



## HIGHWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

### PERSONNEL POLICIES



Last Revised and Approved: October 26, 2020

*It is our privilege to welcome you to the Highwood Public Library.*

*We wish you every success in your new job, and we hope that you quickly feel at home. This handbook was developed to describe some of the expectations we have for all of our employees and what you can expect from us. We hope your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable and rewarding.*

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# Highwood Public Library Personnel Policies

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees  
October 26, 2020

## I. General

The following personnel policies are established to acquaint you with the Highwood Public Library (hereinafter "the Library") and provide you with general information regarding working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting your employment. You are responsible for reading, understanding and complying with all of the Library's personnel policies. They describe many of your responsibilities as an employee and outline the programs developed by the Library to benefit employees.

The Library reserves the right to revise, supplement, deviate from or rescind any policies from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. The Library will make an effort to notify you of such changes as they occur.

Applicable federal, state or local laws or regulations shall supersede these stated policies, until corrections can be published, in the following instances:

- If any of the policies are or become in conflict with federal, state, or local laws or regulations;
- If any omissions or inclusions cause conflict with federal, state, or local laws or regulations; or
- If typographical or printer error should cause conflict with any federal, state, or local laws or regulations.

Should there be any questions as to the interpretation of the policies or benefits listed herein, the final explanation and resolution will be at the sole and absolute discretion of the Library, subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws. If you have any questions about these personnel policies, please see your supervisor or the Library Director.

## II. Employee Classifications, Recruiting and Selection

### A. Employment at Will

Employment at the Library is at will and may be terminated at any time for performance. No written or oral representation by Library personnel, other than one that is specifically approved in writing by the Director or the Board of Library Trustees, is intended to create a contract of employment. No employment practice or personnel policy of the Library is intended to create a contract of employment. No changes in the Library's employment-at-will policy will be effective unless executed in writing and signed and approved by the Board of Library Trustees.

### B. Equal Employment Opportunity

The Highwood Public Library is an "equal opportunity employer." The Library will afford equal employment opportunities regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetic information, or any other category protected by applicable law. This policy of equal employment applies to all aspects of the employment relationship, including but not limited to: initial consideration for employment; job placement and assignment of responsibilities; performance evaluation; promotion and advancement; compensation and benefits; training and professional development opportunities; formulation and application of human resource policies and rules; facility and service accessibility; and discipline and termination. Any employee who believes this policy has been violated should report the situation to his or her supervisor or the Library Director. All such matters will be thoroughly investigated and rectified if a policy violation is identified. Please refer to the policy governing sexual and other types of harassment for more detailed information concerning the Library's investigative procedures.

## C. Organization and Management

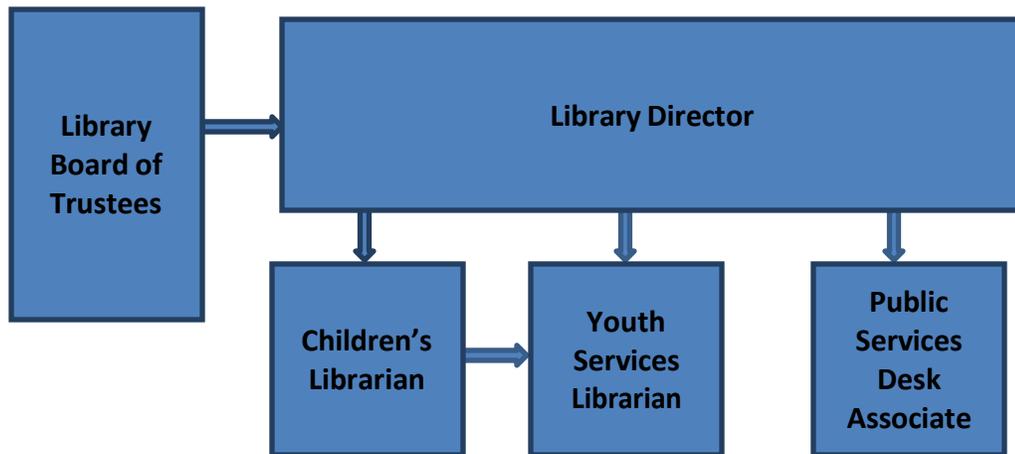
### Board of Library Trustees

The Board of Library Trustees is composed of nine Highwood residents elected to staggered three-year terms. Made up of volunteers, the Board is responsible for hiring the Library Director; establishing Library policy; monitoring the Library budget; serving as the liaison with the community, and other functions. The Board is legally responsible for the Library.

### Library Director

The Library Director implements Board-established policy; serves as advisor to the Board of Library Trustees in professional Library matters; is responsible for operation of the Library, including staff selection, collection development, Library services and activities; develops and implements Board-approved budget; represents the Library at the local, state, and national level; assists the Board as required; and performs other functions.

### Organizational Flow Chart



## D. Employee Classifications

It is the intent of the Library to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Accordingly, the right to terminate the employment relationship, at will, at any time is retained by both the employee and the Library.

Each employee is designated as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" according to federal and state wage and hour laws.

### Exempt Employees

Exempt employees are defined as employees who are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws, including minimum wage and overtime provisions. Exempt employees shall be paid on a salaried basis and are expected to fulfill the duties of their positions regardless of hours worked. Exempt employees are not eligible to receive overtime compensation or compensatory time off.

### Non-Exempt Employees

Non-exempt employees are defined as employees who are subject to specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws, including minimum wage and overtime provisions.

