

JOB SHOP VOLUNTEER MANUAL

UPDATED: JUNE, 2018
BY SARAH MCBRYDE



VOLUNTEERISM STRENGTHENS OUR LIBRARIES

Dear Volunteer,

On behalf of the Anchorage Public Library system and the city of Anchorage, I would like to thank you for your interest and involvement in the library. Reaching the goal of providing employment services for all interested patrons requires a community-wide effort. In addition to the commitment of our librarians and library staff, we must have strong community partnerships in order to thrive as a society. Library volunteers play a critical role in this effort.

The library's volunteer program serves patrons in a variety of ways, including providing mentorship and general job search assistance. Volunteers are true partners in our library. We cannot be successful without you.

Thank you in advance for helping us to increase the quality and effectiveness of our job service program. I look forward to working closely with you as we unite to serve the Anchorage community.

Sincerely,

Sarah McBryde, AmeriCorps VISTA

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

This handbook has been produced to help you become better library volunteers by detailing policies and best practices when it comes to helping library patrons and community members search for a job. This book will share with you a little of our history, philosophy, practices, and policies, as well as all the benefits we will provide to you as a valued volunteer.

As a volunteer at the library, please remember a fundamental library principle is the protection of personal privacy and intellectual freedom. That means not talking about who checked out what or who said what, as well as other personal information you might be privy to as a volunteer.

It is important that you make a commitment to show up when scheduled to work. Library staff is counting on your help. If, for some reason, you must miss a shift, please call or email your volunteer supervisor as soon as possible, so staff can make adjustments to the program or activity.

No volunteer handbook can answer all the questions you might have about our programs. It is in our person-to-person interactions that we can better get to know each other, express our views, and work together in a harmonious relationship.

We depend on you, and your success is our success. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. Your volunteer coordinator will gladly answer any questions you might have. It is our hope to provide you with a volunteer experience that is both beneficial to you as well as to the library. We also want you to enjoy your time volunteering with us.

Thank you for giving your time and talents to help others. We hope that you find volunteering with the library to be a positive and rewarding experience.

LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The Anchorage Public Library is an essential partner in building and sustaining a literate citizenry, transforming lives through information and knowledge, and enhancing our community's quality of life.

LIBRARY VISION STATEMENT

We envision an Anchorage Public Library that works to ensure that the people of Anchorage will always have the information resources they need to live successful and productive lives and deal with the challenges in the city.

- We seek to be a boundary-spanning organization that works with other agencies and individuals to serve as a catalyst for individual and community improvement.
- We celebrate the diversity of our community and welcome all who wish to learn and grow.
- We provide conveniently located facilities that offer comfortable, stimulating learning experiences as well as services that go directly to where you, our patrons, need us to be.

JOB SHOP MISSION STATEMENT

The Job Shop's mission is to eradicate adult unemployment in the Municipality of Anchorage by empowering patrons with the tools they need to find sustainable employment through peer-to-peer counseling.

HISTORY OF THE ANCHORAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Anchorage's first library opened in 1917 in a church hall. Volunteers operated the library for the following 28 years. The city of Anchorage assumed responsibility for the operation of the library and hired the first librarian in 1945.

Zachary Joshua Loussac was a Russian immigrant who prospered in Anchorage with drugstores, gold and coal mines. He established the Loussac Foundation which pledged to provide money to pay off bonds for a new library. In 1955, the library moved into its first permanent home when the first Z.J. Loussac Public Library opened its doors downtown.

The first branch library in Anchorage opened in Spenard in 1960. During the next 30 years, Anchorage's library system expanded to nine branches and a book mobile. Loussac opened at its current location on Sept. 14, 1986. Since it opened, millions of people have gone through its doors. In the late 1980s and a number of times since then, branch libraries were closed to save money, despite huge increases in the population. Currently, there are only five libraries in the Anchorage system: Loussac Public Library in Midtown, and neighborhood libraries in Eagle River, Girdwood, Muldoon and Mountain View.

Our patrons represent the most diverse community in the United States according to 2010 census data, which brings a set of unique strengths and challenges to our community. We serve the diverse population of Anchorage through striving to make necessary resources available as well as providing a safe and welcoming environment. We are expanding our collection to include more diversity in language as well as expanding physical resources to aid our patrons in economic advancement such as our new 3D printer.

In 2016, the Job Lab was started as a means to aid Mountain View patrons in their search for employment. Other adult programs followed, including an ESL class, English Conversation Hour, Small Business workshops, and monthly adult enrichment programming.

