

XIX. PERSONNEL POLICY: STAFF, BOARD, AND DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP

A. Director:

1. The Director serves as the channel of communication between the Library Board, the library staff and the public. Under these policies, adopted by the Board of Trustees, the Director administers the library and directs the staff.

B. Staff:

1. The library staff has responsibility for public relations in contact with the public both inside and outside the library.
2. Members of the staff are encouraged to make suggestions to the Director on any phase of library service which they feel can be improved. These suggestions are channeled through departments and/or directly to the Director.
3. Staff members will participate in appropriate and on-going programs of staff development and continuing education policies, in-house or at workshops, seminars, and meetings within the limitations imposed by budget and current staffing levels.

C. Drug-Free Workplace:

1. In compliance with Whitman County personnel regulations, Whitman County Rural Library shall be a drug-free workplace (see Appendix D).

D. Board of Trustees:

1. The Board of Trustees serves as the liaison between the library and the public and between the library and government officials.
2. Its members advise the Director of needs in the community and explain the library and its services in lay terms to the public.
3. The Board works with the Director in adopting a budget.
4. Members of the Board will not discuss policy matters with members of the staff without knowledge of the Director.
5. If circumstances require by passing the normal administrative channels, the matter should be acted upon by the Board as a whole prior to any such discussion.

E. Staff Classifications:

1. Full-Time Employees:

- i. Full-time employees are those who are not in a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work 40 hours per week. Generally, these employees are eligible for the facility's benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program. Vacation, holidays, insurance, retirement, etc. are included in full-time employee benefits package. Payroll is computed on an hourly basis.

2. Part-Time Employees:

- i. Part-time employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than a full-time schedule (124 or less hours per month.) Part-time employees working 70-124 hours a month (for 5 months within a twelve month period) are eligible for a retirement benefit.

3. Temporary Employees:

- i. Employees hired for temporary positions lasting for less than six months, unless specified by the Director, board, or terms of a grant. Temporary employees are not eligible for paid sick leave, retirement, vacation, or holidays for the duration of the temporary position including periods extended beyond six months.

4. Introductory Employees:

- i. Introductory employees are those whose performance is being evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with the facility is appropriate. Employees who satisfactorily complete the introductory period of one year will be notified of their new employment status.

5. Exempt Employee:

- i. An Exempt employee, typically the library director, is paid on a salary basis; e.g., the employee regularly receives each pay period a predetermined amount constituting all or part of an employee's compensation, which amount is not subject to reduction because of variations. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime. Exempt employees shall not have their predetermined salary reduced during a workweek in which they perform any work exempt as does not jeopardize the employee's exempt status under federal and state law. Accrued sick or vacation leave should be used for absences of a day or more. Exempt employees will not have their salaries reduced for less than a full day absence.

F. Resignation:

1. Employees must give the Director or the Board two (2) weeks prior notice when resigning.

G. General Personnel Guidelines:

1. Personnel Records:

- i. The Director or designee shall maintain a personnel record for each employee.
- ii. The employee records shall be considered confidential and shall be accessible only to the employee, the Director, the Director's appointee, or as required by law.

2. Temporary Appointments:

- i. As a substitution for a regular employee who has taken leave of absence.
- ii. When it is necessary to fill a short term appointment which has been authorized by the Board.
- iii. When the library has been awarded a grant which includes funds for additional, temporary personnel.
- iv. Temporary employees shall serve at the discretion of the Director.

