documentation of tuition paid for said courses.

In order to be eligible for educational benefits through the WFPL fund:

- The employee must have been employed by the library for at least 6 months in a full-time capacity.
- The employee must be enrolled and/or provisionally accepted as a degree or certification-seeking student at an institution approved by the Board.
- If pursuing a Master's in Library and Information Science degree, the employee may be enrolled as a degree-seeking student at an American Library Association-accredited graduate program.

In order to apply and receive Library Educational Benefits, eligible employees should complete the following steps:

- Complete the Educational Assistance Agreement application, and receive approval. Applications should be submitted by March 1 in order to be included in the WFPL Foundation annual budget process.
- Within 30 days of the end of each semester, the employee shall submit a copy of an unofficial transcript confirming the institution, course and grade received as well as a receipt for tuition paid. Reimbursements will only be processed for coursework completed with a grade of C or better.
- The total amount of reimbursement for Library Educational Benefits will not exceed \$4,000 annually per employee.

D. Whistleblower Protection Policy

1. The Washington Public Library adheres to Iowa State Code, Section.70a.29.
2. Any Washington Public Library staff member or volunteer who reports waste, fraud, or abuse at the Library will not be fired or otherwise retaliated against for making the report.
3. The report will be investigated and, if determined not to be waste, fraud or abuse, the individual making the report will not be retaliated against for making the report. There will be no punishment—including firing, demotion, suspension, harassment, failure to consider the employee for promotion, or any other kind of discrimination—for reporting problems at the Library.
4. To report suspected waste, fraud or abuse a written report should be filed with the Library Director. If it would be inappropriate to make the report to the Library Director, a report may be filed with any Board member including President or Vice-President.
5. An appropriate investigation will be undertaken and a report summarizing findings will be provided to the person making the report. Steps will be taken to deal with the issue and, if warranted, law enforcement personnel will be contacted.

E. Conflict of Interest Policy

The purpose of the following policy and procedures is to prevent the personal interest of staff members and board members from interfering with the performance of their duties to Washington Public Library, or result in personal financial, professional, or political gain on the

part of such persons at the expense of Washington Public Library or its patrons, supporters, and other stakeholders.

1. Full disclosure, by notice in writing, will be made by the interested parties to the full Board of Trustees in all conflicts of interest, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. A board trustee is related to another board member or staff member by blood, marriage or domestic partnership.
 - b. A staff member in a supervisory capacity is related to another staff member whom she/he supervises.
 - c. A board trustee or his/her organization accrues a direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit from a Washington Public Library transaction or staff member of such organization receives payment from Washington Public Library for any subcontract, goods, or services other than as part of her/his regular job responsibilities or as reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred as provided in the bylaws and board policy.
 - d. A board member or staff member's organization receives funding from Washington Public Library.
 - e. A board member or staff member is a member of the governing body of a contributor to Washington Public Library.
 - f. A volunteer working on behalf of Washington Public Library who meets any of the situations or criteria listed above.
2. No volunteer or paid staff will:
 - a. Authorize the use, for the benefit or advantage of any person, the name, logo, endorsement, services, or property of the Washington Public Library
 - b. Accept or seek, on behalf of himself/herself or any other person, any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value, which may be offered as a result of the person's affiliation with the Washington Public Library.
 - c. Publicly utilize any Washington Public Library affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue not in conformity with the official position of the Washington Public Library.
 - d. Disclose any confidential Washington Public Library information that is available solely as a result of the volunteer's or paid staff member's affiliation with the Washington Public Library to any person not authorized to receive such information.
 - e. Knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the Washington Public Library in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation.
 - f. Operate in any manner that is contrary to the best interest of the Washington Public Library.

3. Following full disclosure of a possible conflict of interest or any condition listed above, the Board of Trustees will determine whether a conflict of interest exists and, if so, the Board will vote to authorize or reject the transaction or take any other action deemed necessary to address the conflict and protect Washington Public Library's best interests. Both votes will be by a majority vote without counting the vote of the trustee with potential conflict of interest.
4. No Board Trustee will serve as an employee of the Washington Public Library.
5. A Board member or staff member with a conflict of interest will not participate in any discussion or debate of the Board of Trustees, or of any committee or subcommittee thereof in which the subject of discussion is a contract, transaction, or situation in which there may be a perceived or actual conflict of interest. However, they may be present to provide clarifying information in such a discussion or debate unless objected to by any present board or committee member.
6. Anyone in a position to make decisions about spending Washington Public Library's resources (i.e., transactions such as purchasing contracts) – which may result in a conflict of interest has a duty to disclose that conflict as soon as it arises (or becomes apparent); s/he should abstain in any final decisions.

F. Purchasing Policy

The purpose of this policy is to acquaint library staff, administration, and Trustees with the general flow of required forms and internal procedures to be followed in the purchasing process.

