

POLICY MANUAL

For

SERVICES, MATERIALS, AND EMPLOYEES

COVINGTON COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Adopted On June 6, 2025 by the

Covington County Library System Board of Trustees

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Administration	7
Foundations of the Public Library System	7
Board of Trustees and Library Director.....	7
Mission Statement	8
Vision Statement.....	8
Core Values	8
Service Area and Residency	9
Library Card Policies.....	9
Library Card Registration	9
Library Card Use.....	9
Restrictions	9
Library Materials Use Policy.....	10
Checkouts.....	10
Renewals	10
Holds	10
Interlibrary Loan.....	10
Penalties.....	11
Access to Circulation Records	12
Library Services	12
Computer Services	12
Physical Facilities.....	13
Gift Materials	13
Collection Development Policy	14
Purpose	14
Policy	14
Implementation	14
Selection.....	14
Accessibility.....	15
Special Collections.....	15

Weeding	15
Reconsideration of Library Materials.....	16
Gifts	16
Disposal of Surplus Personal Property Policy	16
Patron Conduct and Behaviors	17
Expectations of Conduct for Library Patrons	17
Unacceptable Patron Behavior Policy.....	18
Verbal Warnings that Precede Banning a Patron	18
Banning a Patron for the Remainder of the Business Day.....	18
Banning a Patron for Two or More Days	18
Banning Procedures for Repeat Offenders	18
Animals in the Library Policy	19
Background and Definitions.....	19
Service Dog.....	19
Disability.....	19
Other Species	19
Miniature Horses	19
Policy	20
Exceptions for Library Offerings.....	20
Animal Endangerment	21
Grievances.....	21
Citations and Related References	21
Safe Child and Vulnerable Person Policy	22
Definition of a Vulnerable Person.....	22
Rules and Expectations	22
Safety Measures.....	23
Meeting and Space Use Policy	24
Regulations Governing Use of the Library for Meetings.....	24
Rules of Use	24
Hold Harmless Clause	25
Security Camera Policy.....	26
Purpose	26
Access to Video Footage	26

Public Records Policy	27
EXEMPTIONS – PUBLIC RECORDS ACT OF 1983	27
PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING ACCESS TO RECORDS	28
Appeal of a Denial.....	29
REFERENCE REQUESTS AS PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS	29
COST REIMBURSEMENTS	30
Personnel Policy	31
Statement of Equal Opportunity.....	31
Classification of Positions.....	31
Salary Schedule and Payment	31
Public Employees’ Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS)	32
Health Insurance	32
Life Insurance	33
Workmen’s Compensation	33
Employee Standards of Conduct.....	34
Attendance.....	34
Attitude Towards the Public	34
Babysitting	34
Conflict of Interest	34
Conversation	35
Discussion of Library Policies, Administration, and Budget.....	35
Endorsements and Advertisements.....	35
Fees and Honorariums	35
Gifts from Vendors	35
Grooming and Dress Code	35
Reading While on Duty	35
Relationships with Other Staff	35
Salesmen and Canvassers	36
Sexual Harassment.....	36
Smoking and Tobacco Use	36
Telephone Calls.....	36
Mobile Phones	36
Work Performance.....	36

Professional Development	37
Reimbursement for Library Business Related Travel	37
Performance Appraisal	38
Promotions and Transfers	38
Social Media	39
Working Conditions	41
Work Week	41
Work Environment	41
Overtime	41
Time Sheets	41
Drug Free work Environment	42
Leaves of Absence	43
General Laws and Statements	43
Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993	43
Annual Leave	43
Major Medical Leave	44
Donated Leave	45
Administrative Leave	46
Death in the Family	47
Compensatory Time Leave	47
Emergency and Disaster Leave	47
Holidays	47
Jury/Court Witness	48
Leave Without Pay	48
Maternity/Paternity Leave	48
Military Duty	49
Religious Holidays	49
Unauthorized Leave	49
Disciplinary Action	50
First Group Offenses	50
Second Group Offenses	50
Third Group Offenses	51
Verbal Reprimand	51

Written Reprimand	51
Probationary Period	51
Suspension with Pay	52
Suspension Without Pay	52
Dismissal.....	52
Appeal	52
Separation From Service	53
Exit Interview	53
Retirement	53
Resignation.....	53
Reduction in Force (RIF)	54
Death.....	54
Release	54
Payment to Separated Employees	54
Demotions.....	54
Demotion Because of Inadequate Performance.....	54
Disciplinary Demotion.....	55
Reduction-in-Force Demotion	55
Voluntary Demotion.....	55
Volunteers.....	55
Grievance Procedure	55
Patron Comments and Complaints	56
Appendices.....	58
Appendix I – Privacy Statement	58
Appendix II – Freedom to Read Statement.....	61
Appendix III – Library Bill of Rights	64
Appendix IV – ALA Code of Ethics	65
Appendix V – Internet Safety Policy.....	66

Introduction

This manual provides information concerning the policies and governance of the Covington County Library System, hereafter referred to as CCLS. It also contains information and guidelines with respect to the rights, duties, and responsibilities of employees. It includes a summary of rules, responsibilities, and benefits all of which are subject to change. This manual is not a contract and should not in any way, form, or fashion be considered as such.

It is impossible to anticipate every situation that may occur or every policy question that may arise. CCLS reserves the right in its sole and absolute discretion to revise, supplement, interpret, or rescind any portion of the Policy Manual as they deem appropriate.

Administration

Foundations of the Public Library System

CCLS, which serves Covington County, is established in accordance with section 39-3-8 of the Mississippi Code as a joint city-county public library system. It is administered by a 5-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Covington County Board of Supervisors as per an agreement detailed in the *Resolution Establishing the Covington County Library System* dated March 11, 2011 which details the composition of the Board of Trustees and in according with Section 39-3-15 of the Mississippi Code which established the qualifications and terms of the Board of Trustees.

Board of Trustees and Library Director

The Board of Trustees employees and oversees a Library Director in accordance with Section 39-3-17 of the Mississippi Code who shall have such educational qualifications as are prescribed by the Mississippi Library Commission. The Library Director shall administer and established procedures according to policies established by the administrative Board of Trustees. His or her duties shall include employment of staff with the approval of the Board of Trustees; prescription of staff duties; removal of staff for cause; preparation of the budget; financial and statistical management; reporting to Board of Trustees; and other acts necessary for the orderly and efficient administration of the library system.

Mission Statement

The Covington County Library System connects and enriches lives in our community by providing equitable access to a wide range of information resources, programs, equipment, and services that encourage literacy and lifelong learning as well as support educational, cultural, creative, and recreational community activities.

Vision Statement

A connected, creative, and engaged community coming together for growth and enrichment.

Core Values

Accountability – We are accountable to our patrons, our peers in the library, and our community.

Community Focused – We provide support for educational, civic, and cultural groups and organizations in our community. We also assist in efforts to preserve local history in conjunction with local historical and genealogical groups.

Honesty, Trust, Integrity, and Respect – In our actions and attitudes, we treat each other and our patrons as they would like to be treated, recognizing the richness and qualities each of us brings to the workforce and community.

Intellectual Freedom and Access – We are committed to providing open access to library resources which interest, inform, and enlighten all people in our community. Our collections, print and electronic, represent diverse points of view and are available to all citizens regardless of economic status, education, ethnicity, or physical condition.

Open and Free Communication – We communicate openly from the bottom to the top, from the top to the bottom, and with our community. The library provides a medium for involvement, creativity, and encouragement for all staff and patrons.

Standards of Excellence – We want our library to be the best possible for our community. We work together in a spirit of cooperation, supporting each other's efforts to develop their skills to better provide quality services to our community.

Service Area and Residency

CCLS serves all residents of Covington County. Residency is determined by physical address of residence and tax record. A patron from outside of Covington County seeking to get a library card with CCLS may get an out-of-county card for a recurring annual fee. Recognizing that many of our close neighbors work, shop and otherwise contribute to our community, residents of the following zip codes (39111, 39116, 39168, 39480, 39459, 39402, 39482, 39421, 39474, and 39140) may obtain a card without paying said fee. Additionally, any teacher working in a Covington County school may obtain a card regardless of residence.

Library Card Policies

Library Card Registration

In order to checkout materials and use some library services, individuals must apply for a library card with CCLS. The documents required at the time of library card registration are:

- A government-issued ID
 - Social Security Card, Driver's License or state issued ID, Military ID
- Proof of Residence
 - Current utility statement, checkbook or mail with name/address, tax receipt, etc.
 - Alternatively, the government-issued ID may be used as proof of residence if current

An individual must be at least 5 years old in order to apply for a library card. Children aged 5-17 must have a parent or legal guardian present the above required documentation.

If a patron has lost a card a replacement may be obtained for a fee.

Library Card Use

By obtaining a library card the patron agrees to accept responsibility for library materials checked out to the patron's account and agrees to abide by CCLS' *Expectations of Conduct for Library Patrons* found later in this section.

In order to check out materials a patron must present their library card or picture identification at time of checkout. If a patron wishes a family member or friend to conduct library business on his or her behalf, the family member or friend must have that patron's library card in order to do so. Possession of a library card is understood as permission to use the card unless that card has been reported lost or stolen to CCLS.

Restrictions

CCLS reserves the right to deny or limit its usage and/or services to groups or individuals who make excessive demands on library resources and staff. CCLS further reserves the right to limit the number of items checked out by one person at any given time including items in heavily used subject areas.

Patrons with unpaid fees cannot check out materials or use public access computers until the balance is paid in full or arrangements to make payments on a regular basis are made with the library system.

Organizations

Organizations such as schools, senior centers, daycares or other similar facilities located within Covington County may apply for an organization card. Such organizations may check out up to 30 materials for 90-day periods in order to provide them to their residents or students. The organization will be responsible for lost or damaged materials checked out to their card. To apply for such a card, a representative of the organization should complete a registration form and provide a short letter on company letterhead signed by an individual with fiscal authority and responsibility for the organization authorizing the creation of an account.

Library Materials Use Policy

Checkouts

Patrons may checkout up to ten (10) print or audio materials at any given time for fourteen (14) days and up to two (2) video materials at any given time for fourteen (14) days with a limit of ten (10) total items checked out at one time.

Renewals

Patrons are allowed to renew any print or audio materials they have checked out. They may do this in person, over the phone, through our online catalog, or by email. Renewals will be rejected if another patron has placed a hold on the item in question.

A renewal may be requested but is subject to rejection for interlibrary loan materials based on the decision of the lending library.

Holds

A patron may place a hold on any item that is allowed to circulate. They may do this in person, over the phone, through our online catalog, or through email. An item is generally held for one week. If the patron does not pick up the item within that time it is rolled over to the next patron with a hold on that item or placed back on the shelf.

In extenuating circumstances, such as illness or hospital stay, a patron may call and request additional time to pick up materials.

Interlibrary Loan

A patron may request a title that is not available in any of the branches of CCLS or through interlibrary loan. This service is offered at no cost. Patrons not in good standing with CCLS do not have access to interlibrary loan services. Patrons requesting interlibrary loan materials are responsible for any fees enforced by the lending library for late return or loss of materials.

Restrictions on interlibrary loan may be placed on patrons that request materials but do not pick them up. Additionally, a non-pickup fee will be assessed to their account. Abuse or excessive use of interlibrary loan may, at the Library Director's discretion, result in an individual patron's access to this service being barred or limited.