In addition to the above categories, each employee will belong to one other employment category:

#### 1. Full-time

A full-time employee is one who is regularly scheduled to work 37.5 hours per week. The employee will be entitled to all Library staff benefits, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

2. Part-time

A part-time employee is one who is regularly scheduled to work less than 37.5 hours per week. The employee may be eligible for some of the Library's benefit package, in addition to those required by law, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each individual benefit program.

3. Substitute

A substitute is contacted to work as needed, to ensure the operation of necessary Library services when regular staffing levels are insufficient due to vacations, leaves and other circumstances that result in staffing shortages. Substitute employees are not eligible for any of the Library's benefit package except those required by law.

**E. Recruitment**

Sources to be used to locate qualified professional personnel may include but are not limited to advertisements in the RAILS online job listing, professional Library publications, local newspapers, the state job line, and with accredited Library schools.

**F. Applications for Employment**

Applicants will be required to complete the appropriate Library application form.

**G. Applicant Selection**

The selection of staff members is based primarily on merit, with appropriate attention to educational and technical qualifications, background and experience, as well as personality and temperament.

Library Director – The applicant to be hired will be selected by the Library Board.

Professional Positions – Based upon information from the job application, the employment interview, and reference checks, the Library Director, or her/his designee, and other appropriate personnel will select the applicant to be hired.

Staff Positions – Based on information from the job application, the employment interview, appropriate skills tests (where required), and reference checks, the Library Director, or her/his designee, and the supervisor of the position will select the applicant to be hired.

**H. Criminal History Background Check**

A criminal history background check is required for all applicants who: 1) are eighteen years of age or older and 2) have been offered employment contingent upon successful completion of a background check. All applicants who are a subject to a criminal background check will be notified prior to the time the check is conducted and will be asked to disclose any convictions prior to the check. The existence of a conviction does not automatically disqualify an individual from employment.

**Inaccurate or Fraudulent Information**

The Library will eliminate from further consideration for employment any applicant who provides false, misleading, or willfully deceptive information on his or her job application. Employees hired based on false information discovered after employment begins are subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

**I. Appointment**

Each person hired or reassigned may receive an appointment form or letter signed by his or her supervisor and/or the Library Director which will provide the following information:

1. Title of position;
2. Department to which assigned;
3. Beginning salary or hourly wage;
4. Brief explanation of benefits and value of benefits;
5. Name and title of immediate supervisor; and
6. Date and time new employee will begin work.

In the absence of the Library Director, the President of the Library Board, or designee, will issue the letter of appointment.

Each new employee will receive a copy of the Library's Personnel Policy and will be required to sign a form (Appendix A) acknowledging receipt. This signed form will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

## **J. Forms**

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act, Section 1 of the Form I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification) must be completed and submitted by new employees prior to or on the first day of work. Employees must also present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Work Permits for student employees and all payroll forms (such as the Federal and Illinois W-4 forms) must also be completed and returned prior to reporting to work.

## **K. New Employee Period**

All employees must complete a 90-day new employee period. This is a time during which the individual is trained for effective performance on the job. The new employee period is an opportunity for the employee to evaluate the Library as a place to work, and an opportunity for the Library to evaluate the employee with regards to his or her work, skills, attendance, punctuality, performance in the job, and other job-related criteria.

The Library Director may extend an individual's new employee period at her/his discretion.

The new employee period is simply an administrative designation. Satisfactory completion of the new employee period does not assure continued employment.

All Library personnel are employees at will, both during the new employee period and after its conclusion.

## **L. Performance Evaluations**

In order that the Library employees will know how well they are doing in their job, the employee's supervisor and/or Director may formally review her/his progress periodically, generally on an annual basis, unless performance issues necessitate more frequent evaluations. If the employee has no designated supervisor other than the Library Director, the Library Director is to be considered the supervisor and will conduct the performance evaluation. During the performance evaluation, the supervisor will discuss with the employee the areas in which s/he is doing well and also those areas where improvement is required. Criteria that will usually be evaluated include, but are not limited to: quality and quantity of work performed; conduct and behavior; dependability; ability to work with others; initiative, resourcefulness and creativity; and potential for future growth. The employee will also have an opportunity to discuss any questions or difficulties s/he may have.

The original, completed performance evaluation will be signed and dated by the employee, supervisor, and or Library Director, and the employee's supervisor will maintain a file of all evaluations s/he conducted. The employee may request a copy.

The Library Board will typically evaluate the Library Director annually. After discussion, the Library Board will meet with the Library Director to review the evaluation and discuss accomplishments, future goals, and areas requiring attention. The original, completed performance evaluation will be kept in the personnel file of the Library Director.

Employees are evaluated informally at all times and may receive commendations or reprimands at any time.

### **Employee's Right to Counter**

If an employee disagrees with any of the statements in a written evaluation, s/he will be allowed to write her/his own statement which will then be forwarded to the Library Director. Such a statement will be attached to the evaluation in question and will be filed in the employee's personnel record.

### **Use of Evaluations**

Performance evaluations are confidential. Those authorized to see them are the employee, her/his supervisor, and the Library Director. Performance evaluations may be reviewed and weighed when an employee is being considered for one of the following: promotion, pay raise, reassignment, reduction of hours, demotion, dismissal, or layoff.

## **M. Reasonable Accommodations**

The Library supports the current Illinois Human Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for pregnant individuals and qualified

individuals with disabilities in the workplace unless such accommodations would present an undue hardship for the Library.

Reasonable accommodations apply to all covered employees and applicants and include, but are not limited to accommodations related to hiring practices, job placement, training, pay practices, promotion and demotion policies, access to benefits, facility and service accessibility, and layoff and termination procedures.