- v. No temporary appointment shall exceed six months unless a longer period is stipulated by the board or under conditions of a grant or contract.
 - vi. Not eligible for benefits unless a longer period is stipulated under conditions of a grant or by the library board.
3. Evaluations:
- i. Employees shall be evaluated yearly.
 - ii. New employees shall be evaluated frequently, ideally at three months, six months, and one year.
4. Hiring, Discipline, and Discharge:
- i. Whitman County Library is an “At Will” employer. Thus all hiring, disciplinary action, and/or discharge of employees will be based upon employee performance and will be at the discretion of the library director. Discharge can be, but is not limited to the following reasons:
 - a. Failure to meet performance standards and/or unsatisfactory performance evaluation.
 - b. Drinking intoxicating beverages, or the illegal use of drugs on the job, or arriving on the job under the influence of intoxicating beverages or drugs.
 - c. Violation of a duty.
 - d. Insubordination.
 - e. Breach of discipline.
 - f. Being absent from work without first notifying and securing permission from the employee’s supervisor.
 - g. Being habitually absent or tardy for any reason.
 - h. Misconduct.
 - i. Conviction of a felony or of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.
 - j. Using religious, political, or fraternal influence.
 - k. Accepting fees, gifts or other valuable items in the performance of the employee’s official duties for the library.
5. Restriction on Employment:
- i. Employment with the library requires an employee to conduct any and all personal matters in a manner that will bring no discredit to the library. This includes proper use of staff computers as spelled out in numbers 9 & 10 of the computer policies (see Appendix J).
 - ii. Peddling or solicitation of any kind on Library premises or during regular working hours is not allowed without the express written consent of the Director.

6. Political Activity:

- i. The rules governing political activities of employees shall follow the provisions of RCW 41.06.250 as amended by CH. 136, Laws of 1974, 1st Ex. Sess. (see Appendix P).

7. Personal Appearance and Conduct:

- i. It shall be the responsibility of all employees to represent the library to the public in a manner which shall be courteous, efficient, and helpful. They must arrive for work clean, well-groomed, and appropriately dressed.
- ii. Attitude: All employees should remember that the main function of the library is to provide service to the public. It is the duty of all employees to do this effectively and efficiently. Wholehearted cooperation with the public, your supervisor, your fellow employees, and Director is the best way to accomplish this task.

H. Absences:

1. General:

- i. Payments may be made to employees for absence during their assigned hours only for the purpose and to the extent provided in sections which deal with paid holidays, vacation, sick leave, administrative leave, civil leave, and compensatory time.
- ii. Employees shall be credited with accrued vacation and sick leave with pay at the end of each month. These hours are not available for use until earned.
- iii. All types of leave and all overtime must be approval by the Director (or designee).
- iv. The library's official work week is Sunday-Saturday and full time employees are not allowed to work more than 40 hours within that time frame unless they have the expressed written consent of the director (or designee). In such cases, overtime hours will be compensated at 1.5 times the normal rate of pay.

2. Library Closures:

- i. All branches of Whitman County Library will be closed for the following holidays (any time the holiday falls on a Saturday or Monday, the library will close on the adjacent Sunday):
 - a. New Year's Day - January 1st
 - b. Martin Luther King's Birthday - 3rd Monday of January
 - c. President's Day - 3rd Monday in February
 - d. Easter - Sunday
 - e. Memorial Day - Last Monday in May (3 day weekend)
 - f. Independence Day - July 4th
 - g. Maintenance Week – First full week each August (Mon thru Sun)
 - h. Labor Day -First Monday in September (3 day weekend)