Penalties

CCLS does not financially penalize patrons for returning materials late. If materials are returned in the condition they were checked out in the patron will remain in good standing with the system.

Penalties will be assessed for damaged, destroyed, or lost materials. Patrons will be assessed a fee for damaged materials appropriate to the damage caused – assuming the material can still be used. If the materials are damaged to the point of disuse, the patron will be assessed the replacement cost of the material including processing costs.

No additional items may be checked out while a patron has overdue materials on their account.

Access to Circulation Records

CCLS follows the American Library Association policy on confidentiality of library records and will not make inquiry into the purposes for which a patron requests information. Any records made in loaning books or in answering reference questions are for the sole and express purpose of protecting public property. If a staff member receives a request for information relating to circulation or registration records, the following procedure should be utilized:

1. The staff member receiving the request to examine or obtain information relating to circulation or registration records will explain the policy on confidentiality. If the person or group making the request is not satisfied and insists on repeating demands, the staff member should immediately refer the person making the request to the Library Director who shall explain further the confidentiality policy.
2. If further action is desired, the Library Director, upon receipt of such process, order, or subpoena, shall consult with the Board of Trustees to determine if such process, order, or subpoena is in good form and if there is a showing of good cause for its issuance.
3. If the process, order, or subpoena is not in proper form or if good cause has not been shown, insistence shall be made that such defects be cured before any records are released.
4. Any threats or unauthorized demands concerning circulation or registration records shall be reported to the Library Director.
5. Any problems relating to the privacy of circulation or registration records which are not provided for above shall be referred to the Library Director. Under no circumstances should any information from patron files or about patrons be given to anyone by staff.

Library Services

CCLS will select and organize materials for easy public access to books, equipment, programs, and services that best meet the needs and demands of the community. Staff will be trained to provide guidance for patrons in obtaining the information they need.

CCLS recognizes the need to constantly assess, update, and occasionally discontinue services and materials based on changing community needs and interests. Efforts will always be made to spend library funding in a way that best represents the entirety of Covington County residents and not unduly serve any particular demographic or interest group.

Computer Services

CCLS provides public access computers to registered patrons in good standing at all branches. Computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis with set session times. No child under the age of five years old may use a networked computer. Patrons are responsible for adhering to the library's *Expectations of Conduct for Library Patrons* while utilizing library computers. Out-of-county patrons may use a computer upon showing a picture ID showing an out-of-county residence for incidental usage. If an out-of-county patron attempts to use a computer regularly, they will be required to get a "computer-use only" library card.

Patrons will be responsible for any damage done to library computers. Per Mississippi Code Section 97-5-29, it is illegal to publicly display graphic, obscene, or pornographic materials and users accessing this material will have their sessions ended. Continued misuse or abuse of library computers can result in a patron having their computer privileges entirely revoked.

Physical Facilities

CCLS has a responsibility to see that the public library facilities are maintained in a manner that meets qualifications necessary for modern library services. Facilities are maintained in cooperation with the cities of Collins, Seminary and Mount Olive as well as Covington County and should be presented in a manner so as to invite patrons to enter, access, and utilize all resources.

Gift Materials

CCLS accepts gifts in the form of materials and books, money, real property, stock certificates, and/or other forms of gifts as allowable by Mississippi law.

Books and other materials donated to CCLS become the sole property of CCLS and are accepted as donations to be added to the collection, donated to legal fundraising affiliates of CCLS (such as Friends of the Library organizations), or disposed of as deemed appropriate.

Gifts of money, real property, stock certificates, and/or other forms of donations will be accepted if conditions attached to such gifts are acceptable to the Board of Trustees and other governing bodies.

The library will not accept materials that are not outright gifts with the exception of special exhibits or collections which, upon approval of the Library Director, may be set up by the owner for a limited, specified period of time at the owner's risk. CCLS reserves the right to decline any gift.

Collection Development Policy

Purpose

Providing a wide array of materials is an essential way CCLS serves its patrons. The purpose of this policy is to state the criteria the library uses to develop and maintain its collection.

Policy

CCLS selects material to support its mission, vision, and values. The library upholds the freedom to read as stated by the American Library Association in the Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement and protected by the 1st Amendment of the US Constitution.

- CCLS will select materials of interest to all members of the community, reflecting a variety of interests, viewpoints, ages, backgrounds, and education levels.
- CCLS does not restrict selection based on the expressed opinion of an individual or group.
- Parents and legal guardians have sole responsibility for what their children read, view, or hear. Only parents and guardians may restrict their own children's access to library materials. Selection of library materials will not be restricted by the possibility that materials could come into a child's possession.
- Access to the collection will not be limited or denied because of origin, race, religion, age, background, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or political views and affiliations. These factors shall also not be cause to exclude any materials, authors, or other creators from the collection.

Implementation

Selection

The collection is for patrons of all ages, backgrounds, interests, education, and opinions. It will therefore reflect the diversity of the community it serves while also working within the realities of CCLS' collection space and budget. The responsibility for selection and weeding is vested in the Library Director and, under his or her direction, in staff qualified by pertinent expertise and experience. To select materials for purchase the following criteria will be used:

- Popular appeal/usage
- Timeliness
- Contemporary significance
- Favorable reviews
- Accuracy
- Quality of writing
- The authority and reputation of the author(s) and publisher(s)
- Nominated or received awards or honors
- Price and format
- Local or regional significance
- Inclusion on recommended lists (e.g. those compiled by professional organizations)
- Media tie-ins

Additionally:

- Not all selection materials criteria may apply equally to all content or formats
- Selection of materials does not imply agreement with or approval of the viewpoints expressed
- Materials are evaluated as a whole work and not by selected passages or scenes
- Individual items which may be considered controversial or offensive by some may be selected if it will contribute to the overall variety and balance of the collection
- CCLS does not offer textbooks or other school curriculum and in general does not duplicate resources provided by academic and special libraries
- Staff use a wide variety of selection resources including, but not limited to, professional journals, popular media, publishing trends, local interests, patron recommendations, and circulation data
- Patron recommendations are welcomed and evaluated by the criteria listed above.

Accessibility

CCLS will not restrict access to any library materials in public areas

- All library cardholders may check out materials in accordance with circulation policies and procedures
- Materials are labeled only by classification or as a directional aid
- Children, young adult, and adult collections are differentiated based on reading level, language comprehension, and audience. These collections may be housed in designated areas to aid in discovery
- Determining the appropriateness of materials for minors is the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian
- Some materials are designated for use in the library only

Special Collections

CCLS maintains several collections that are specialized, rare, not readily available elsewhere, and/or of special interest to our community.

- Examples of special collections include genealogy, government documents, microfilm, Mississippi reference and local history
- Special collections are established and maintained by library administration based on space, funding, local interest, and other criteria
- Many items in these collections require special handling due to their age and/or uniqueness. The goal is to provide access to these items while also preserving them for continued use
- CCLS does not house private collections unless the collection is presented as a gift and it meets the necessary criteria for inclusion

Weeding

CCLS staff removes worn, dated, and damaged items from the collection through procedures known as weeding. This process helps maintain the quality of the library collections. When weeding, staff considers the selection criteria in this policy. Weeded materials are disposed of through a combination of donation to the Friends of the Library organization, recycling, and other donations as possible. These materials may be disposed of through book sales, giveaways, or recycling.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

CCLS recognizes that full information about issues of public concern requires access to resources that represent all those concerns. CCLS also recognizes the right of individuals to question both materials selected by the library and those that are not. Individuals who wish an item to be removed or reconsidered may fill out a *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials* form which will be reviewed by library administration. Materials under review will remain in the circulation collection until a determination is made.

Gifts

CCLS accepts gifts to enhance library services through materials. Money gifts are the responsibility of the Library Director. Material gifts are subject to the evaluation criteria stated in this policy. Processing costs and shelving limits are also considered before adding materials. Donations are accepted with the understanding that CCLS has the right to determine the disposition of gift items. Materials not accepted by the CCLS are offered to the Friends of the Library for book sales.

Disposal of Surplus Personal Property Policy

Personal property, for the purposes of this policy, includes equipment, furniture, vehicles, and other commodities, as opposed to real property. The Board of Trustees has the authority to sell or dispose of any personal property belonging to the library when the property has ceased to be used for public purposes or when, in the Board's judgment, a sale would promote the best interest of the library.

The Board shall declare items to be disposed of as surplus property, and the items should be listed in the minutes of the meeting. After the items have been declared surplus, the Board may choose to offer them at public sale. Such a sale should be advertised by posting notices at 3 public places in Covington County, one of which shall be the R E Blackwell Memorial Library, at least 10 days prior to the sale. Items that do not exceed \$500 in value may be sold at a private sale by unanimous vote of the Board. No Board member or library employee may buy property at a private sale.

The Board may sell or dispose of any surplus personal property at a public auction that shall be conducted by an auctioneer or auction company that meets the standards established by the State Department of Audit and is hired by the Board.

If the Board determines that the fair-market value of the items is zero, and this finding is entered on the minutes of the Board meeting, then the Board may dispose of such property in the manner it deems appropriate and in the best interest of the library, but no Board member or employee of the library shall derive any personal economic benefit from such disposal.

If the property may be of use or benefit to any federal agency or authority, another governing authority or state agency of the State of Mississippi, or a state agency or governing authority of another state, it may be disposed of in accordance with Mississippi Code Section 31-7-13(m)(vi).

The provisions of section 19-7-5 of the Mississippi Code 1972, Annotated and any future changes shall prescribe the way disposal of personal property is handled by the Board.

Patron Conduct and Behaviors

Expectations of Conduct for Library Patrons

1. Be respectful of staff and other patrons
2. Theft, mutilation, or failure to return library materials is a crime punishable by Mississippi law
3. Do not inhibit others' usage of the library
4. No profanity, verbal or otherwise
5. Do not disturb others with loud talk or cell phone usage
6. Use the library, its furnishings, and grounds appropriately, including public restrooms
7. Shirts, pants, and shoes must be worn
8. No smoking, smoking devices, or other tobacco usage in the library. Use of incense, candles, or other fragranced and/or burning materials is prohibited.
9. No alcohol or drug usage while in the library
10. You are responsible for the security of any personal items at all times
11. No soliciting, panhandling, or gambling
12. Food and drinks are limited in the library: only drinks in fully enclosed containers (bottles, travel mugs, etc.) and light dry snacks (chips, candies, etc.) are allowed. Exceptions may be made for events held in the Collins meeting room at the Library Director's discretion.
13. Circulation of petitions, pamphlets, or advertising is prohibited without approval of the Library Director. Distribution of political campaign materials is prohibited in the library
14. Parents are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children (see *Safe Child and Vulnerable Person Policy*)
15. Patrons are expected to adhere to CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

Violation of these expectations may lead to being asked to leave the library, having library privileges revoked, and/or contacting local authorities.

Unacceptable Patron Behavior Policy

Banning a patron from CCLS is a last resort used only after a patron has violated the CCLS *Expectations of Conduct for Library Patrons* or other CCLS policies. Patrons with multiple or serious warnings concerning violation of the *Expectations of Conduct* may be banned from the library for a time period ranging from the remainder of a business day to a permanent ban. Anyone engaging in illegal activities or violent, abusive, or threatening behaviors will be evicted immediately and banned for a significant period of time. The authority for banning a patron rests with the Library Director and/or the CCLS Board of Trustees. In the absence of the Library Director, the Person in Charge may ban a patron for the remainder of the business day. A patron banned from one CCLS branch is banned from all CCLS library branches. All staff are instructed to call 911 or the appropriate agency if any incident in the library requires emergency personnel.