Contact the Library Director for further clarification regarding the Library's policy on reasonable accommodations or to request a reasonable accommodation in the workplace.

### **III. Employee Work Hours and Compensation**

#### **A. Hours of Operation**

The Library Board in consultation with the Director will set the number of hours the Library will be open by determining the schedule that best serves the public within the Library's resources of money and staff.

#### **B. Work Schedules**

The standard workweek at the Library for full-time employees is 37.5 hours. Full-time non-exempt employees must work 37.5 hours per week, depending on individual work schedules and varying days off. All exempt employees must typically work a minimum of 37.5 hours per week. For part-time employees, the number of hours per week may vary depending upon the availability of the employee and the needs of the Library as well as budgetary restrictions.

To the extent possible, the Director will assign work hours so that employees follow a regular schedule. However, all employees will be expected to be flexible in adjusting schedules or working additional hours to cover such needs as substituting, providing additional staff for public service, and meeting project deadlines. At any time, the Director may need to adjust the hours of an employee to provide the necessary services in the Library. Employees should consult with the Director to determine their work schedules.

Volunteers will be used as supplemental help only and will not be considered regular employees on the work schedule. Requests to use a volunteer as the only person on duty at a public service desk will be considered only in emergency cases, and the decision must be made by the Library Director.

#### **C. Overtime**

Every attempt will be made to minimize overtime worked, but employees will be expected to work as needed when conditions temporarily require work beyond their typical schedules.

Non-exempt employees must have supervisory authorization prior to working overtime. Working unauthorized overtime is prohibited, will not be remunerated, and may be disciplined, up to and including termination.

Overtime is paid only after a non-exempt employee has worked more than forty (40) hours during the workweek. For overtime purposes, the Library workweek will run from Monday through Sunday. Holiday, vacation, personal, and sick time, and any other paid or unpaid leave of absence do not count as hours worked for purposes of overtime. All overtime beyond 40 hours in a workweek will be compensated at one and a half times the employee's regular hourly rate.

Exempt employees do not receive overtime pay.

#### **D. Pay Periods**

Employees are paid bi-weekly. Each pay period consists of 14 days, beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday. This pay schedule is subject to change, depending on the requirements of the payroll service.

#### **E. Timekeeping**

A timekeeping system is used to record the work hours of all employees. Staff should clock in and out on the timekeeping system located by the Library Director's office. Staff must clock in and out at the start and finish of each day. It is not necessary to clock in and out for rest breaks.

## **F. Attendance and Punctuality**

Regular and predictable attendance is an essential function of every position at the Library. Consistent attendance and punctuality contribute to the success of the Library's business operations. Attendance problems disrupt operations, lower productivity, and create a burden on other employees. All employees of the Library are expected to assume responsibility for their attendance and promptness. Unexcused absence or tardiness may be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to dismissal.

### **Rules Regarding Attendance**

- Employees should inform the Library in advance if they will be absent or late, when possible.
- If the employee is unexpectedly unable to report to work, s/he should make every effort to speak directly the Library Director at least one hour before the employee's normal starting time. If the Director is absent or unavailable, the employee should inform someone who works in the same service area so that adjustments can be made. The employee should be prepared to explain the reason for the absence and give an expected date of return to work. The Library may require that additional documentation substantiating the reason for the absence be furnished.
- The absent employee must provide daily updates, except those arranged in advance with the Library.
- In instances of absence due to an employee's health, the Library reserves the right to require an employee to obtain a doctor's note justifying his or her absence. Where deemed appropriate, the Library may delay its decision as to the employee's physical fitness to return to work until a doctor's report is submitted.
- The Library will consider employees who are absent for three days without notice to have voluntarily separated (terminated) from the Library.

## **G. Position Classification and Wages/Salary**

Library wages and salaries are intended to provide fair and equitable compensation for all positions, considering rates of pay for comparable positions in the north/northwest suburban area of Chicago, the Library's financial condition and policies, and other factors.

Reevaluation of the wages and salaries, including creation of new positions and classifications, will be performed when needed at the discretion of the Library Director in conjunction with the Library Board.

At any given time that an employee's duties and responsibilities change significantly, the Library Director may revise the position description and request consideration for a position change.

## **H. Adjustment of the Wages/Salary Budget**

Changes in the average annual overall wages/salary budget will normally become effective at the beginning of each fiscal year.

## **I. Pay Advancement Due to Merit**

Regular employees may be eligible for pay increases based on job performance, within the limits of the wages/salary budget and subject to the prior approval of the Library Director. Raises will normally become effective at the beginning of each fiscal year. An employee must receive at least a satisfactory performance evaluation in order to be considered eligible for a merit increase.

## **J. Transfers or Promotions**

The pay of an employee transferred to a position of higher or lower complexity level may be raised or reduced to a level commensurate with the classification of her/his new position. Any transfer or promotion is subject to the approval of the Library Director.

## **K. Converting between Part-time and Full-time**

When an employee switches from part-time to full-time status, full-time benefits will be implemented.

When an employee switches from full-time to part-time status, full-time benefits will stop accruing at the end of the current pay period. Accrued sick time unused as of the date part-time status becomes effective will be lost. Vacation time granted during full-time status will carry over.

## **L. Payroll Deductions**

Certain deductions from each employee's paycheck will be made as required by both federal and state law. It is the policy of the Library not to take any improper pay deductions that would be in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act, its regulations (specifically Section 541.602(a)), or relevant state law or local ordinance. Any employee whose pay is improperly deducted shall be reimbursed for such improper deduction no later than the next pay period after the improper deduction is communicated to the Library Director.