1. Full-time Librarians have the authority to purchase individual supplies and materials for the library for amounts not to exceed \$250. For amounts greater than \$250, prior approval from the Library Director is required.
2. The Library Director has the authority to make new contracts, and purchase individual supplies and materials for the library for amounts not to exceed \$2,000, and recurring annual expenses not to exceed \$5,000. For new amount greater than \$2,000 and recurring amounts greater than \$5,000, prior approval from the Library Board of Trustees is required.
3. The Library Board of Trustees has the authority to make contracts, and purchase supplies and materials for any amount up to the library's annual budget allotment. For amounts greater than the library's annual budget, prior approval from the Washington City Council is required.
4. *In an emergency situation, the Library Board President may approve a new purchase in excess of \$5,000. The Board President or Library Director will notify the Library Board of such an emergency purchase at the next Library Board of Trustees meeting.*

The basic flow of purchasing is as follows:

1. Librarians or the Library Director recognize the need for a purchase and select a vendor. When making purchases, all library staff will attempt to obtain the lowest

price for their purchases. Staff members are encouraged to give preference to local businesses when the quoted price is reasonably close to a lower-priced non-local vendor. For purchases on individual items over \$1,000, the Library Director will solicit at least 3 quotes for pricing. For regular expenses over \$1,000, the Library Director will solicit quotes once per fiscal year. After this is done, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. Librarians make the purchase if \$250 or less and if there are sufficient funds available in the appropriate budget account to cover the expense.
 - b. The Library Director makes the purchase if \$5,000 or less and if there are sufficient funds available in the appropriate budget account to cover the expense.
2. For purchases of greater than \$5,000 for recurring/budgeted contracts and \$2,500 for new purchases, the Library Director submits the request to the Library Board of Trustees for consideration. The Library Board of Trustees may approve the request if there are sufficient funds in the budget to cover the request.
3. The vendor ships and/or provides the items/services purchased.
4. Upon receipt of the items, library staff will inspect them in regard to quantities ordered and price before signing the packing slip or freight bill.
5. Librarians provide the packing slip and receipt/invoice to the Library Director.
6. The Library Director approves payment of the receipt/invoice, records payment information in the monthly bills list, and makes a copy of the invoice for library records. The Library Director then provides the original receipt/invoice to the Accounting Clerk at City Hall for processing. A check is issued from City Hall to cover the purchase.
7. At the monthly Library Board of Trustees meeting, the board discusses and approves the list of bills for the previous month.
8. For information on purchases made from the Library's Gift Account, see the library's "Gift Policy."

G. Volunteers in the Library

Volunteers for the Washington Free Public Library help enhance the quality of services and programs offered by library staff. Our volunteer program is designed to further the relationship between the library and the community it serves and to complement the efforts of paid library staff.

Recruitment and Selection:

1. The library will actively recruit volunteers to support various aspects of library operations, including but not limited to shelving books, assisting with programs, providing assistance with programs and services in the MakeIT Place, and performing administrative tasks.
2. Volunteer positions will be advertised through the library's website, social media channels, community bulletin boards, and local volunteer networks.

3. Interested individuals will be required to complete a volunteer application form, which includes personal information, availability, skills, and interests.
4. All prospective volunteers will undergo a screening process, including interviews, reference checks, and background checks as appropriate.
5. Applicants must be 13 years or older to apply. Applicants less than 18 years of age must include a signature from a parent or guardian with their application.
6. Volunteers may be released from the program at the discretion of the Library Director.

Training:

1. Volunteers will receive orientation and training sessions to familiarize them with the library's policies, procedures, and expectations.
2. Training will be provided by library staff members or designated trainers and will cover topics such as customer service, confidentiality, shelving techniques, and safety protocols.
3. Ongoing training opportunities will be provided to volunteers to enhance their skills and knowledge as needed.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Volunteers are placed in positions best suited to their skills, interests, and availability, as determined by library staff. Selection is based on the needs of the library.
2. Volunteers are expected to adhere to the library's policies, including those related to confidentiality, customer service, and safety.
3. Volunteers will maintain professionalism and respect towards library patrons, staff members, and fellow volunteers at all times.
4. Volunteers are encouraged to communicate any concerns, questions, or suggestions to library staff members in a timely manner.
5. Volunteers may be re-assigned to different projects or responsibilities based on the changing needs of the library.
6. Volunteers will provide their assigned staff coordinator with advanced notice of absence, leave or tardiness prior to their assigned shift.

Supervision and Support:

1. Volunteers will be supervised by designated staff members who will provide guidance, feedback, and support as needed.
2. Library staff members will be available to answer questions, address concerns, and provide assistance to volunteers during their shifts.
3. Volunteers will have access to resources and materials necessary to perform their duties effectively.

Recognition and Appreciation:

1. The library will recognize the valuable contributions of volunteers through various means, including but not limited to appreciation events, certificates of appreciation, and public acknowledgment.
2. Volunteers may be eligible for incentives such as discounts on library makerspace

materials or priority registration for library programs, depending on their level of participation.

3. The library will maintain a positive and inclusive environment that values the diverse talents, experiences, and contributions of all volunteers.