Verbal Warnings that Precede Banning a Patron

Each verbal warning issued to a patron for behavior that could lead to banning will be documented in the comment field of the patron's library account and an incident report shall be filed with the Library Director. In the case that the patron does not have a library account, only the incident report shall be filed.

Banning a Patron for the Remainder of the Business Day

Each incident of banning a patron for the remainder of the day will be documented in an incident report and noted in the patron's library account. In the absence of the Library Director, this process is executed by the Person in Charge.

Banning a Patron for Two or More Days

- Patron should be banned for the remainder of the day of the incident
- Staff involved in the incident will fill out an incident report and have a meeting with the Library Director to decide the length of the banned period after reviewing all documentation and security cameras, if necessary.
- After a decision is made regarding the length of the banned period, the Library Director will block the patron's library account, make a note in the account as to why it is blocked, and send a letter by certified mail to the patron. A copy of the letter will be given to the staff at each branch library. In cases of illegal, violent, or abusive behavior, the letter will be given to the local authorities as well.
- Patrons guilty of illegal, violent, or abusive behavior may be banned permanently.

Banning Procedures for Repeat Offenders

Repeat offenders may be banned for varying amounts of time, decided by the Library Director.

2nd Offense: The Library Director will review documentation and if the patron is deemed in violation of library policy, the patron's privileges will be blocked. The Library Director may meet with the patron to discuss the behavior. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

3rd Offense: If the patron's library privileges are reinstated and the behavior continues, the patron may be banned for six months or as much as a year.

4th Offense: A permanent ban is considered if patron's behavior/violation of library policies continues.

Animals in the Library Policy

CCLS recognizes that patrons with disabilities may have service dogs that are trained to assist or accommodate a person with a sensory, mental, or physical disability or to perform tasks for the benefit of a disabled individual. The CCLS recognizes legal rights under federal and state laws regarding use of service dogs. The CCLS also considers the safety and health of all its patrons, the public, and library staff to be of utmost priority.

Background and Definitions

Service Dog

Dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities (Americans with Disabilities Act).

Examples of such work or tasks include: guiding people who are blind; alerting people who are deaf; pulling a wheelchair; alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure; reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications; calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack; or performing other duties.

Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks. Beginning on March 15, 2011, only dogs are recognized as service animals under Titles II and III of the ADA.

Disability

The term "disability" means, with respect to an individual:

- a) A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual;
- b) A record of such an impairment; or
- c) Being regarded as having such an impairment.

If an individual meets any one of these three tests, he or she is considered to be an individual with a disability for purposes of coverage under the ADA.

Other Species

Under RCW 49.60.218, other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained, or untrained, are not service animals, except for miniature horses.

Miniature Horses

Notwithstanding the limitation of only dogs being recognized as service animals, federal regulations do allow the consideration of a miniature horse to also be recognized as a lawful service animal. Therefore, an individual with a disability may be allowed to utilize a miniature horse as a service animal, subject to all restrictions stated in this policy, but also subject to additional considerations. When determining whether to allow a miniature horse to function as a service animal, the CCLS may consider the following before permission is granted to utilize a miniature horse as a service animal.

- a) The horse in question may be no more than 34 inches tall measured at its shoulder and it may weigh no more than 100 pounds.
- b) As with dogs, the horse must have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.
- c) As with dogs, the handler of the horse must be able to be in sufficient control of the horse and the horse must be housebroken.
- d) The presence of the horse may not compromise legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for the safe operation of library service.

Policy

No pets or animals other than service dogs, miniature horses (see sections 2.1 and 2.4), or service dogs/minature horses in training, are allowed in the library. Owners of pets will be asked to remove them from the library.

Individuals with disabilities may bring their service dogs into all areas of the library where members of the public are normally allowed to go. All service dogs must be under the full custody and control of their handler at all times. Also, all service dogs must be on a leash or harness at all times unless the handler is unable to leash or harness the dog because of a disability or use of a leash or harness would interfere with the dog's safe, effective performance of work or tasks. If the service dog cannot be leashed or harnessed, it must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means). Owners of the service dog are solely responsible for the supervision and care of the service dog. Therefore, owners must keep the service dog directly with them at all times.

Users of service dogs are not required to show papers or to prove a disability. Service dogs are not required to be licensed or certified by a state or local government or training program or be identified by a special harness or collar.

Staff may ask two questions: (1) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform? Owners of service dogs or service dogs in training will indicate that they are working dogs and not pets. Terms used may include assistance, service, guide, hearing, or helping dog. Staff may not ask about the owner's disability.

A person with a disability may not be asked to remove his or her service dog or service dog in training from the library unless the presence, behavior or actions of the service dog constitutes an unreasonable risk of injury or harm to property or other persons, or the dog is disruptive, and the owner does not take effective action to control it. In these cases, library staff must give the person with the disability the option to obtain library services without having the service dog or service dog in training on the premises. Fear of allergies, annoyance on the part of other patrons or employees, or fear of dogs are generally not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people with service dogs or service dogs in training.

Exceptions for Library Offerings

Pending approval by the Director or his/her designee, the CCLS may have animals in the building as part of its educational and recreational offerings.

Animal Endangerment

CCLS does not condone leaving non-service animals outside the library in a way that may endanger the animal or Library patrons. The CCLS reserves the right to contact the police regarding any unattended animals on its premises. The CCLS also reserves the right to ban patrons who endanger animals in such a way, in accordance with the Library's Safety Policy and Suspension of Patron Access Policy.

Grievances

The CCLS is committed to the equitable use of the CCLS for all its patrons. Any patron who feels their use of the CCLS has been compromised due to this policy should report grievances to the Director or his/her designee.

Citations and Related References

- i) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Title II, Section 35.136 (Revised September 15, 2010); Beginning on March 5, 2011, only dogs are recognized as service animals under Titles II and III of the ADA.
- ii) RCW 49.60.218, Use of guide dog or service animal

Safe Child and Vulnerable Person Policy

Definition of a Vulnerable Person

Section 43-47-5 of the Mississippi Code defines “vulnerable person” as follows:

“Vulnerable person” means a person, whether a minor or adult, whose ability to perform the normal activities of daily living or to provide for his or her own care or protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation or improper sexual contact is impaired due to a mental, emotional, physical, or developmental disability or dysfunction, or brain damage or the infirmities of aging.

Rules and Expectations

We want CCLS to be a welcoming, safe place for children and vulnerable persons. Our staff has many duties to perform in order to serve all patrons in the best way possible. For this reason, the staff cannot monitor the whereabouts or behaviors of children or vulnerable persons. Staff cannot assume the responsibility of your children’s or vulnerable person’s care when they are in the library. No public space, including the library, can guarantee the safety of a child or vulnerable person. A child or vulnerable person could be approached by a stranger, become ill, wander outside, or become lost or injured. We are primarily concerned with their safety, and we believe that our policy helps assure their well-being.

We expect parents/caregivers to be responsible for their child’s or vulnerable person’s behavior in the library. We expect parents/caregivers to understand and explain the library rules to their children or vulnerable persons. The rules and policies have been developed to safeguard the collection and ensure fairness for all library users.

We require all children under the age of 8 to be accompanied by an adult at all times while visiting the library. Persons of any age with special needs affecting decision-making must be accompanied by a parent/caregiver at all times. Children 8 and older may be left unattended provided they understand and follow the rules of the library.

The library in no way assumes responsibility for any child or vulnerable person left unattended in the building. We expect all children, teens, and vulnerable persons to use appropriate language and behavior in the library. Those who do not will be asked to leave.

We expect parents/caregivers to set reasonable time limits for their children’s or vulnerable person’s library visits. Parents/caregivers must remain in the library during programs if their child is under 8 years of age.

We expect parents/caregivers to let us know if they, their children, or vulnerable persons are unable to find the type of material they seek. We welcome suggestions for materials that will broaden our collection and improve our services.

We expect parents/caregivers to be responsible for the types of materials checked out by their children or vulnerable persons and their selection choices. The library does not limit choices or censor materials.

We expect parents to see that any fines or fees are promptly paid. Parents are fiscally responsible for any damages to library materials, equipment, or property incurred by their children.

We expect parents/caregivers to maintain control of their children or vulnerable persons while visiting the library – this includes times when parent/caregiver is using a computer. Please remember that the library staff's professional duties do not include babysitting.

We expect parents to help their children arrive on time for programs. We expect parents who attend children's programming with their children to demonstrate good listening habits.

We expect parents/caregivers of children or vulnerable persons to have a responsible plan for picking up children or vulnerable persons by closing time.

We expect parents/caregivers to keep sick children or vulnerable persons at home and not bring them to the library, especially during children's programming when illness may easily be spread to others.

Safety Measures

A parent/caregiver is defined as someone 16 years and older.

If a child under the age of 8 or vulnerable adult is found unattended while the library is open, library staff will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver in the library. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, local authorities will be called and the child or vulnerable adult will be placed in their care.

Within 30 minutes of closing time, library staff will conduct a walkthrough both inside and outside of the library building to ensure that children above the age of 8 have transportation home. If necessary, library staff will assist children in calling parents/caregivers.

If a child or vulnerable person has not been picked up by a parent/caregiver by closing time, local officials will be called and staff will remain with the child/vulnerable person until placed in their care.

If a child or vulnerable person is found unattended when the library is open and the child or vulnerable person has become ill or frightened, has become disruptive and will not respond to verbal warnings from library staff, is upset because of weather conditions, long hours out of contact with the parent/caregiver, or other special circumstances, local authorities may be called and the child or vulnerable person may be placed in their care.

After a child or vulnerable person has been placed in the care of local authorities, the staff will leave notes about a child or vulnerable person's whereabouts at the front desk. If after library operating hours a parent/caregiver will need to contact local authorities.

All children and vulnerable persons should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in the case of an emergency.

Under no circumstances will a staff member give a child or vulnerable person a ride home or remain in the building alone after closing with an unattended child or vulnerable person. When possible, two staff should wait with the child or vulnerable person outside.

Parents/caregivers who disregard library policy regarding this matter may be reported to the appropriate social services agency and may lose all library privileges.

Library staff will report to local authorities or an appropriate social service agency immediately if and when it becomes apparent that a child or vulnerable person is being neglected, abused, or exploited.

Meeting and Space Use Policy

Regulations Governing Use of the Library for Meetings

The library may be used for activities sponsored by both non-profit and for-profit organizations. Sales of merchandise and fundraising at these activities shall not be permitted with exception made for book sales and official library author events.

A reservation for the meeting room is required. Reservations may be made at the Collins circulation desk and must be approved by the manager or Library Director prior to use of the meeting room.

Priority for use of the meeting room is decided in the following order:

- Library/Friends of the Library events
- Local non-profit groups
- Other non-profit groups
- All others

While use of the library as a meeting space will be provided free of charge the organization utilizing the space will be held responsible for cleaning up behind themselves and leaving the library in the condition they found it in upon arrival. If an organization fails to clean up after themselves a janitorial fee may be assessed in the amount of \$100. The organization will be barred from continued use of the meeting space until the fee is paid in full.

Organizations may bring in equipment for meetings and workshops. It is not, however, the responsibility of library staff to move equipment or arrange tables and chairs. Alteration of electrical and audio service panels or equipment is prohibited. Decorations or displays may not be affixed to the interior or exterior of the library without prior approval of the Library Director. Organizations must ensure proper supervision of all activities at all times.