## **M. Relief Periods**

Each staff member will usually be allowed a relief period of fifteen minutes of paid time for each continuous working schedule of four hours. Employees working a three-hour shift will usually be allowed one ten-minute relief period. Generally, employees should remain in the Library during the relief periods so that they will be available if needed. This time may not be used to extend a meal break or shorten working hours.

## **N. Meal Breaks**

The lunch/dinner period for employees is normally thirty minutes. The time for using this period will be scheduled in a manner that the public service desk is adequately covered. The lunch/dinner period will be scheduled so that the employee will be free from public service responsibilities during that time. An employee who is scheduled to work 7.5 continuous hours must take a break of thirty minutes, which must begin no later than five hours after beginning work.

## **O. Personnel Records**

The employee's master personnel file will be securely maintained and stored. So that the Library will have complete and accurate information, it is requested that the employee notify the Director promptly if there is any change in name, address, or other information affecting the employee. Employees' personnel records are maintained in compliance with the Illinois Personnel Record Review Act and such records are retained under lock for the employee's protection. Personnel files include materials such as: forms and documents related to hiring, performance evaluations, wages/salary information, documents necessary for the administration of Library benefit programs, and letters and memoranda related to performance.

Employees may examine their personnel file upon reasonable written notice submitted to the Director, in whose office the reviews will take place.

## **P. Disclosure of Information**

When information regarding an employee is requested by banks or other establishments requiring employment checks, written permission will be needed from the employee before the information will be released. The Library Director may only verify that an individual is employed by the Library.

## **Q. Resignation**

The Library requests that the resigning employee inform her/his supervisor in writing of the intention to leave at least two weeks prior to the last day of work. Supervisors and those in professional positions are asked to give at least thirty days written notice if they intend to resign.

When an employee terminates/leaves the employ of the Library, s/he will receive her/his final paycheck on the next regular pay day. The employee is responsible for returning any Library property

# **IV. Time Off and Employee Benefits**

## **A. Vacation Leave**

All vacation leave is subject to the approval of the Library Director. Vacation leave will, so far as practical, be granted at a time most desired by the employee provided that such leave causes minimal disruption of Library services. With the understanding that fairness will govern approval of vacation requests, the following guidelines apply:

- Vacation leave requests should be submitted in writing using the Time Off Request Form (Appendix B) as far in advance as possible, but no more than three months in advance.
- A vacation leave request may not be approved if it conflicts with the scheduled leave of

another employee.

- In order to provide Library services and staff public desks, the Library Director may need to limit the approval of vacation leave requests for the same time off.

Holidays which fall within an employee's vacation period will not be considered vacation leave.

### **1. Part-Time Employees**

Part-time employees are eligible for two weeks of unpaid vacation time. Additional days of unpaid vacation time may be available at the discretion of the Library Director. Part-time employees are eligible for unpaid vacation leave after completing the first six months of work.

### **2. Full-Time Employees**

Full-time employees are eligible for two weeks of paid vacation time, and are eligible for vacation leave after completing the first six months of work.

### **3. Accumulation and Use of Vacation Time**

It is intended that employees will use their vacation leave each calendar year. It will be the responsibility of the supervisor or the Library Director to work with employees to schedule vacation time so that employees can use vacation leave on a calendar year basis while ensuring continuity of Library operations. Vacation time must be used within the calendar year, but an employee may carry over vacation time for an additional 90 days with approval of Director. All carried-over time that is not used in those 90 days will be lost. Vacation leave is intended to provide a real break from work routines for the employee.

## **B. Sick Leave**

Sick leave shall be allowed for personal illness or illness of a member of the immediate family of the employee. An employee will be required to notify the Library Director as soon as possible but at least within one hour of the beginning of her/his work day, and if possible, stating the approximate duration of the leave. Sick leave days are reset at the beginning of each calendar year and unused sick leave does not carry over.

### **1. Part-Time Employees**

Part-time employees are eligible for five days of unpaid sick time. Additional days of unpaid sick time may be available at the discretion of the Library Director. Part-time employees may make up the time during the pay period in which it was missed at the discretion of the Library.

### **2. Full-Time Employees**

Full-time employees are eligible for ten days of paid sick time, and are eligible for paid sick time after completing the first three months of work.

For sick leave, verification by a proper medical authority may be required. In the absence of a required physician's statement, vacation leave will be charged for the entire period. In some instances, prior to returning to work an employee may be required to provide the Library Director with a physician's certificate verifying ability to return to work. If an employee is out for 3 days due to illness, a doctor's release may be required before return to work, at the Director's discretion. Where abuse of sick leave is suspected, the Library may require a physician's statement.

## **C. Holidays**

Full-time employees qualify for holiday benefits and will be paid for the following holidays when the Library is closed:

- i. New Year's Day – January 1
- ii. Memorial Day – last Monday in May
- iii. Day before Independence Day – July 3
- iv. Independence Day – July 4
- v. Labor Day – first Monday in September
- vi. Thanksgiving Day – fourth Thursday in November
- vii. Christmas Eve – December 24
- viii. Christmas Day – December 25
- ix. New Year's Eve – December 31

## **D. Emergency Library Closing**

The Library Director may make the decision to alter the Library's operating schedule, on any given day, due to inclement weather conditions or due to extenuating circumstances such as sewer issues, roof leaks, floods, mechanical failures, etc. Some of the factors to be considered in the decision-making process include: present weather conditions, predicted weather conditions, closing of other area agencies such as local governments and schools, the health and safety of Library employees and patrons, and overall condition of the facility.