- i. Veteran's Day - Nov. 11th
 - j. Thanksgiving – 4th Thursday in November
 - k. Friday after Thanksgiving
 - l. Christmas Eve - December 24th
 - m. Christmas - December 25th
 - n. New Year's Eve - after 3 p.m. Dec. 31st
3. Free Day:
 - i. Two free days of leave will be allotted each full-time employee per year and **MUST BE TAKEN BEFORE NOVEMBER 1** of each year.
4. Vacation:
 - i. Anniversaries will be the beginning of the year following the employee's date of employment.
 - ii. Full-time employees will receive basic vacation of 12 days per year. The Director will receive 15 vacation days per year. All full-time employees, including the Director, may carry-over only 12 vacation days into the next calendar year. Vacation and Free Days beyond 96 hours as of December 31st will be lost.
 - iii. Full-time employees and the director will be credited additional vacation time for longevity at a rate of .33 per month on the anniversary date of their full time employment.
 - iv. Upon resignation or termination of employment, eligible employees who have vacation time will be paid out up to 96 hours of that time. Employees who have accumulated vacation time that exceeds 96 hours upon resignation or termination, those hours will be lost and not paid out.
 - v. Non-benefit positions (i.e. part-time positions) will not accrue vacation.
5. Sick Leave:
 - i. Is granted to employees in order that they need not work when ill nor suffer loss of pay due to illness. It is not to be used as vacation or for any other purposes than those listed below:
 - a. Illness of the employee.
 - b. Illness in the employee's immediate family (spouse, children, dependent relatives, and foster children).
 - c. Death in the immediate family (maximum 5 days).
 - d. Other funeral attendance at the discretion of the Director.
 - e. Medical/dental appointments – time recorded by hours taken (appointments taking less than one hour will not be counted).

- f. Vacation days will not be used for illness unless all sick leave is exhausted.
 - ii. Full-time employees accumulate sick leave at the rate of 1 day per month to a maximum of 60 WORKING DAYS (480 hours) that will be carried forward into the next month. The sick leave hours of employees who have earned over 480 hours will be converted to vacation hours at a 50% rate.
 - iii. Non-benefit positions, (i.e. part-time employees) will accrue sick leave as enacted under Initiative 1433, effective 01/01/2019.
 - iv. Sick leave shall be reported at the beginning of any period of sick leave to the Director by the employee or a person designated to act for him prior to the beginning work hour. The employee or a delegate shall continue to notify the Director at reasonable intervals.
 - v. Extended illness (more than 3 days) may require a doctor's certificate UPON REQUEST from the Director.
 - vi. Sick leave may be extended under special circumstances by Board permission. With Board permission, after sick leave is exhausted, employees may take leave without pay. At the employee's option, vacation may be used as sick leave, but sick leave may not be used as vacation.
 - vii. Upon resignation or termination of employment, eligible employees who have accumulated sick leave time will lose those hours and not have them paid out. Eligible employees who take an approved leave of absence without pay from the Director may have their sick leave restored if returning to work at the same level. Eligible employees on approved leave of absence without pay have the option to receive COBRA benefits when they leave as stated in Appendix R.
 - viii. In a case where an employee is forced to take an extended sick leave which exhausts all of their accumulated sick and vacation leave, fellow employees may donate their accumulated sick or vacation leave towards this employee's sick leave on a day-for-day basis. All donations are voluntary and confidential and must be approved by the Director and properly reported to the business manager. (Added Nov. 18, 1996).
 - ix. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Please see Appendix O.
6. Administrative Leave:
- i. Administrative leave may be given to attend meetings as authorized by the Director and the Board. Such time will be counted as regular work time.
7. Leave Without Pay:
- i. Leave without pay may be granted on a case-by-case basis with permission of the Director and the Board. Unless for educational purposes, leave without pay shall not exceed six months.
 - ii. No vacation or sick leave benefits or any other benefits shall accrue while the employee is on leave of absence without pay, and the employee's anniversary date will be adjusted accordingly.

iii. Requests for leave without pay shall be made in writing to the Director and reviewed by the Board.

iv. Family & Medical Leave (FMLA/FLA) – please see Appendix Q.

8. Civil Leave:

i. Any employee who is called to jury duty or is subpoenaed to appear as a witness before any court or other public body, in any proceeding in which the employee is not a party of interest in the litigation, shall receive from the Whitman County Library his/her normal rate of pay for the time actually required to be absent from work because of such obligation. However, if such employee shall receive compensation for jury duty or as a witness, such compensation received, excluding mileage reimbursement, shall be deposited into the appropriate general county fund. Any such absence from duty shall not be considered sick or annual leave. If an employee is called to jury duty or subpoenaed as a witness in Whitman County and is dismissed prior to the end of the work shift, the employee shall report to work for the remainder of the work shift.