Rules of Use

All organizations must abide by the library's policy of non-discrimination and shall not deny access to any individual on the basis of origin, race, religion, age, background, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or political views and affiliations.

The following are prohibited activities on library property:

- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages
- Use or consumption of any tobacco product, including vaping
- Gambling or other games of chance
- Political campaigning
- Religious proselytizing
- Hate speech of any kind

Disorderly conduct and willful destruction of library property will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Violation of these rules can result in the organization's denial for future use of the library facilities. The Library Director may refuse an organization the right to use the library if he or she deems that use

constitutes a danger to participants, is illegal, is likely to place CCLS in an untenable position, or is in violation of this policy.

Hold Harmless Clause

CCLS and the Board of Trustees shall be held harmless by any organizations utilizing the library facilities and will not be held liable for accidents and behaviors on the premises.

Security Camera Policy

Purpose

CCLS will use security cameras to enhance the safety and security of library patrons, staff, and property while also protecting individuals' right to privacy. Security cameras will be used where needed to discourage violations of CCLS' library policies and when necessary will provide law enforcement assistance in prosecuting criminal activity. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the placement and use of video cameras as well as the access and retrieval of recorded images at all CCLS branches.

Cameras may be installed in locations where staff and patrons would not have an expectation of privacy. Examples include common areas of the library such as entrances, near book and media collections, computer stations, public seating, delivering areas, and parking lots. Cameras will not be installed in areas where staff and public have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms.

Access to Video Footage

A stored video recording is considered a library record pursuant to section 39-3-365 of the Mississippi Code and only released consistent with that code. Authorized individuals may release a still shot or selected portions of recorded data to law enforcement review for assessing the security risk of a specific individual or for investigating a crime on library property.

For investigations initiated by law enforcement agencies, recorded data will be made available to law enforcement upon presentation of a valid court order establishing probable cause to review the data. Any such review by law enforcement will be with the knowledge and approval of the Library Director.

In all other respects, recorded data will be accorded the same level of confidentiality and protection provided to library users by Mississippi law and CCLS policies on confidentiality and privacy.

Public Records Policy

In accordance with 39-3-365 of the Mississippi Code 1972, Annotated, records containing information related to the identity of a library user and pertaining to the user's use of library books and other materials in any branch of the Covington County Library System are confidential and shall only be released with the written consent of the user, or as a response to a duly served court order.

The Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983, as located in 25-61-1 to 25-61-17 in the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated is adopted as policy and referenced by CCLS. Unless exempted by 25-61-9, 25-61-11, 39-3-365 or in the sections, all public records held by CCLS are declared to be public property, and any person shall have the right to inspect, copy, or mechanically reproduce or obtain a reproduction of any such record as outlined by the following procedures.

Records furnished to CCLS and housed in any branch by a third party, unless declared exempt under the above listed sections of the Mississippi Code of 1972, annotated, shall also be released upon request by the public. Reasonable attempts will be made to notify third parties of public record requests concerning the specific records of said third party.

EXEMPTIONS – PUBLIC RECORDS ACT OF 1983

The availability of all records in the possession of CCLS shall be subject to the following limitations:

1. Personnel records and applications for employment and letters of recommendation for employment in possession of CCLS, except those which may be released to the person who filed the application, or released upon prior written approval of the person who filed the application, shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act, 25-1-100.
2. Test questions or answers which are used in employment exams or competency tests for the purpose of completing annual evaluations and in possession of CCLS except for those that may be released to the person who filed the application, or released upon prior written approval of the person who filed the application, shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act, 25-1-100.
3. Records which represent and constitute the work product of any attorney, district attorney, or county prosecuting attorney representing CCLS and related to any litigation made by or against CCLS, or in anticipation of potential litigation, including communications between the attorney and CCLS made in the course of attorney-client relationship shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act, 25-1-102.
4. Records in the possession of CCLS which would reveal information about a person's individual tax payment or status shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act, 27-3-77.
5. Appraisal information in the possession of CCLS which pertains to the sale or purchase of real or personal property for public purposes prior to the announcement of the purchase or sale, where the release of such information could be detrimental to such sales or purchases shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act, 31-1-27.
6. Letters of Recommendation concerning admission to any education institution which are in the possession of CCLS shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act, 37-11-51.
7. Records in the possession of CCLS which contain information concerning the location of any specific archeological site, which in the opinion of CCLS could upon disclosure, create a substantial risk of damage or destruction to the historical value of the archeological site or

create a substantial risk of damage to private property rights, shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act, 39-7-41.

8. Records in possession of CCLS which are not otherwise protected by law that (1) are compiled in the process of detecting and investigating any unlawful activity or alleged unlawful activity, disclosure of which would hamper or harm any investigation or detection efforts in such proceedings; (2) would reveal the identity of informants; (3) would prematurely release information which would hamper CCLS' enforcement, investigation, or detection in such proceedings; (4) would disclose investigatory techniques; (5) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication; (6) would endanger the life or safety of any CCLS personnel; (7) are matters pertaining to the quality control or PEER review activities, shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act, 45-29-1.

PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING ACCESS TO RECORDS

Public access to CCLS non-exempt records will require the following procedures:

1. Written Request

Individuals wanting to obtain access to public records information in the possession of CCLS should make a written request, signed by the individual or authorized agent, either by mail to the Director of CCLS at PO Box 1539, Collins MS 39428 or in person at the CCLS administrative office located at 403 S Fir Ave Collins, MS 39428 during publicly open hours of the R E Blackwell Memorial Library. Requests for public records shall be received and the request acted upon during regular business hours. The written request and the envelope must be marked "Request for Public Records" in the lower left hand corner of the envelope. Failure to mark the request may delay responses by CCLS.

The written request must describe in reasonable detail the records sought. The request should include a description of the type of records, dates, and any other information that may be helpful to locating the records.

The written request shall: specify whether the party requesting the records wants to access the record by personally inspecting the record or wants photocopies of the records; specify when the party requesting the records will be present to personally inspect the records; state the number of persons who will be inspecting the records, and provide the name, address, home and office telephone numbers of the party requesting the records.

2. Production of Records or Denial of Access

The Director of CCLS shall determine, with consultation with any legal counsel that may be deemed necessary, are exempt and shall either produce the records or provide access to the records, or deny access to or production of the records sought within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the request.

If the Director of CCLS determines that the records requested are exempt or privileged by law, the Director shall deny the request and send the party requesting the records a written

statement detailing the specific reasons for denying the request for the records. When possible, CCLS, will maintain separate files for non-exempt and exempt materials, and only exempt materials shall be withheld (25-61-1). Such denials shall be kept on file for a period of three (3) years and be made available for inspection and/or copying during regular working hours by any person upon written request (25-61-5).

Individuals provided access to the records may view the records during regular publicly open hours of the R E Blackwell Memorial Library under the supervision of an CCLS administrative representative. Those records which the party wants to have copied shall be marked by the individual and the staff person will reproduce copies of the records. No records, only reproductions, shall leave the premises of the CCLS headquarters.

Appeal of a Denial

If the public records request is denied, the party requesting the records may appeal the decision under the following procedures:

3. The requesting party has thirty (30) calendar days from the receipt of CCLS' response to appeal the denial.
4. The appeal shall be submitted in writing to the Director of CCLS for consideration by the Board of Trustees for a final administrative decision.
5. The appeal must contain a copy of the original request, the written statement of denial, and the justification for reconsideration of the denial.
6. The appeal and the envelope must be marked, "Public Records Appeal" in the lower left hand corner of the envelope. Failure to mark the envelope may delay a response from the Board of Trustees.
7. The Board of Trustees will instruct the Director to prepare and issue a written decision granting or denying the appeal within sixty (60) working days after the receipt of the appeal, unless after showing good cause, the Board extends the sixty (60) day period. If the appeal is granted, the requesting party must begin the procedures detailed in item a. under PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING ACCESS TO RECORDS. If the appeal is denied, in its entirety or in part, the decision will include the reasons for the denial.

REFERENCE REQUESTS AS PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

The branches of CCLS are resource libraries containing bibliographic collections that routinely receive reference requests for information. Occasionally, a request submitted as a reference request is actually a public records request. In those instances, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The staff member receiving the request will transmit the request to the Director for review and determination that it is indeed a request for public records.
2. After the determination that the reference question is actually a request for public records, the Director will return the reference request to the party or parties who submitted the reference question, with instructions as to how the request should be submitted as a public records request.

3. The party submitting the reference request as a public records request will be required to follow the procedures in PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING ACCESS TO RECORDS.

COST REIMBURSEMENTS

CCLS establishes a schedule of cost reimbursements to compensate the library system for cost incurred in searching, overseeing, reproducing, and if required, mailing copies of public records. Reimbursement costs are subject to change.

1. Reimbursement schedule:
 - a. No reimbursement, except for reproduction costs, packing, and mailing costs shall be charged if the request requires one (1) hour or less.
 - b. If the request requires more than (1) hour, \$10.00 per hour per person may be charged for searching, reviewing, and duplicating public records. Any part of an hour will be charged at the full hourly rate.
 - c. Reproduction cost will be reimbursed at the current library rate for copies. Copies of pages printed on front and back will be counted as two (2) pages for the purposes of copy cost reimbursement.
 - d. A \$5.00 fee will be charged for all requests for public records that must be packaged for shipping or mailing.
 - e. Mailing costs will be calculated by weight and at the applicable rates for each individual mailing. If the request involves notices to a third party, the cost of mailing the notice by certified mail will be charged to the party requesting the public records.
2. Prior to complying with a request for public records, CCLS will estimate the projected time and reimbursement costs that may be incurred, and the party submitting the request will reimburse CCLS for the estimated costs as set forth by the Reimbursement Schedule. If the reimbursement costs exceed the estimated amount, the party requesting the public records must remit the difference prior to the release of the public records by CCLS. Cost reimbursements will apply even if the search does not yield any pertinent public records.

Personnel Policy

Statement of Equal Opportunity

CCLS administers a program designed to recruit, select, and promote staff members on the basis of their relative ability, knowledge, and skills. The selection process and criteria shall assure fair and equitable treatment of all applicants and staff members without regard to origin, race, religion, age, background, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, handicap or political views and affiliations.

Classification of Positions

Currently CCLS recognizes the following positions:

- Director
- Branch Librarian
- Library Associate

Future positions may be created and current positions may, as funding requires, be merged permanently or on a temporary basis.

Salary Schedule and Payment

The Library Director with approval of the Board of Trustees establishes salary and increments in accordance with:

- Total budget appropriation;
- Job content, workload, and level of responsibility;
- Satisfactory job performance, growth, and experience within a particular job;

Salary payments are made by check on the 5th and 20th days of the month unless said day falls on a weekend or holiday in which case payments are made on the last business day prior. Deductions for federal taxes are made in accordance with federal regulations and the number of exemptions claimed and the exemption status for federal withholding. Deductions for state taxes are based on state regulations, the dollar amount claimed as an exception, and the exemption status for state withholding. Staff members are asked to submit new forms as needed to make changes to tax withholding.

Upon authorization of the staff member, deduction is also made monthly for insurance coverage, deferred compensation, and/or other optional payroll deductions. A staff member may participate in optional payroll deductions at the time of employment or during open window registration for certain benefits.