If the Library Director is unavailable and cannot be reached by phone or email, the staff will have the authority to close the Library using the same criteria listed above.

In the event of an early closing or a decision not to open the Library at all, the Library Director or designee(s) will let the Library trustees know by email as soon as practical. The Library Director or designee(s) will also contact library staff. The Library Director will also post emergency closing information on the website, [emergencyclosingcenter.com](http://emergencyclosingcenter.com)

It is the Board's philosophy that, if at all possible, the Library should be open, at least for a few hours, even under severe weather conditions. Procedures for closing are provided in the Library's *Disaster Plan*. When the Library Director declares an emergency closing, employees will be paid for their normal working hours whether they get to the Library or not.

### **E. Compassionate Leave**

A paid leave of absence not to exceed three days may be taken by full-time and part-time employees following the death of a member of the immediate family. Up to one day unpaid leave of absence may be taken following the death of a relative beyond the immediate family. The amount of leave is left to the discretion of the Library Director as each case is dependent on travel time and individual circumstances. Schedules permitting, employees may attend funerals of friends on their own time.

### **F. Civil Leave**

Full-time employees summoned for jury duty or subpoenaed as a court witness (for other than personal cases) during their regularly scheduled work hours may be absent without loss of pay provided that a copy of the summons or subpoena, respectively, shall be forwarded to their supervisor or the Library Director in advance. Employees serving on jury duty must also provide verification of their service. If released from court service during normal working hours, employees are required to report to work on that day, if feasible.

### **G. Military Leave**

Leaves of absence for military or reserve duty are granted to all employees of the Library. Employees called to active military duty or to reserve or National Guard training, or volunteering for the same, should submit copies of their military orders to their supervisor or the Library Director as soon as practicable. Employees will be granted a military leave of absence for the period of military service in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Employees who are reservists or members of the National Guard are granted time off for required military training. Their eligibility for reinstatement after the completion of their military duty or training and benefit continuation/eligibility issues are determined in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Employees may elect, but are not required, to use any vacation entitlement for the absence.

### **H. Domestic and Sexual Abuse Leave (VESSA)**

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) allows employees who are victims of domestic or sexual violence or who have family or household members who are victims of such violence to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave per any twelve (12) month period to seek medical help, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other assistance

Should employees wish to request a reasonable accommodation pursuant to this act, they must contact the Library Director.

### **I. Family and Medical Leave Act**

The Family and Medical Leave Act allows employees to take up to twelve weeks of unpaid family/medical leave within a twelve-month period and be restored to the same or an equivalent position upon return provided that the employee has worked for the Library for at least twelve months and worked at least 1,250 hours in the last twelve months.

Should employees wish to request leave pursuant to this act, they must contact the Library Director.

## **J. Illinois One Day Rest in Seven Act**

Each employee must be allowed twenty-four (24) consecutive hours of rest per week. A week is defined as the seven consecutive 24-hour periods beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday through Saturday. The twenty-four consecutive hours of rest does not apply to: exempt employees as defined by the FLSA, employees whose services are required in response to emergency situations to prevent injury to person or damage to property, and part-time employees whose total hours are less than twenty-four per week.

## **K. IMRF Benefits**

Employees scheduled to work 1000 hours per year or more will be enrolled in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). Access the IMRF website ([www.imrf.org](http://www.imrf.org)) for details of benefits and retirement.

## **L. Health Insurance Benefits**

Full-time employees are eligible for health, vision, dental and life insurance benefits. The Library Director will inform eligible employees of the health insurance options available, the cost of the benefits, and the Library Director will provide enrollment forms. Eligible employees on leave (such as FMLA, civil or military leave) will continue participation in the Library's health insurance benefit program.

## **M. Additional Employee Benefits**

All employees are enrolled in benefits such as Social Security, workers' compensation, and unemployment insurance in the manner prescribed by law.

# **V. Employee Responsibilities, Safety and Training**

## **A. Personal Appearance and Conduct**

The Highwood Public Library expects employees to serve as Library ambassadors and to project a professional image to patrons.

Therefore, employees should dress in "Smart Casual" attire. Smart Casual attire means clothing that is professional yet informal. Attire should be appropriate to the employee's department and position. Smart Casual attire may include nice jeans. In consideration of possible adverse reactions by patrons or co-workers, strong-smelling fragrances are discouraged.

Each employee is a representative of the Library. It is the employee's responsibility to create a library atmosphere which is welcoming, helpful and pleasant. Employees should not be so engrossed in other work that a patron is given only superficial attention. Courtesy on the telephone is also important, and co-workers are entitled to the same courtesy as the general public.

All work will be conducted as quietly as possible. Personal telephone calls, either incoming or outgoing, must be brief and infrequent.

Eating in the public areas inside the Library is not allowed, except as appropriate (i.e., Library events at which food is served).

## **B. Harassment Free Workplace**

The Library is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free of harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the Library will not tolerate harassment of Library employees by anyone, including any supervisor, co-worker, vendor, patron, contractor or other regular visitor of the Library. See the Library's Harassment Free Workplace Policy for more information.

## **C. Safety**

For any questions regarding safety hazards or safety rules, contact the Library Director, who will take appropriate action. The Library's Emergency Prevention and Preparedness Manual/Disaster Plan is available to all employees for reference or review. This manual covers many safety-related topics such as first aid procedures, medical emergencies, and building evacuation.