In 2017, The Job Lab was renamed the Job Shop and became a system-wide program, mainly operating at the Loussac, Muldoon, and Mountain View locations. The Job Shop was further expanded to include employment sessions at partner organizations in the Anchorage community.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES:

Volunteer Role: Be realistic and candid in accepting your assignment, taking into consideration your interests, skills, and availability, as well as the needs of the library.

Hours: Volunteer hours are scheduled in collaboration between a volunteer and their supervisor. Notify our supervisor if you cannot come to the library as scheduled, by either phone or email.

Tracking Hours: Due to stipulations in our grant funding, we are required to record volunteer hours and theoretical pay. Even though this is an unpaid position, we record the dollar value of volunteer time spent at the Job Shop. To keep track of your hours, we will give you a folder with a time sheet. It is your responsibility to record your time spent at each Job Shop session.

Telephone: Keep cell phone usage to a minimum when working with patrons. During breaks or downtime cell phone use is permitted.

Lockers: Lockers are available at some locations. If you would like to use a locker (or some other secure area) to store your things for the day, make arrangements with your supervisor.

Smoking: Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside the building. Smoking areas are outside, 20 feet from the building.

Emergencies: If the fire alarm sounds, immediately go to the nearest fire exit. Security or staff will announce an “all clear” to return to the building when it’s safe to do so.

During an earthquake, it is safest to stay in the building against an internal doorway or under a table. Avoid leaving the building or standing near building entry areas during the tremors. If an active shooter enters the building, run to the nearest secure location behind a locked door, if possible. Call emergency services, and do not attempt to interfere with an active shooter.

Confidentiality: No information concerning an individual patron shall be given, made available, or disclosed to any individual, corporation, institution, government agent, or agency unless disclosure is approved by that patron. This information includes, but may not be limited to:

Name (or whether an individual is a registered borrower or has been a library patron)

Address

Telephone number

Email address

Employment history

Other information related to employment

Circulation records and their contents

Registration records and their contents

Computer registration records and their contents

Number or character of questions asked by an individual

Frequency or content of a patron's lawful visit to the library or any other information supplied to the library.

Communication: Always keep confidential matters confidential. When interacting with patrons at the Job Shop, you may come into contact with some of their private information. This is not to be shared with anyone. Be courteous with patrons at all times. If problems with patrons arise, bring them to the attention of your volunteer coordinator or library staff.

Appearance: Dress in an appropriate fashion in clean and neat attire. Some positions may require closed-toe shoes for safety.

Training: Training may be required, depending on the volunteer task and the volunteer's skill level. If you feel you need training for the volunteer position you are interested in, schedule a time with a staff supervisor to learn volunteer tasks and expectations. It is the volunteer's responsibility to ask questions if something is not understood. Please don't hesitate to ask for more information or clarification. The Anchorage Public Library subscribes to Lynda.com which offers training in the form of webinars in many subject areas.

Responsibility: Although the job is voluntary, the commitment is professional. Be dependable, reliable, positive, flexible, and cooperative. Know your duties and how to do them correctly. Work well with others, and maintain a good team attitude. Report for duty on time, or inform your volunteer coordinator as soon as possible of any planned or unplanned absence or lateness.

Evaluation: Volunteer evaluations are carried out on an informal basis; however, more formal, in-depth evaluations may be provided upon request. This evaluation can include a verification of work hours, and a letter of recommendation depending on the length of the volunteer's service.

Termination: The library accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the library. Volunteers agree that the organization may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the library or make changes in the nature of their volunteer assignment.

Emergency Contact: It is the responsibility of each volunteer to regularly update their personal contact information and emergency contact information. This update can be made by contacting the volunteer coordinator.

Feedback: Participate in the feedback process by letting your volunteer coordinator know how you feel about your volunteer experience and by giving constructive suggestions for improvement in any area. Your suggestions are highly valued and often implemented, so don't hesitate to let us know what you think.