Benefits

Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS)

All employees working 20 hours or more per week are required to participate in the Public Employees Retirement System of Mississippi with employer and employee each paying a percentage of the cost. Employees may not enter membership in the system if they are over 60 years of age when first employed in a covered position. Employees working less than 20 hours a week do not receive the benefit of PERS.

It is the employee's responsibility to notify PERS when he or she desires to make application for retirement. This should be done approximately two months before the termination of employment date or as soon as possible after the employee determines his or her incapacity for continuance in employment.

No maximum accumulation limits exist for annual and major medical leave. Unused leave for which an employee is not compensated upon termination or retirement shall be transferred and certified by the employee's agency to PERS and be counted by PERS as creditable service for the purpose of the retirement system. In order to receive creditable service for the months of unused leave, PERS must receive certification of such leave balances from the governing authority of the employee's agency.

Upon termination of employment, other than retirement, the employee has the option of leaving their money on deposit with the retirement fund or withdrawing such monies. A "Termination Request" is available from library administration if withdrawal of monies is desired.

For further information please contact:

Public Employees Retirement System of Mississippi
429 Mississippi Street
Jackson, MS 39201-1097
Phone: (601) 359-3589

Health Insurance

All CCLS employees who are working in positions of 20 hours or more weekly are eligible for enrollment in a group health plan administered and paid for by the State of Mississippi. Additional coverage is available for staff member's spouse and/or dependent children with the staff member paying 100% of the additional premium cost through payroll deduction. Employees working less than 20 hours per week do not receive the benefit of health insurance.

Eligible staff members who do not join the group insurance plan at the time of employment must sign a waiver stating that he or she does not choose to be covered. The staff member may join at a later date during open enrollment or for another of the accepted reasons by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mississippi.

Insurance deductibles are for the calendar year. Each employee may fill out new application forms in October to make changes in their insurance. Application forms are available from library administration.

Staff members who leave the employment of CCLS may, under certain conditions, convert or continue group insurance under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). The employee

must apply directly to the health insurance company and assume all costs. Additional information regarding this limited, extended coverage is available from library administration.

Life Insurance

Life insurance is available through BCBSMS. The state of Mississippi covers half of the cost of life insurance with the staff person being responsible for the remaining 50% of the cost. Coverage is available at twice the employee's annual salary (rounded up to the nearest thousand) to a maximum of \$100,000 coverage.

Workmen's Compensation

Staff members, while on duty, are covered by Workmen's Compensation Insurance. The purpose of Workmen's Compensation is to provide fixed benefits to employees in the event of job-related illness or injury. Income compensation is based on salary with a maximum benefit set by Workmen's Compensation Insurance.

If an employee is injured, no matter how minor the injury, he or she should report this to his or her supervisor within 24 hours. It is not necessary that the employee seek medical attention immediately, only that the report be filed in case of later complications.

If an employee is receiving Workmen's Compensation, he or she may also request available major medical and/or annual leave to cover portions of absence not paid by Workmen's Compensation. Requests for leave will be granted in accordance with provisions contained in those policies.

Employee Standards of Conduct

Attendance

Employees are expected to report to work and leave work at the time designated for their schedules.

Staff members are expected to adhere to the limits on breaks and lunchtime. If a staff member is going to be late for work or late returning from lunch for any reason, that employee must call his or her immediate supervisor. Time lost cannot be made up. Habitual or excessive tardiness will be reported to the Library Director who may dock a staff member's pay or charge the lost time against annual leave.

Staff members are allotted a fifteen (15) minute break per three and a half hours worked. Breaks may not be added to the front or back end of a lunch break and may not be accumulated for later use. Lunch breaks are one hour and should be limited to days in which a staff member is scheduled to work 7 or more hours. Lunch breaks are unpaid.

Attitude Towards the Public

The primary duty of the library is to serve the public. All patrons regardless of origin, race, religion, age, background, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or political views and affiliations are to be given the same standards of service. All contacts with the public are to be handled in a courteous and business-like manner. Serving the patron is the library's first priority; staff members should never ignore a patron in order to complete other tasks.

All staff members are public relations representatives of the library. Accuracy, courtesy, and good taste are expected in your dealings with the public and with other staff members. Rudeness or loss of temper is never permitted. At all times staff members must show respect and regard for the reputation of the library and fellow workers. These standards apply to social media as well as stated in our *Social Media Policy*.

Babysitting

Babysitting while on duty is not allowed. Babysitting applies to any person, toddler or adult, who stays at the library on a regular basis for any length of time. Staff members, volunteers, and summer workers are all expected to make arrangements for their spouses, children and/or grandchildren while they work. Staff members also should not have to consider themselves babysitting for a child belonging to a member of the public who is doing research, etc., while in the library. Members of the public who habitually drop their children off at the library while the adult shops, runs errands, etc., should be discouraged from this activity.

Conflict of Interest

Employees should be careful to avoid using or appearing to use an official position for personal gain, giving unjustified preferences, or losing sight of the need for efficient and impartial decisions in the library's method of operation. Solicitors, sales of tickets or chances, or circulation of petitions are prohibited in the public services areas of the library. The Library Director may give permission for these activities if the library business is involved.

Conversation

Conversation with fellow staff members should be kept within bounds and not become mere visiting. Loud conversations are disturbing to everyone and should be avoided. Furthermore, conversations involving personal opinions and views regarding the topics of politics and religion are not to be engaged in with the public.

Discussion of Library Policies, Administration, and Budget

Questions regarding policy, library operations, budget, etc., should be directed to a Library Manager or the Library Director. Public criticism of the library, its policies, its employees, or patrons is to be avoided at all times. Channel complaints through the established *Grievance Procedure*.

Endorsements and Advertisements

Advertisements of current local events should be kept in a designated location and thrown away after the event occurs. No political or religious event should be advertised or endorsed in the library as we are non-partisan.

Fees and Honorariums

Fees and honorariums for talks, lectures, workshops, etc., conducted by staff members are permitted if done on the staff member's personal time. No fee may be received by the staff member if the lecture, workshop, etc., is performed on library time or on the library's premises, or is sponsored by the library, or is conducted in the name of the library.

Gifts from Vendors

Any rebates, refunds, coupons, merit points, gratuities or any article of value tendered or received by any library staff member from any vendor of materials supplies, equipment or other articles shall be used to the benefit of the library making the purchase. The library may, in accordance with its best interest and with the consent of the Library Director and/or Board of Trustees, either take delivery of the article of value tendered and use the same or convert it to cash by selling it for its fair and reasonable value, making use of the proceeds from such a sale for the exclusive benefit of the library as per section 37-7-23 of the Mississippi Code.

Grooming and Dress Code

The dress and manner of the staff contributes directly to the overall image the library projects to the community. Clothing should be fresh and neat. Careful personal hygiene is essential. Extremes should be avoided. Within these concepts there is room for the expression of individual taste and the exercise of individual choice of apparel.

Reading While on Duty

Reading while on duty is primarily limited to professional material, book reviews, dust jackets, etc. Reading through materials in preparation for Storytimes and other programming is also allowed. Staff should be familiar with the book collection, but the major portion of staff reading should be done during off-duty hours or during breaks, i.e., leisure reading materials such as fiction or magazines.

Relationships with Other Staff

All employees should maintain a courteous and cooperative attitude toward other employees. Because of respect for individuals and the strong desire to assist each other, we must talk with one another to get answers to questions, to communicate and resolve problems. If there are issues, it is always best to

communicate with your immediate supervisor. If you have difficulty communicating with your immediate supervisor, you are encouraged to follow the *Grievance Procedure* outlined in the policy manual.

Salesmen and Canvassers

Solicitation is not permitted on premises of CCLS. Petitions are not to be left in the library for gathering signatures. The library prohibits solicitation in the library so as to provide an atmosphere free of influence or coercion. Proselytizing, politicking, selling merchandise, tickets or chances of any kind in the library is prohibited unless conducted by the Friends of the Library and/or is approved by the Board of Trustees.

Sexual Harassment

The library workplace is free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may consist of requests for sexual favors, unwelcome sexual advances, threats, bodily contact, and other deliberate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. No harassment by any employee or patron is permitted. All offenses, should such occur, must be reported to the Library Director. If a staff person is uncomfortable coming to the Library Director of the offense is originating with the Library Director, the staff member may take their concerns directly to any member of the Board of Trustees.

Smoking and Tobacco Use

Smoking, vaping, or use of other tobacco products is not permitted in library buildings, including bathrooms, or anywhere else on the library premises.

Telephone Calls

Personal telephone calls and personal conversations will be made and received only in case of emergency. Emergency personal telephone calls should be kept as brief as possible. Family and friends should be advised of this policy. Telephones are provided to conduct library business and are designated for the public's use in calling the library. Personal telephone calls are disruptive to the flow of work, inconsiderate of fellow workers, and poor public relations. Employees may not charge personal telephone calls to the library.

Mobile Phones

Cell phones may be carried by employees but must be silenced while in public areas. Cell phones should not be used in public areas including circulation, the stacks, and children's areas. Excessive use of cell phones during the workday will not be tolerated.

Work Performance

A full day's work is expected for a day's pay. Employees are expected to apply themselves to assigned duties for which they are being compensated. Carelessness which results in mistakes, slowness which results in tasks left undone, etc., places an unjust burden on fellow workers and detracts from the quality of library service given to the public. Staff members owe the library, the public, and fellow workers a full day's work of the best quality of which they are capable. Planned absences are to be arranged in advance and unexpected absences are to be reported promptly.

Professional Development

All staff are expected and required to complete professional development (as funding allows) in the form of workshops, conferences, outside training, and webinars. Requirements for annual professional development include:

- Director: 8 training events
- Full time staff: 4 training events
- Part time staff: 2 training events

A training event is defined as a single workshop, a single conference session, a single webinar, or other training as approved by the Library Director.

All travel and registration for off-site training must be approved by the Library Director in order to qualify as time worked and to have fees and costs paid by the library. Free and on-site training (i.e. webinars) require approval of the Library Director to count towards professional development requirements.

This training is mandatory in order to be considered for future promotions or pay increases as budgets allow. Failure to complete required training may be met with disciplinary actions.

CCLS may, but is not required to, reimburse staff members for all or part of the cost accrued in attending library conferences/meetings. If CCLS requires a staff member to attend a library conference/meeting then the library will assume responsibility for all allowed reimbursement costs. If a conference, workshop, or meeting is not approved by the Library Director prior to registration, the library will not provide reimbursement for that training event.

Reimbursement for Library Business Related Travel

Library staff members and/or trustees will from time-to-time find it necessary to attend conferences/meetings sponsored by a professional library or library related organization as a representative of the library. Selection of staff members/trustees to attend professional meetings will be based on availability of funds and the benefits to library service to be gained. Travel by library staff must be approved by the director in advance. All conference registration, airfare, and lodging reservations will be handled by library administrative offices unless the Library Director authorizes a staff member to make individual reservations. A signed travel expense form and documentation of all reimbursable library business related travel is required.

An employee traveling on library business is expected to exercise the same care incurring expenses as would a prudent person traveling for personal reasons. Travel for business should be conducted at a minimum cost for achieve the success of the mission.