9. Maternity Leave:

i. Disabilities caused or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, childbirth, and recovery there-from, are, for all job related purposes, to be considered temporary disabilities, and, as such, will follow regular sick leave policy.

ii. A six week period of recovery after childbirth or related circumstances shall be considered reasonable. Sick leave and/or vacation may be used for this recovery period. Additional time off without pay may be requested if sick leave or vacation has been exhausted.

iii. To be eligible for sick leave because of childbirth or related circumstances, an employee shall give her/his employer 2 weeks notice (if possible) of her/his anticipated date of departure and intention to return.

iv. Women employees cannot categorically be denied the opportunity to work during the entire period of pregnancy, but may continue to work as long as her physician concurs in her ability to work and demands of the job are met. All points listed under "Maternity" shall apply equally to married and unmarried women and men.

10. State Industrial Compensation:

i. Any employee who is eligible for State Industrial Compensation for time off because of an "ON THE JOB" injury shall be paid sick leave in the amount of the difference between his regular pay and that paid by State Industrial after the first three days off the job. Full amount of sick leave shall be paid for the first three days. Should an employee later be paid by State Industrial for the first three days, it shall be credited to the library from money due the employee in the next payroll period.

I. Salaries and Related Benefits:

1. The Director shall make recommendations for staff wage levels and increases with the Board of Trustees reviewing and approving them annually.

2. Wage increases and/or cost of living raises are set by the Director and approved by the Board based on merit, performance of duties and the availability of funds.
3. The wage for any position will be established prior to hiring new personnel by the Director (or designee).
4. A review of staff wages in comparison to those for comparable library positions within the State of Washington should be done on a regular basis. The Director or Board may choose to adjust certain salaries to assure that the library retains quality personnel.
5. Each benefited employee of Whitman County Library will have money deducted from his/her paycheck for the following benefits: Social Security, Washington State Industrial Insurance, and, if applicable, retirement benefits through Washington Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). PERS requirements for eligibility may exclude some employees. Spouse or dependent coverage is paid for by the employee.

J. Vehicle Policy:

1. This policy is to inform each Whitman County Library employee of how the Library Automobile will be used. The Whitman County Library automobile will be used for official business only.
2. Employees shall wear a seat belt at all times while driving or riding in a Whitman County Library vehicle.
3. Employees shall track the mileage of each trip in the book provided in the vehicle.
4. No smoking is allowed in Whitman County Library vehicles.
5. Employees shall at all times observe safe driving procedures when operating a Whitman County Library owned vehicle. Employees are personally responsible for any driving infractions or fines as a result of their driving.
6. Non-employee, non-business associates shall not ride in or drive Whitman County Library vehicles without prior approval from the Director.
7. All Whitman County Library vehicles shall be equipped with the following emergency equipment:
 - i. Flashlight
 - ii. Flares
 - iii. First aid kit
 - iv. Immediately report any missing or used equipment to the Business Manager for replacement.
8. Any accident occurring in a Whitman County Library vehicle shall be reported to the Director as soon as possible and in all cases within 48 hours of occurrence.
9. Employees may not drive a Whitman County Library vehicle for Whitman County Library business without prior approval of their supervisor. Before approving a driver who is driving a Whitman County Library vehicle for the first time, the Library shall have on file the employee Driver's License number and verification of insurance.

10. Employees approved to drive on Whitman County Library business are required to inform their supervisor of any changes that may affect either their legal or physical ability to drive or their continued insurability.
11. Employees are not permitted, under any circumstances, to operate a Whitman County Library vehicle, or a personal vehicle on Library business, when any physical or mental impairment causes the employee the inability to drive safely. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, circumstances in which the employee is temporarily unable to operate a vehicle safely or legally because of injury, illness or medication.
12. Employees shall not operate any Whitman County Library vehicle at any time, or operate personal vehicles while on Library business, with any alcohol, illegal drugs or drugs that cause impairment in their blood system.
13. Employees are required to report any safety concerns about a vehicle immediately so that repairs can be made. Some examples might be brakes, lights, steering mechanisms, seatbelts, and windshield wipers.