UNACCEPTABLE ACTIVITIES

If you have questions concerning any volunteer or safety rule, or any unacceptable activities, see your volunteer coordinator for an explanation. Any volunteer who violates rules established by APL may be subject to immediate discharge. Unacceptable activities include:

- Willful violation of any Anchorage Public Library rule (see code of conduct); any deliberate action that is extreme in nature and is obviously detrimental to the library.
- Willful violation of security or safety rules or failure to observe safety rules or library safety practices.
- Negligence or any careless action which endangers the life or safety of another person.
- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or marijuana on library property or when representing the library is prohibited.
- Possession or use of all illegal drugs or other illegal substances on library property or when representing the library is prohibited.
- Excessive tardiness or absenteeism, unless arranged with a volunteer coordinator.
- Possession of dangerous or illegal firearms, weapons or explosives on library property.
- Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence, making threats of violence toward anyone on library premises or when representing the Anchorage Public Library.
- Inability to follow instructions issued by your volunteer coordinator.
- Threatening, intimidating, or coercing fellow volunteers or library patrons on or off the premises at any time, for any purpose.
- Theft of library, patron, staff, or volunteer property.
- Dishonesty; willful falsification or misrepresentation on your application for volunteering or other volunteer records; alteration of library records or other library documents.
- Breach of confidentiality of personnel information.
- Malicious gossip and/or spreading rumors; engaging in behavior designed to create discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another volunteer on the job; willfully restricting volunteer output or encouraging others to do the same.
- Going into staff areas when not volunteering is prohibited.

VOLUNTEER RIGHTS

As a volunteer you have the right:

- To work in a healthy and safe environment.
- To be engaged in work in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.
- To be given accurate and truthful information about the organization for which you are volunteering.
- To be given a copy of the organization's volunteer policy and any other policies or procedures that affect your role.
- Not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker.
- To have a role description and agreed-upon hours of contribution.
- To be provided with orientation to the organization and the role.
- To be provided with appropriate training and support to carry out your role.
- To have the chance to grow and develop your own skill set through participation in volunteer activities with the library.

HELPFUL INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIBRARY

AmeriCorps VISTA: Sarah McBryde (907) 343-2949

Anchorage Public Library Director: Mary Jo Torgeson (907) 343-2892

Anchorage Public Library Deputy Director: Virginia McClure (907) 343-2907

Z.J. Loussac Library

3600 Denali St.
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-343-2975

Chugiak-Eagle River Library

12001 Business Blvd. #176
Eagle River Town Center
Eagle River, AK 99577
907-343-1530

Gerrish (Girdwood) Library

PO Box 169
250 Egloff Drive
Girdwood, AK 99587
907-343-4024

Mountain View Neighborhood Library

120 Bragaw St
Anchorage, AK 99508
907-343-2818

Muldoon Library

1251 Muldoon Rd., Suite 158
Muldoon Town Center
Anchorage, AK 99504
907-343-4223

THE JOB SHOP

What is the Job Shop?

The Job Shop (previously referred to as the Job Lab) is a 3 hour event wherein volunteers aid library patrons in their search for new employment. The focus is on peer-to-peer counseling to help library patrons find the jobs that best fit their personal needs.

What we can offer help on:

Job Search assistance is the number one service that we provide. Most people that come into the Job Shop need help navigating the many career websites on the Internet. For this task, familiarize yourself with Indeed.com and other job search websites so that you know how to help library patrons navigate them. Begin by asking the patron what sort of job they are applying for, and then help them search for positions matching their criteria.

Résumé building is another popular service that we provide. Many patrons come in with a résumé already written. Look it over, and ask questions about any current information such as address, phone number, most recent job, etc. There will also be patrons who do not have a résumé, and do not know how to write one. We provide one-on-one assistance to help patrons with each step of the resume writing process. Code for America built an easy resume building website that is free to use. It is located on the Job Shop section of the APL website.

If you are well-versed in employment expectations, coaching our patrons is often helpful to them. Start with a conversation with the patron, and decide from there what services would be most helpful. Department of Labor Job Centers are usually the best solutions for people who need a significant amount of help.

We offer advice for the interviewing process as well as a mock interview. A script will be provided, should the patron request this. If you would like a copy of this script in advance in order to familiarize yourself with it, please request one from your volunteer coordinator.

Some patrons are not computer literate, and coaching them through some basic computer skills is valuable to them. If they need more help, direct the patron to Lynda.com through the library's web-site.

If the patron needs more assistance than we can provide in three hours, ask them to come back next week or go to one of the Department of Labor Job Centers.

What we can't offer help on:

When a patron asks for assistance with unemployment benefits, or any other government benefit, we generally are not qualified to give them advice or guidance. The patron is welcome to use the Job Shop computers to access information on their benefits, but if they have questions, advise that they contact their case worker. During the school year, we have Masters of Social Work (MSW) interns through UAA. These interns are able to help with the more complicated job-related questions that patrons may have.

We can't offer anyone employment on the spot like a job fair; however, we can help the patron search for a job on reputable job search websites.