Reimbursable Expenses

- Conference, seminar, etc.
 - Registration and other fees including study materials as required
 - Travelers shall request reservations as far in advance as possible and shall utilize the lowest logical rate available.
- Lodging

- Travelers shall request hotel reservations as far in advance as possible and shall utilize the lowest logical rate available. Government or conference rates should be requested when available. Room sharing should be utilized when available and reasonable.
- Transportation
 - Reimbursement for use of personal automobiles or other private motor vehicle will be made at the same rate as allowed by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration. Only one travel expense allowance at the authorized rate per mile shall be allowed for any one trip. When there is a demonstrated cost savings and with prior approval of the Library Director, vehicle rental cost will be reimbursed at the prevailing rate.
- Meals
 - The library will reimburse meal costs associated with official travel not to exceed state allowed reimbursement rates.
 - Meal tips are reimbursable when the total of the tips do not exceed the state maximum tip percentage and the addition of the tips do not exceed the daily maximums.
 - Alcohol is not reimbursable.
- Business related telecommunication charges
 - Reimbursement will be for actual charges
- Taxis, buses, subways, ride sharing, parking
 - Reimbursement will be for the actual charges
- Business related postage/supplies
 - Reimbursement will be for the actual charges

Performance Appraisal

Formal staff evaluations will be done six months after employment date and then annually in September after that. These formal evaluations will be the responsibility of the immediate supervisor and the Library Director. The staff member and the immediate supervisor and/or Library Director will discuss the appraisal, and the staff member will be given an opportunity to ask questions or make comments, after which the appraisal will be signed by the staff member and immediate supervisor and/or Library Director. The appraisal will be placed in the staff member's personnel file. Appraisals may be seen upon request at any time by the staff member or by administrative personnel. Personnel appraisals are confidential and are not to be discussed with other employees. Each staff member shall be furnished with a copy of their performance appraisal.

The evaluation of the Library Director is the sole responsibility of the Library Board of Trustees.

Promotions and Transfers

When vacancies occur it is the library's policy to evaluate staff members for possible promotion or transfer. However, the library is also free to seek candidates from other sources in an effort to ensure that the vacancy is filled by the most qualified candidate available. Request for promotion or transfer should be submitted in writing to the Library Director.

Under no condition should it be assumed that promotion is automatic.

Transfers are changes in assignment in which the job level and salary rate remain the same. Transfers are made for the good of library service and the development of staff member potential.

When a vacancy occurs, another staff member may be asked to serve in the vacated role until someone can be hired. This does not indicate any job favoritism and does not guarantee the staff member the job they are temporarily occupying.

Social Media

CCLS recognizes that social media is regularly used as a form of communicating. The library trusts and expects employees to exercise personal responsibility whenever they participate in social media. All employees have the right to free speech and to discuss personal opinions and matters of public concern. However, not all speech is protected speech.

CCLS has the right and duty to protect itself from the unauthorized disclosure of information and to protect its reputation as a business and employer. CCLS also has the right to maintain an orderly, safe, and efficient work environment, consistent with its organizational values, practices, procedures, and library work rules and policies. This policy includes basic guidelines for each employee.

Social media and related technology include, but are not limited to, video or Wiki posts, social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, chat rooms, podcasts, discussion forums, personal blogs, or other forms of online journals, diaries, or personal newsletters not associated with CCLS. This policy also includes future social media technologies and applications that may not yet be contemplated.

Library employees may not use social media in a manner that interferes with their job duties or violates a library work rule or policy. Specifically employees may not use social media to harass, threaten, intimidate, retaliate, discriminate, or disparage against the library, employees, or anyone doing business with the library, including patrons.

Employees are responsible for protecting confidential and proprietary library information. Employees may not disclose any confidential or proprietary information on or about the library, its patrons, its affiliates, vendors, or suppliers including but not limited to business and financial information. At all times, including when using social media during non-work hours, employees must comply with CCLS policies regarding the confidentiality of library operations and patron activities.

Unless specifically instructed, employees are not authorized to speak on behalf of the organization on personal social media sites. Employees may not represent that they are communicating on behalf of CCLS or do anything that might reasonably create the impression that they are communicating on behalf of, or as a representative of, the library.

Do not use library logos, address, telephone numbers, fax number, or email addresses on social media sites other than those sponsored by the library.

Library employees are prohibited from taking photos of work related information or activities in the library and posting this information on a personal social media site unless expressly authorized by the Library Director.

The library requests employees to report all suspected violations of this policy to the Library Director. CCLS investigates and responds to all reports of violations of the social media policy and guidelines and other related policies. Violation of the policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. Discipline or termination will be determined based on the nature of the issue.

and other factors. CCLS reserves the right to take legal action if deemed necessary to protect CCLS, employees, patrons, or any other affiliated individual or group.

Library Operated Social Media Sites

When representing CCLS via library-sponsored social media, staff should:

- Conduct themselves at all times as representatives of CCLS;
- Not make statements about patrons or post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate confidential information in violation of CCLS confidentiality policy;
- Never identify a library user without permission. In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, be very cautious using information about children under the age of 17 if that child is not part of a program where parents registered and signed a photograph release;
- Not represent postings as official CCLS opinion or policy unless this has been clearly approved by the Library Director;
- Not conduct political activities or personal business;
- Observe and abide by all copyright, trademark, and service mark restrictions in posting materials to electronic media;
- Be respectful in your comments and avoid inflammatory topics;
- When interviewing others, clarify how their information will be used/disseminated.

Examples of postings not permitted include, but are not limited to:

- Advertisements for non-library entities
- Spam
- Postings which contain obscene matter
- Disparaging, harassing, abusive, profane or offensive postings
- Postings that are hateful, threatening, pornographic, that contain graphic or gratuitous violence
- Potentially libelous or defamatory postings
- Postings which contain privileged, proprietary, or confidential information about any person, business, or entity including, without limitation: patrons, vendors, the library or library partners
- Postings which violate or potentially violate local, state, or federal laws including without limitation intellectual property and copyright laws
- Postings which discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, age, sexual orientation, creed, or ancestry
- Postings which are sexually harassing, including without limitation: epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, sexual rumors that show hostility toward individuals based on gender, derogatory comments about individuals' body or appearance, unwelcome sexual compliments, innuendos, suggestions or jokes
- Postings which promote alcoholic beverages, cigarettes or other tobacco products or any illegal product service or activity
- Postings which support or oppose the nomination or election of a candidate for public office, the investigation, prosecution, or recall of a public official, or the passage of a levy or bond issue.

Working Conditions

Work Week

The CCLS work week is outlined as beginning at 12:00 am on Sunday and ending at 11:59 pm on Saturday. Full time staff members work forty (40) hours per week. Full time staff members may be required to work evening hours and/or Saturdays as part of their regular schedule. The staff member's own time is allowed for lunch and the staff members are required to take the allotted time. Part time member's hours are determined by the workload and/or the open hours of the library. Part time staff members may be required to work evening and/or Saturday hours as part of their regular schedule. On occasion a staff member may need to change his or her schedule to fill in and the time may be taken off later so as not to exceed their normal weekly hours. Full time staff members should not exceed forty (40) hours in a given work week. No employee may work in excess of their regularly scheduled hours without permission of the Library Director.

Work Environment

The library provides staff members with a work site and equipment necessary to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of each position. The library also provides a work environment free of safety hazards. Any condition in the work environment which prevents a staff member from performing effectively should be reported to library administration. The library provides a work environment free from sexual harassment, political influence, coercion, and drugs.

If repairs of a disabled HVAC system are expected within four (4) hours the library will not close. If repairs are expected to take longer than four (4) hours and the temperature reaches 85 degrees or higher inside the library then the library is subject to being closed and staff reassigned until the HVAC system is repaired or the library temperature is lowered to below 85 degrees by another means. Similarly if the temperature reaches 50 degrees or below and repairs will take longer than four (4) hours, the library is subject to being closed and staff reassigned until the HVAC system is repaired or the library temperature is raised above 50 degrees by other means.

Overtime

Under ordinary circumstances staff members will not be expected to work overtime. Under emergency circumstances, unusually heavy workloads, and during leave periods staff members may be asked to work overtime. Any full time employee required to work above the allotted forty (40) hours per week will earn compensatory time at a rate of 1.5:1 for non-exempt employees and at a rate of 1:1 for exempt employees.

Time Sheets

In order to insure that a staff member receives due compensation, each member of the staff keeps a daily record of the time worked on a time sheet. This records the time the employee works as well as leave and holiday time, making a complete record of the working time for each person.

Any deliberate misrepresentation on the time sheet will result in disciplinary action against the responsible party up to possible immediate termination.

Drug Free work Environment

In compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, CCLS has adopted the following policy:

All employees must sign an agreement stating that they agree to the following:

“The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace. Use of alcohol or unlawful possession of controlled substances while on the job constitutes a Third Group Offense. This offense is of such a serious nature that first occurrence may result in suspension without pay for up to thirty (3) days or immediate dismissal.”

In further compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, the following procedure must be followed:

- Employee will abide by the Drug Free Workplace Agreement
- Employee must notify library administration of any criminal drug statute conviction or violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days following such conviction
- The library Director shall take appropriate personnel action against such an employee up to and including termination or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state, or local health, law enforcement, or other such agency with such rehabilitation to be paid for by the employee with the approval of the Library Director and the Board of Trustees. Accumulated annual leave, accumulated major medical leave, or leave without pay may be used for such rehabilitation purposes.
- Upon completion of rehabilitation, the employee must furnish the Library Director and/or Board of Trustees with certification of having satisfactorily completed a drug-rehabilitation program.
- If employee does not satisfactorily complete such rehabilitation program, the Library Director and/or Board of Trustees shall terminate the employment.

Leaves of Absence

General Laws and Statements

CCLS adheres to the leave policies outlined in section 25-3-61 through section 25-3-101 of the Mississippi Code.

For purposes of annual leave, major medical leave, or death in the family the state of Mississippi defines immediately family as: spouse, parent, step-parent, sibling, child, step-child, grandchild, grandparent, son or daughter-in-law, mother or father-in-law, or brother or sister-in-law.

Holiday pay, PERS, annual leave, and major medical leave are benefits accruing only to permanent employees and temporary employees working twenty (20) or more hours per week.

All leave requests should be submitted to Library Director as soon as possible on the *Application for Leave* form.

In accordance with section 25-3-97 of the Mississippi Code, upon termination of employment, an employee who has given proper notice shall be paid up to a maximum of thirty (30) days annual leave. Any employee whose position is covered by PERS may request that any annual leave or major medical leave in excess of thirty (30) days be credited to his or her retirement. Employees who are dismissed for misconduct are not entitled to annual leave or major medical leave allowance.

Should an employee die having accumulated annual or major medical leave, the wages or salary which would have been paid to such employee during his or her leave shall be paid to the person designated as "next of kin."

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was enacted into law on February 5, 1993 and took effect August 5, 1993.

The FMLA entitles eligible employees (employees who have been employed for at least a total of twelve (12) months and have worked for at least 1,250 hours over the prior twelve (12) months) to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a twelve (12) month period for specified family and medical reasons and makes it unlawful for any agency to discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by the Act or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to the Act. Further, the appointing authority shall not interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of, or the attempt to exercise any right provided under the Act.

The FMLA does not affect any other federal or state law that prohibits discrimination and does not supersede any state or local law which provides greater and more generous leave rights.

If an employee does not choose to substitute accrued paid leave, the agency may require him or her to do so.

Annual Leave

Annual leave is provided for the specific purpose of allowing a staff member a period of rest and recreation and thereby increasing their efficiency and fitting them for their duties.