## **D. Employee Injury**

In the event of an employee onsite accident, it is important to take care of any injured employees and patrons. Quickly assess what care is needed and if anyone onsite can assist. If the accident

appears to be an emergency or serious in nature, call 911. If in doubt, call for help anyway. If an employee seeks immediate medical treatment in an emergency room or emergent care setting, s/he must notify the treating providers that the injury is the result of a workplace accident. All part-time and full-time employees are covered by Worker's Compensation, and the employee and the Library have certain responsibilities to process a claim.

Any work-related accident, illness, or injury must immediately be reported to the Director, who will take appropriate action. The Director will complete a written report of the injury. Failure to report and/or deliver this report within forty hours of the accident may delay medical and compensation payments. Upon receipt of the report of injury, the Library Director or designee will notify the appropriate authorities.

## **E. No Smoking**

The Library is a smoke-free environment. Smoking (including smoking electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, and other electronic smoking devices) is not permitted anywhere in the Library's facilities, or within 15 feet of any Library entrance.

## **F. Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace**

### **1. Work Rules.**

Whenever employees are working or present on Library premises, they are prohibited from using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing or dispensing alcohol or illegal drugs.

This Policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use (use must be lawful in accordance with both federal and state law) and possession of prescribed medications. Employees are responsible for consulting with their doctors about a medication's effect on their ability to work safely, and promptly disclosing any restrictions to the Library Director. Employees need not, however, disclose underlying medical conditions unless specifically directed to do so.

### **2. Employee Assistance.**

The Library will assist and support employees who voluntarily seek help for alcohol or drug problems before becoming subject to discipline under this or other Library policies. Employees who seek such assistance will be allowed to use accrued paid time off, placed on leaves of absence, where available, referred to treatment providers and otherwise accommodated as required by law. Such employees may be required to document that they are successfully following prescribed treatment.

## **G. Use of Library Property and Equipment**

An employee has a positive duty to protect and conserve all Library property. Employees are responsible for all Library equipment used in their work and for its proper use and maintenance. Employees should follow the principle of "patrons first", when using or checking out Library property.

Any defects should be reported to the Director as soon as possible. Any Library-owned property which is lost or mislaid must be reported to the Director immediately upon discovery that it is missing.

## **H. No Solicitation / No Distribution**

In the interest of maintaining a proper business environment and preventing interference with work and inconvenience to others, employees may not distribute literature or printed materials of any kind, sell merchandise, solicit financial contributions, or solicit for any other cause during working time. Employees who are not on working time (e.g., those on lunch or other breaks) may not solicit or distribute literature or printed material of any kind to employees who are on working time.

## **I. Gifts and Political Activities**

No employee will accept any gift in the form of a service, a loan, a item, or a promise from any person, firm, or corporation. No employee will grant an improper favor, service, or thing of value in the course of her/his duties. If a community member wishes to provide an employee with a gift for library assistance, employees may suggest that the person write a thank you note to the Library Director on the employee's behalf, write a complimentary post on the Library's Facebook page, or make a donation to the library.

Employees will not be required to contribute to nor participate in any political fund.

Employees will not participate in any political activities while on library premises.

## **J. Replacement of Key**

Employees are issued a key at time of employment. If a staff member's key is misplaced, lost or damaged, a new one will be issued at a cost of \$10.00. Please see the Library Director.

## **K. Photocopies**

Staff members may make personal black-and-white copies for five cents and color copies for ten cents per copy, which is discounted from the public rate. These machines should only be used for personal reasons when no staff member or patron is waiting. Payment for personal photocopies should be made at the Check-Out Desk.

## **L. Return of Library Property**

Employees leaving the employed service of the Library, whether temporarily or permanently, through resignation, layoff, suspension, or dismissal, are responsible for returning any Library property.

## **M. Conferences and Training for Employees**

Expenses or partial expenses for attendance at conferences of professional associations will be paid by the Library, provided advanced approval by the Library Director.

## **N. Use of Private Vehicles for Library Business**

When private vehicles are used for Library business, drivers must have and show proof of a valid, current, and class-appropriate driver's license and adequate insurance. Approval to attend meetings, conferences, Library-related events, and other activities outside the Library includes approval of use of a private vehicle for Library business.

The Library will reimburse employees for use of a private vehicle for Library business at the current standard mileage rate for automobile deductions set by the Internal Revenue Service. If the employee leaves from her/his home to go directly to the destination, and then returns to the Library, s/he will need to deduct her/his normal commute miles to the Library from her/his total. Basically, an employee is only reimbursed for mileage above her/his normal total daily commute.

## **O. Workplace Security and Inspections**

To safeguard the property of employees, customers, and the Library; help prevent the possession, sale, and use of illegal drugs on the Library's premises and keep with the spirit and intent of the Library's substance abuse policy; and help prevent the possession of illegal weapons on the Library's premises, the Library reserves the right to question employees and all other persons entering and leaving our premises, and to inspect any packages, parcels, purses, handbags, briefcases, lunchboxes, or any other possessions or articles carried to and from the Library's property. In addition, the Library reserves the right to search any employee's office, desk, files, locker, or any other area or article on our premises. In this connection, it should be noted that all offices, desks, files, lockers, and so forth, are the property of the Library and are issued for the use of employees only during their employment with the Library. Inspections may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the Library.