Some patrons will want to speak with you at length about subjects unrelated to employment. While some polite conversation is necessary to ensure a friendly experience at the Job Shop, if these conversations exceed ten minutes, gently steer the conversation back to the subject of employment.

Some patrons will ask for complicated technical assistance with their phones and other personal devices. While we can offer basic assistance with accessing certain documents and general coaching on how to use an electronic device or computer, we are not IT professionals, and that is not the purpose of the Job Shop. If a patron needs help with more than basic assistance, suggest that they call their phone provider or take their computer or device to the store they bought it from.

Some patrons will request personal help outside of the Job Shop hours. It is up to individual volunteers to decide how much they want to be involved in helping library patrons find employment outside of the Job Shop. There is no requirement for volunteers to help a patron beyond the scheduled Job Shop hours.

EVENT PROCEDURES

Set Up:

Each Job Shop location is different, but there are a few things that should remain consistent at each Job Shop such as technology set-up and flyers.

Equipment that should be at every Job Shop:

- Minimum 6 laptop computers
- Printer
- Paper (computer paper and resume paper)
- Notepads
- Pens and pencils
- Flyers, pamphlets, and job-related information
- Employment handbook
- Thumb drives (enough to give one to each participant)
- Internet connection (use Mifi for pop-up Job Shops)
- Feedback surveys

Announcement:

There should always be some form of announcement at each location before the start of the Job Shop. At the Loussac Library this can be done over the main loudspeaker, located in the Security Office on the Second Floor. At other locations the best practice is to put Job Shop mini flyers next to each computer station. At pop-up Job Shops, the announcement is the responsibility of the host organization.

Loussac Announcement Script:

“Attention Library Patrons; Starting at 2 and going until 5 this evening, there will be a Job Shop in the Salmon Room on the Second Floor. If you are looking for a job, need help with a resume, or are looking for career related assistance, come to the Job Shop for one-on-one help.”

Materials:

- Laptops—Ensure that there are enough laptops for each Job Shop session according to average attendance numbers. Ensure that each laptop is fully charged before the start of each session.
- Mifi—Ensure that the Mifi device is fully charged and operational before bringing it to pop-up Job Shops. Always bring the Mifi device when

operating the Job Shop outside of the library, even if the organization has its own Wifi.

- Printer—Ensure that the printer is fully charged and operational before the start of each Job Shop.
- Office supplies—notepads, folders, paper, pens, pencils, and thumb drives.
- Flyers and job related information (found online through Department of Labor and other partner organizations).
- Job Hunting Handbooks (found at the Midtown Job Center).
- Feedback Surveys—ensure that there are enough printed surveys for each Job Shop session and also ensure that volunteers know to encourage participants to fill out a survey.

Set-up Procedures

1. Arrange tables according to the space provided. Usually there is one table for flyers, handbooks, etc. and two to three tables for laptops. There should be a notepad and pencil at each laptop station. Surveys should be prominently displayed to ensure easy access. Survey participation is incredibly important because we rely on survey-generated statistics in grant applications, library board reports, news reports, etc.
2. Arrange pamphlets on the information table according to category. Keep everything having to do with the library together, all the recruitment flyers together, etc. Most materials are located in the locked floor cabinet.
3. Use white board signs to advertise the Job Shop when it's in operation.
4. Make announcement 5 minutes before the start of the Job Shop.
5. Branch locations: Print ¼ sheet Job Shop flyers and distribute them to each computer station to let patrons in the building know about the Job Shop.
6. Optional: If patrons bring their kids to the Job Shop, set up one more table with coloring supplies.

Event Procedures:

When a new patron walks through the door, greet them and ask what it is they're seeking from the Job Shop. It's important that each person is greeted as they walk through the door. Volunteers should pay attention to who is walking in the room and ensure that each new Job Shop visitor is directed to the information they need. If the patron is unsure of what they need, direct them to general information at the information table. Volunteers should ask follow-up questions to find the best solution for each Job Shop participant.

1. If the patron is looking for a job, start with a job search on one of the laptops.
2. If the patron is looking to build a resume, start with the Easy Resume Builder located on the Job Shop webpage.
3. See Volunteer Checklist for further details on Job Shop procedures.
4. If the patron is looking for advice in finding a job, give it to the best of your ability. If you're not as familiar with a certain field of work, ask other volunteers in the room if they are more qualified to give advice. If further help is needed, direct the patron to one of the Job Centers operated by the Department of Labor.