In accordance with section 25-3-93 of the Mississippi Code, full time (40 hours per week) employees will earn leave based on the following scale:

Continuous Service	Accrual Rate (monthly)
1 month to 3 years	12 hours / month
37 months to 8 years	14 hours / month
97 months to 15 years	16 hours / month
More than 15 years	18 hours / month

Annual Leave for employees working less than forty hours per week will earn leave based on the following scale:

Hours Worked / Week	36 hrs / wk	30 hrs / wk	28 hrs / wk	25 hrs / wk	20 hrs / wk
1 month to 3 years	11 hrs / mo	9 hrs / mo	8 hrs / mo	8 hrs / mo	6 hrs / mo
37 months to 8 years	13 hrs / mo	11 hrs / mo	10 hrs / mo	9 hrs / mo	7 hrs / mo
97 months to 15 years	16 hrs / mo	14 hrs / mo	13 hrs / mo	11 hrs / mo	8 hrs / mo

Maximum annual leave hours that employees can take each fiscal year (October 1 to September 30):

Hours Worked / Week	Maximum Leave per Fiscal Year
40 hours	240 hours
36 hours	216 hours
30 hours	180 hours
25 hours	150 hours
20 hours	120 hours

Annual leave is credited to employees monthly after the completion of each month of service. The Library Director cannot increase the accrual rate of annual leave in any amount greater than was earned and accumulated by the staff member.

There shall be no limit on accrued annual leave. Upon separation of service, a maximum of 240 hours leave will be paid to the employee. The remainder will be certified to PERS for creditable service hours.

Annual leave should be requested on the *Application for Leave* form. If more than one day is being taken, the form should be sent for approval at least one week in advance. So far as possible, annual leave will be arranged in accordance with the staff member's request, subject to the needs of the library and fairness to other staff members.

If an employee exhausts all annual leave for a fiscal year, it is not to be assumed that leave without pay will be automatically granted (see *Leave Without Pay*).

Major Medical Leave

Major medical leave may be used for the illness or injury of an employee or member of the employee's immediate family. Major medical leave may be used to cover regularly scheduled visits to a doctor or a hospital for the continuing treatment of a chronic disease as certified in advance by a physician. For any

absence in excess of 32 consecutive working hours due to illness, the illness must be certified in writing by a doctor.

In accordance with section 25-3-95 of the Mississippi Code, full time employees (40 hours per week) will accrue major medical leave as follows:

Continuous Service	Accrual Rate (monthly)
1 month to 3 years	8 hours / month
37 months to 8 years	7 hours / month
97 months to 15 years	6 hours / month
More than 15 years	5 hours / month

There shall be no limit to sick leave accumulation. Upon separation of service, remaining sick leave will be certified to PERS for creditable service hours.

Major medical leave for employees working less than 40 hours:

Hours Worked / Week	36 hrs / wk	30 hrs / wk	28 hrs / wk	25 hrs / wk	20 hrs / wk
1 month to 3 years	7 hrs / mo	6 hrs / mo	6 hrs / mo	5 hrs / mo	4 hrs / mo
37 months to 8 years	6 hrs / mo	5 hrs / mo	5 hrs / mo	5 hrs / mo	4 hrs / mo
97 months to 15 years	5 hrs / mo	5 hrs / mo	4 hrs / mo	3 hrs / mo	3 hrs / mo

Staff members should submit an *Application for Leave* form when he or she knows major medical leave is needed. When a staff member becomes ill and cannot report to work, he or she should arrange for coverage of position and should notify the Library Director on or before his or her regularly scheduled work time.

If a staff member is ill and has no major medical leave accumulated, time off will be leave without pay unless annual leave is available. If an employee exhausts all major medical leave and annual leave for a year, it is not to be assumed that leave without pay will automatically be granted.

Donated Leave

Any employee may donate a portion of his or her major medical leave to another employee who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, or to another employee who has a member of his or her immediate family who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, in accordance with subsection 8 of section 25-3-95:

- The employee donating the leave (“donor employee”) shall designate the employee who is to receive the leave (the “recipient employee”) and the amount of earned personal and major medical leave that is to be donated, and shall notify the Library Director of his or her designation. The Library Director then shall notify the recipient employee and his or her supervisor of the amount of leave that has been donated by the donor employee to the recipient employee.
- The maximum amount of earned personal leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed a number of days that would leave the donor employee with fewer than seven (7) days of personal leave, and the maximum amount of earned major medical leave

that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the earned major medical leave of the donor employee.

- An employee must have exhausted all of his or her accumulated annual and major medical leave before he or she will be eligible to receive any leave donated by another employee.
- Before an employee may receive donated leave, he or she must provide the Library Director with a physician's statement that states the beginning date of the catastrophic injury or illness, a description of the injury or illness, and a prognosis for recovery and the anticipated date that the employee will be able to return to work if the Library Director deems this action necessary.
- If an employee is aggrieved by the decision of the Library Director that the employee is not eligible to receive donated leave because the injury or illness of the employee or member of the employee's immediate family is not, in the appointing authority's determination, a catastrophic injury or illness, the employee may appeal the decision to the Library Board of Trustees
- Beginning on the effective date of Senate Bill No. 2317, 2003 Regular Session, the maximum period of time that an employee may use donated leave without resuming work at his or her place of employment is ninety (90) days, which commence on the first day that the recipient employee uses donated leave. Donated leave that is not used shall be returned to the donor employee.
- No person, through the use of coercion, threats, or intimidation, shall require or attempt to require any employee to donate his or her leave to another employee. Any person who alleges a violation of this paragraph shall report the violation to the Library Director, or, if the violator is the Library Director, shall report the violation to the library Board of Trustees. Any person found to have violated this paragraph shall be subject to termination of employment.
- No employee can donate leave after tendering notice of separation for any reason or after termination
- In order for an employee to be eligible to receive donated leave, the employee must have worked for CCLS for at least six months
- Donated leave shall not be used in lieu of disability retirement
- For the purposes of this section, "immediate family" means spouse, parent, step-parent, child, or step-child.
- For the purposes of this section, "catastrophic injury or illness" means a life-threatening injury or illness of an employee or a member of an employee's immediate family which totally incapacitates the employee from work, as verified by a licensed physician, and forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee, resulting in the loss of compensation. Conditions that are short-term in nature, including but not limited to, common illnesses such as influenza and the measles, and common injuries are not catastrophic. Chronic illnesses or injuries, such as cancer or major surgery which result in intermittent absences from work and which are long-term in nature and require long recuperation periods may be considered catastrophic.

Administrative Leave

Employees may be granted administrative leave with pay. For the purposes of this section, "administrative leave" means discretionary leave with pay, other than personal leave or major medical leave. The Library Director may grant administrative leave to any employee serving as a witness or juror

or party litigant, as verified by the clerk of the court, in addition to any fees paid for such services, and such services or necessary appearance in any court shall not be counted as personal leave.

Death in the Family

An employee may use up to three (3) days of earned major medical leave for each occurrence of death in the immediate family requiring the employee's absence from work. The immediate family is defined as spouse, parent, step-parent, sibling, child, step-child, grandchild, grandparent, son or daughter-in-law, mother or father-in-law, brother or sister-in-law. Child means a biological, adopted, or foster child or a child for whom the individual stands or stood in loco parentis.

Compensatory Time Leave

In certain circumstances, when library operations cannot be fulfilled during regular working hours by staff, employees may be required to work in excess of normal working hours. When possible, advance notification of these assignments will be provided. All overtime worked must first be authorized by the Library Director. The library will comply with all requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), not to be confused with the leave provisions contained in the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

The Library Director, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, may designate certain executive, administrative, and professional positions as exempt from the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Exempt staff may accrue comp time leave on an hour for hour basis, to be taken at any time. All comp time must be approved by the Library Director. Non-exempt staff may not accrue comp time beyond one pay period. If an employee who has comp time leave available needs to be use major medical or annual leave, comp time leave shall be taken first and used until exhausted before time can be applied to major medical or annual. Non-exempt employees must take comp leave within the pay period it was accrued.

Emergency and Disaster Leave

The Library Director and/or Board of Trustees is authorized to close any or all libraries in the event of an emergency/disaster or extreme weather warning. During the period of emergency or disaster, all salaried employees will be paid their regular rate. Salaries during this period may be ended by the Board of Trustees if, in their judgement, the length of time is an extreme financial burden. The Library Director can also assign employees to other duties and positions or agencies if the emergency/disaster is lengthy and assistance is needed to serve the public at other locations.

Holidays

In accordance with the legal holidays of the State of Mississippi as listed in section 3-3-7 of the Mississippi Code and based on library usage during the holidays, CCLS observes the following holidays upon which all libraries are closed:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

- Labor Day
- Veterans' Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Holidays which fall upon a Saturday will be observed on Friday; holidays which fall upon a Sunday will be observed the following Monday. Good Friday is observed in lieu of Confederate Memorial Day.

Staff members receive their regular pay for the designated holidays if the designated holiday falls upon a regularly scheduled workday. If a holiday falls on a day not regular scheduled as a workday for an employee, holiday pay will not be received. Employees working less than 20 hours per week do not receive the benefit of holiday pay with exception that they may take their birthday off as paid holiday for a typical daily work shift for that employee.

Holidays falling during a vacation period are not counted against annual leave.

The Governor of Mississippi has the authority to, and does occasionally, grant state employees additional called holidays. CCLS will observe the above holidays and will be notified of any special called holidays. Staff members will be notified of any special called holidays and closing schedules as soon as possible by the Library Director.

In the event that a staff member has already planned annual leave in conjunction with a scheduled holiday and a special called holiday is observed, the called holiday may be observed in lieu of annual leave.

[Jury/Court Witness](#)

In accordance with section 25-3-92(1) of the Mississippi Code, staff members who are called to serve as a witness or juror or party litigant, as verified by the Clerk of the Court, shall be granted administrative leave for such duty.

[Leave Without Pay](#)

Staff members may be granted leave without pay, if their absence can be covered by another staff member. Requests for leave without pay should be made to the Library Director in writing at least two weeks before time is to be taken. All leave without pay, except military duty, is considered individually and must be approved by the Library Director. Leave without pay may be used for professional purposes, maternity, adoption, illness or travel. While on leave without pay, the employee is not entitled to accrue annual leave, sick leave, or holiday pay. The Library Director has the authority to deny staff member's request for leave without pay if past abuse has been established or if library service would be affected adversely. In accordance with section 25-3-61 of the Mississippi Code, employees can only use a total of three (3) months of leave without pay during the fiscal year. Employee must pay their own health insurance costs during this period unless employee is entitled under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993.

[Maternity/Paternity Leave](#)

No uniform period of absence for pregnancy shall be required, the amount of leave necessary for pregnancy shall be determined by the staff member's doctor. A staff member who becomes pregnant will be granted accrued sick and annual leave. At her request, she may also be granted leave without pay

to be taken before or after childbirth. Total leave time should not exceed three (3) calendar months. At the end of that period, she may be reinstated in her former position or separated from service at her request.

Any male employee may request paternity leave following the same guidelines as the maternity leave.

CCLS administers maternity/paternity leave under the guidelines provided through the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993.

Military Duty

In accordance with section 33-1-21 of the Mississippi Code, staff members who are members of the Armed Forces of the United States are entitled to leave for up to fifteen (15) working days in any one (1) fiscal year if they are required to perform military service. If the pay for military duty is more than the pay that would have been received for the time worked at CCLS, the staff member will be given the option of either using paid annual leave or time off without pay. A copy of the order should be submitted to the Library Director and an *Application for Leave* form filed.