Persons entering the premises who refuse to cooperate in an inspection conducted pursuant to this policy will not be permitted to enter the premises. Employees working on or entering or leaving the premises who refuse to cooperate in an inspection will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **P. Open Door Communications / Problem-Solving Procedure**

The Library encourages its employees to raise issues that may be negatively impacting their work environment. Should an employee have a complaint, concern or situation that needs to be addressed, the following procedure should be utilized:

**Step One:** The employee should informally discuss the situation with the Library Director. The employee should give the Director an opportunity to investigate and then get back to the employee.

**Step Two.** If the employee is not satisfied with the Director's response or feels the issue is not resolved, the employee should bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Trustees.

## VI. Patron Privacy, Technology and Social Media

### A. Patron Privacy and Confidentiality

Employees must always remember that information and records about patrons are confidential. Personal data is to be utilized only as necessary to conduct Library business, and every patron's privacy is to be respected and protected at all times. Article III of the *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association* states that confidentiality extends to "information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted," including, but not limited to, reference questions and interviews, circulation records, digital transactions and queries, as well as records regarding the use of library resources, services, programs, or facilities.

Confidentiality regarding any Library-patron transaction is to be respected at all times.

An employee is prohibited from directly or indirectly using or allowing the use of patron information, obtained through or in connection with employment by the Library and which has not been made available to the general public, for furtherance of a private interest.

### B. Use of Information Systems

This policy governs employee use of the Library's computers, networks, communications systems, phone systems, Internet and other IT resources (collectively "information systems"). All such information systems, and all communications and stored information transmitted, received, or contained in the Library's information systems are Library property and are to be used primarily for job-related purposes during working time. Limited personal use during break periods is permissible, provided that it does not violate any guidelines of the Library, impact employee productivity, or take place at a public service desk. Employees are expected to demonstrate a sense of responsibility and not abuse this privilege. The same policy applies to the employee's use of personal listening and/or communications devices, such as mobile phones and tablets.

To ensure the proper use of information systems and business equipment, the Library may monitor the use of these systems and equipment from time to time. When using the Library's information systems, employees should note the following:

1. Information systems are owned/leased and maintained by the Library, and electronic communications are the sole property of the Library. Excessive personal use of information systems or distribution of personal messages by employees is prohibited. Personal software or messages shall not be installed or stored on the Library's information systems unless prior approval is obtained.
2. Staff use of earphones or ear buds in any public area at any time that the Library is open for business is not allowed. Use of such devices in staff work areas is allowed only at the discretion of Director.
3. In order to maintain network and information security, the sharing or misuse of passwords is prohibited. Employees are responsible for protecting the confidentiality of their password(s). Passwords should not be written down or left in places that they are accessible to others.
4. Employees are prohibited from using codes, accessing files, or retrieving any stored communication without prior authorization. No employee may use a password unknown to the Library. Employees may be required to disclose passwords or codes to the Library to allow access to the systems.
5. The use of personal passwords, assigned to or selected by the employee, is not grounds for an employee to claim privacy rights in the information systems or any data or content stored therein. The Library reserves the right to override personal passwords.
6. Employees are prohibited from bringing unauthorized electronic equipment to work to use with Library-provided information systems and/or from accessing Library systems with their devices absent explicit permission from the Library Director. Such prohibited equipment includes but is not limited to any type of external computer drives, such as flash drives, to save information from computer drives, and personal laptops and other wireless communications devices. Using such unauthorized equipment with Library-provided information systems and/or

accessing Library information systems without permission is considered to be theft of the Library's intellectual property.

7. Employees who create a Library profile/email account on their personal devices without permission (or who refuse to delete their Library profile/email account on their personal devices when asked to do so) will automatically have their devices reset to factory default by the Library. This setting will delete all Library information from their devices, but will also delete any and all personal information (including, but not limited to, apps, contacts, pictures, videos, etc.) as well.
8. The Library will, or reserves the right to, monitor the use of information systems and to review or inspect all material stored therein. No communications are guaranteed to be private or confidential.
9. The Library's prohibition against sexual, racial, and other forms of harassment is extended to include the use of the Library's information systems. Harassing, vulgar, obscene, or threatening communications are strictly prohibited, as are sexually oriented messages or images. Employees who receive email or other information on their computers which they believe violate this policy should immediately report this activity to the Library Director.
10. Privileged or confidential material, such as, but not limited to, trade secrets or attorney-client communications, should not be exchanged haphazardly by email, facsimiles, etc.
11. Respect all laws governing copyright, fair use of copyrighted material owned by others, trademarks, and other intellectual property, including the Library's own copyrights, trademarks, and brands.
12. Employees are asked to send email only to those with a need and/or desire to receive it. Be particularly careful about sending "Everyone/Everywhere" emails, as these impact library-wide productivity and system resources. "Everyone/Everywhere" email may not be used to solicit donations or to sell merchandise.
13. Employees must be aware of the possibility that electronic messages that are believed to have been erased or deleted can frequently be retrieved by systems experts and can be used against an employee or the Library. Therefore, employees should be cautious and use the systems only in the appropriate manner and consult with systems experts to guarantee that information to be deleted is truly eliminated.
14. Violation of this policy can result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

## **C. Social Media**

### **Definition of Social Media**

Social media is defined as any web application, site, or account that facilitates the sharing of opinions and information. Social media includes such formats as blogs, listservs, web sites, social network pages, other types of self-published online web pages, and collaborative web-based discussion forums including, but not limited to, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

This policy addresses the use of social media in four respects:

1. General guidelines for employees' use of social media
2. Content created by Library staff while on the job for web applications, sites, or accounts created and maintained by Highwood Public Library
3. Content created by Library staff on personal time for web applications, sites, or accounts created and maintained by themselves or other members of the community, that share opinions and information about library-related subjects and issues
4. Staff responsibilities for moderating public contributions to social media

### **General Rules and Guidelines:**

The following rules and guidelines apply to the use of social media, whether such use is for the Library on working time or for personal use during non-working time. (Using Library equipment to access social media sites is also governed by the Use of Information Systems Policy. Employees should also refer to this policy before accessing such sites via the Library's equipment). These rules and guidelines apply to all employees.