K. Travel in a Personal Vehicle:

1. Employees and Board members will be paid mileage at a rate approved by the Board when using their personal vehicles in the course of doing library business. Director and/or Board approval is needed PRIOR TO MAKING THE TRIP.
2. In addition to the paid mileage, when traveling on library business, or for additional training, each employee is allowed food reimbursement. Lodging costs are also paid when an overnight stay is required. If the employee has a library credit card, they may use that credit card for meals and/or other travel expenses. All travel for library must be pre-approved by the director or designee.
3. Exceptions to the above mentioned policies may be negotiated with the Director and/or the Board of Trustees upon written request.
4. Employees are required to have auto insurance on any personal vehicle used for library business, as it is their auto policy that is liable in case of accident. Employees are personally responsible for any accidents, driving infractions or fines as a result of their driving.

L. Reimbursement Policy for Employee Work, Presentations, or Travel Outside Whitman County Library:

1. Employees receiving an honorarium, reimbursement, or compensation for work, presentations, or travel outside of Whitman County Library but related to their work at WCL must have such activities approved by the library director or designee.
2. Should work, presentations, or travel be on Whitman County Library time or in the library vehicle, all compensation received by employees shall be made or forwarded to WCL.
3. Should the work, presentations, or travel be on the employee's own time, vacation time, or in a personal vehicle, all compensation should remain with the employee.

M. Bereavement:

1. If any staff member or their immediate family passes away, the library may provide a memorial plate in a book of the family's choosing. This will be in lieu of a traditional floral arrangement or other memorial. The library will also provide a sympathy card signed by all available staff members.
- N. Library Closure due to Inclement Weather, Natural Disaster, Public Health Crisis, or Other Conditions:
1. It may be necessary in cases of severe weather, natural disaster, pandemic, or unforeseen events, to limit services, provide emergency services only, and/or close the library. Under such circumstances, the Director or designee will make decisions about which services should be limited, are essential, and/or to close the library. In cases where employee work hours are eliminated and/or if the library is closed under this policy, employees will be compensated as if the library were open. For those with benefits, said actions will not count against the employees' sick leave or vacation.
 2. Absence due to an employee's inability to report for scheduled work when the library is open, or providing limited or emergency services shall not be paid. The only exceptions shall be if an employee is unable to work due to the official closure of a county road or state highway, or prior approval by the library director or designee.
 3. In the event a branch manager is unable to staff the branch with a substitute or other library staff, they may close for the day, with approval from the director or designee. Employees will not be compensated for these closures.
- O. Workplace Visitors and Personal Business as Related to Library Resources and Computers
1. Workplace visits, personal phone calls and time spent discussing personal matters with fellow staff shall be considered personal time. Paid time for breaks (15 minutes for every 4 hours) can be used to cover these situations. Lunch hours can also be adjusted or work days lengthened to cover time spent with visitors, phone calls or personal employee conversations.
 2. Children, family members or other guests shall not accompany library employees to work. Occasional exceptions may be granted with prior approval from a supervisor.
 3. Misuse of public property is strictly prohibited. Employees are required to pay for library supplies, paper, photocopies, or other items for which the public is also required to pay a fee.
 4. Any action that violates the law, violates library computer policies or affects the ability of a staff computer to perform its work is strictly prohibited. Online shopping, games, personal emails and other computer uses are allowable during breaks, lunch hour or off duty hours.
 5. Staff should be sensitive to colleagues' ability to work and also to the appearance of impropriety to the public as related to their interactions and/or use of public properties. All employees should seek the advice of supervisors as needed.