1. Employees are prohibited from discussing confidential Library matters through the use of social media, such as the patron account information and other proprietary and nonpublic Library information.
2. Employees cannot use social media to harass, threaten, bully, or discriminate against co-workers, supervisors, patrons, vendors or suppliers, any organizations associated or doing business with the Library, or any members of the public, including website visitors who post comments. The Library's anti-harassment and EEO policies apply to use of social media.
3. Employees should respect all copyright and other intellectual property laws. For the Library's protection, as well as your own, it is critical that you show proper respect for all the laws governing copyright, fair use of copyrighted material owned by others, trademarks and other intellectual property, including the Library's own copyrights, trademarks, and brands.
4. This policy is not intended, nor shall it be applied, to restrict employees from discussing their wages, hours and working conditions with co-workers.

### **Library-Sponsored Social Media:**

Library social media services are intended to create welcoming and inviting online spaces where users will find useful and entertaining information and can interact with Library staff and other users. Comments are moderated by Library staff, and the Library reserves the right to remove comments that violate its policies.

All such Library-related social media is subject to the following rules and guidelines, in addition to the rules and guidelines set forth above:

Only employees designated and authorized by the Library can prepare content for or delete, edit, or otherwise modify content on Library-sponsored social media. Library-sponsored social media accounts are owned by the Library. Any employees who create such accounts or are provided access to such accounts do not obtain ownership rights to such accounts or any content contained in them. Employees who create or are provided access to Library-sponsored social media accounts must provide the Library with all passwords and/or log-in information to such accounts immediately upon the Library's request, and must transfer "manager" or "owner" status (as defined by the particular social media site) upon the Library's request.

Designated employees are responsible for ensuring that the Library-sponsored social media conforms to all applicable Library rules and guidelines. These employees are authorized to remove immediately and without advance warning any content, including offensive content such as pornography, obscenities, profanity, and/or material that violates the Library's EEO and/or anti-harassment policies.

Furthermore, it is expected that all content on Library-sponsored social media (or done on Library work time) will be professionally presented. Writers and contributors should check facts, cite sources, present balanced views, acknowledge and correct errors, and check spelling and grammar before making a post live.

Employees who want to post comments in response to Library-sponsored content must identify themselves as employees.

Like any type of promotion/outreach, posting content about the Library on social media can become a workload issue. Participants are encouraged to work with the Library Director to ensure that their efforts in this area are consistent with available time and resources.

While the development of original content is desirable in many situations, Library writers are also encouraged to use existing text and language created by the staff to promote the Library's services and programs, thereby strengthening the Library's ability to repeat (and underscore) key messages. Administration approval is required for anything posted as an official statement of the Highwood Public Library. Note that the Library Director is the Library's official spokesperson.

### **Personal Use of Social Media**

In their capacity as private citizens, Library employees have the same right to self-expression enjoyed by members of the community as a whole when discussing matters of public concern. This

section focuses on content created by staff on personal time for web applications, sites, or accounts created and maintained by themselves or other members of the community.

Staff members must keep in mind the following best practices when posting content about Library-related subjects and issues on personal time:

1. Employees who utilize social media and choose to identify themselves as employees of the Library may not represent themselves as spokespeople for the Library. Accordingly, employees are strongly encouraged to state explicitly, clearly, and in a prominent place on the site that their views are their own and not those of the Library or of any person or organization affiliated or doing business with the Library.
2. Employees should ensure that their personal blogging activity does not interfere with their work commitments.

**Monitoring Public Content**

The Library reserves the right to monitor employees' public use of social media, including but not limited to statements or comments posted on the Internet, in blogs and other types of openly accessible forums, diaries, and personal and business discussion forums.

## APPENDIX A

### **Highwood Public Library Personnel Policies Handbook Acknowledgment of Receipt**

The Personnel Policies handbook describes important information about employment with the Highwood Public Library. I understand I should consult the Library Director with any questions I might have.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described herein are subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur. All such changes will be communicated through official notices. I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Library Trustees has the authority to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

I have entered into my employment relationship with the library voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either I or the library can terminate the relationship at-will, with or without cause, with or without reason, and with or without notice at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law. No oral or written representations to the contrary are either authorized or enforceable.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook and I understand it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies and guidelines contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

Nothing herein prohibits activity permitted by applicable law, including, without limitations, reporting discriminatory, violent or other illegal conduct, or for engaging in protected or concerted activity under wage, hour or labor laws. "Protected or concerted activity" includes any work-or job-related activity which, without limitation, is related to work time hours, wages, conditions, conduct, responsibilities, duties and other protected rights under any labor and/or wage laws. This assurance is repeated specifically in several policies herein, but it also applies to all other policies.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

I have received and read the Highwood Public Library's Personnel Policies Handbook (revised in October 2020).

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Use Only

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B

**Highwood Public Library  
Time Off Request Form**

Please complete this form and submit it to the Library Director.

Staff Member:	
Date of Request:	
Requested Day(s) off:	
Number of Days:	
Number of Hours:	
Day/Date of Return:	
Notes:	
<i>Have you secured coverage? Who?</i>	
Approval:	
Approval date:	