Staff members are granted a leave of absence without pay when they enlist or are drafted into the Armed Forces of the United States. A staff member on military leave who receives an honorable discharge and who applies for reinstatement within ninety (90) days of his or her release from active duty is entitled to reinstatement to his or her position or to a position of like seniority, status, and pay. Staff members returning from military service will be returned with the same privileges that would have been accorded them had they continued in their position, such as major medical leave and annual leave accumulated and unused at the time of entrance into the military, adjustments in salary schedules, and opportunity for consideration for promotions which the staff member might have received had service been uninterrupted. A copy of the discharge or release paper should be submitted to the Library Director.

Employees requesting leave when ordered to military duty in excess of the fifteen (15) days allowed by law are entitled to leaves of absence from their respective duties without loss of time, annual leave or efficiency rating until relieved from duty. If approved by the Library director, it can be charged against personal or compensatory leave, or leave without pay. The Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Act (USERRA) of 1994, a federal law, requires employers to allow up to five (5) years of leave to a soldier who leaves employment to perform military duty, performs that duty satisfactorily, and requests his or her job back within the statutory time limits. The soldier must be reemployed without regard to whether the military duty was voluntary or involuntary.

Religious Holidays

Upon arrangement with the Library Director, staff members belonging to any recognized national or international religious faith have the right to take up to a maximum of two days of annual leave any calendar year to observe internationally and/or national recognized religious holidays such as Good Friday or Yom Kipper.

Unauthorized Leave

Unauthorized leave will be without pay and subject to disciplinary action. An absence of two (2) consecutive days without authorization will be considered a resignation.

Disciplinary Action

If an employee exhibits unsatisfactory work performance, the supervisor should discuss the issue with the employee and document as a verbal warning. If employee continues to exhibit an unsatisfactory work performance after a verbal warning, the supervisor will need to issue the employee a written reprimand after discussing the situation with the Library Director. Copies of all documentation of verbal warnings and written reprimands should be sent to the Library Director. Upon issuance of a written reprimand, the Library Director may take disciplinary action.

Unauthorized absence from work, habitual or excessive tardiness, failure to attend staff meetings, or abuse of major medical leave may result in the library's deducting the lost time from annual leave or docking the staff member's pay. Temporary suspension without pay (3 days for the first instance and 5 days for second instance) may also be used as a disciplinary measure.

Disciplinary action may result from unsatisfactory job performance or conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the library. Disciplinary action can be broken down into three basic types of offenses:

First Group Offenses

These offenses are less severe and will, under most circumstances, be corrected by oral and/or written reprimands. The accumulation of three (3) written notices of First Group Offenses within a twelve (12) month period will result in a suspension without pay not to exceed three (3) working days or implementation of a probationary period. Failure to improve performance or the receipt of a fourth written reprimand will result in dismissal. First Group Offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unsatisfactory attendance or excessive tardiness
- Abuse of work time, such as unauthorized time away from work area or failure to notify immediate supervisor promptly on completion of assigned work; failure to perform routine duties relating to job specific tasks; performance of personal business or hobbies while on duty; abuse of major medical leave policy
- Failure to comply with plan for improvement after an unsatisfactory performance appraisal

Second Group Offenses

Acts and behavior in this group are generally more serious than First Group Offenses. A written reprimand from the immediate supervisor or Library Director will be required for all Second Group Offenses. Disciplinary action may include implementation of a probationary period, suspension with pay, suspension without pay not to exceed five (5) working days, or dismissal.

Accumulation of one (1) Second Group Offense and three (3) written notices of First Group Offenses will result in dismissal.

Group Two Offenses include, but are not limited to, the following offenses:

- Insubordination, including failure to follow supervisor's instructions, perform assigned work or otherwise comply with established written policy
- Failure to report to work without giving proper notice to immediate supervisor
- Unauthorized use or misuse of library property or records

- Discussion of library policies, administration, personnel, or other library-related matters in a manner that is complaining, derogatory, sarcastic, etc., to the public, board of Trustees, or to elected officials
- Rude or abusive behavior toward public or library staff
- Conflict of interest or other violations of policy under *Employee Standards of Conduct*

Third Group Offenses

Acts or behavior in this group are of such a serious nature that the first occurrence will result in immediate suspension without pay and/or dismissal (immediate or with notice) by the Library Director.

Third Group Offenses may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unauthorized absence exceeding two (2) days
- Reporting to work under the influence of, or when ability is impaired by, alcohol or the unlawful use of a controlled substance
- Falsification of records, such as but not limited to, vouchers, reports, time sheets, leave records, daily financial logs, or other official library documents and/or records
- Willful or negligent defacement of library records, property, or of another employee's property
- Acts of physical violence or fighting
- Unauthorized possession of or use of firearms, dangerous weapons, or explosives
- Threatening or coercing employees or supervisors
- Criminal convictions for felonies or other acts of conduct occurring on or off the job which are plainly related to job performance or are of such nature that to continue to employ the employee in the assigned position could constitute negligence regarding the library system's duties toward the public or toward other library employees
- Engaging in prohibited political activity
- Mismanagement of library funds
- Theft of library materials such as books or money
- Sexual harassment

Verbal Reprimand

Verbal reprimands are considered to be official warnings to an employee and are issued by an employee's immediate supervisor or the Library Director. Verbal reprimands are applicable to First Group Offenses.

Written Reprimand

Written reprimands are considered to be official warnings to an employee. They may be prepared by the immediate supervisor or the Library Director. A copy of all written reprimands must be filed in the employee's official personnel file. Written reprimands are applicable to First Group Offenses and Second Group Offenses only.

Probationary Period

The Library Director may institute a probationary period, the length of which will be determined by the Library Director. During this probationary period, the employee's performance will be continuously appraised.

Suspension with Pay

The Library Director may suspend an employee with pay for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days while determining further action. Suspension with pay is applicable to First Group Offenses and Second Group Offenses. Employees may be suspended with pay prior to the implementation of a probationary period or dismissal.

Suspension Without Pay

The Library Director may suspend an employee without pay for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days while determining further action. Suspension without pay is applicable to Second Group Offenses and Third Group Offenses. Employees may be suspended without pay prior to dismissal. Once placed on suspension without pay, the employee is no longer earning any paid leaves of absence or other benefits.

Dismissal

Authority for instituting all forms of disciplinary action related to the Library Director is vested with the Board of Trustees. Authority for instituting all forms of disciplinary action related to subordinate employees is vested with the Library Director. The Library Director may delegate the responsibility of implementing certain forms of disciplinary action to other administrative personnel.

Appeal

Section 39-3-17(3) of the Mississippi Code provides that, in the event that a determination is made by the Library Director to remove a staff member for cause, written notice of such decision shall be given to such staff member. A staff member who has received such notice shall be entitled to:

- Written notice of the reasons for such action, together with a summary of the factual basis therefore, which notice shall be given at least five (5) days prior to any hearing;
- An opportunity for a hearing before the Board of Trustees at which to present matter relevant to the reasons given for the decision, including any reasons alleged by the employee to the reason for such action;
- Receive a fair and impartial hearing before the Board of Trustees;
- Be represented by legal counsel, at his or her own expense.

If the staff member does not request a hearing, the decision of the Library Director shall be final.

NOTE: Employees may appeal all types of disciplinary action to the Board of Trustees in accordance with provisions of the *Grievance Procedure*.

Separation From Service

This policy describes the library system's practices related to any separation from service. The intent of this policy is to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all employees leaving the service of CCLS.

Exit Interview

An exit interview will be conducted by the Library Director for all employees leaving the service of the library system. Employees hired on a temporary basis, those who resign without notice, and separation due to death will receive no exit interview.

The exit interview serves several basic purposes:

- As a courtesy to the employee, promoting good will towards the system;
- As a means of conveying necessary information regarding termination benefits;
- As an opportunity to discover means by which the loss of a valuable employee may be avoided in the future;
- As a source of information dealing with the employee's attitudes and concerns;
- As a future job reference.

The immediate supervisor or Library Director will complete an *Exit Interview Evaluation* form. This form will be reviewed and filed in the employee's official personnel file.

Retirement

Retirement benefits are provided through PERS of Mississippi for full time staff members and those working twenty (20) hours per week or more. Voluntary retirement may occur at any time after a person reaches fifty-five (55) years of age. Contact PERS and/or the Library Director for more information. Pre-retirement counseling is available from PERS.

Resignation

This shall include all separation of employees who voluntarily terminate their employment with the library system. Voluntary separation from service shall include, but not be limited to, the following: unauthorized absence of more than two days (see personnel policy dealing with unauthorized leave); and employee resignation.

In order to ensure accuracy of personnel records and proper consideration for any application for re-employment with the library system, employees should notify the Library Director in writing, giving specific details of their resignation. All non-MLIS/MLS staff should submit, in writing, a letter of resignation two weeks prior to the effective date. MLIS/MLS staff should submit, in writing, a letter of resignation no less than 30 days prior to effective date.

The effective date of a resignation is the last day the employee will report for work.

An employee who resigns and then later returns to the staff does so as a new employee. Salary and benefits will be determined by the position accepted and not by the salary and benefits granted during any previous period of employment with the library system.

Reduction in Force (RIF)

If staff positions are eliminated as a result of library reorganization or because of insufficient funding and the employee cannot be transferred to another position within the library system, employees will be released from service to the library by the Board of Trustees under this classification. Recall of RIF employees will be limited to those who, in the opinion of the Library Director, are able to perform the work in a satisfactory manner.

Reduction-in-Force due to periods of emergencies/disasters (see personnel policy dealing with Emergency and Disaster Leave) are considered temporary layoffs if this period is not expected to exceed thirty (30) days. Salaries may be ended by the Board of Trustees. If, in the judgement of the Board of Trustees, employees will be returned to their former positions within thirty (30) days, the library system will continue to pay the employer's share of health insurance for those employees who wish to continue in the group plan. In addition, all eligible employees will continue to accrue major medical leave and annual leave. Payment for this annual leave will be made to the employee in the event that recall does not occur within thirty (30) days after layoff.

Death

This shall include all separations of employees whose service is broken by death while on the active payroll. Upon the death of an employee, payment will be made to the estate of the deceased employee.

Release

A probationary employee whose performance, attitude or personal philosophy of public library service does not meet the standards, requirements, and philosophy of CCLS may be released from service by the Library Director at any time during the probationary period.

Payment to Separated Employees

Employees separated from service to the library system shall be paid through the last day worked in addition to payment of earned but unused and unpaid annual leave and major medical leave up to 240 hours. If the employee does not, however, work the entire (2) two weeks or thirty (30) days notice required of their position as described above under *Resignation*, that employee will forfeit the entire earned but unused and unpaid leave even if that amount is greater than the notice required. The unused leave will instead be certified to PERS.

Demotions

An employee may be demoted because of inadequate performance, disciplinary reasons, a reduction in force, or a voluntary demotion. A written notice of demotion and the reasons for the action will be given to the employee at least ten (10) working days prior to the effective date of the demotion. The employee is given an opportunity for a conference with the Library Director and an opportunity to respond in writing prior to the action.

Demotion Because of Inadequate Performance

An employee may be assigned to a lower position, initiate by the Library Director, because that employee has displayed an inability to adapt to job requirements.

The employee's salary is determined by the employee's experience applicable to the new position. Demotion to a previously held position will not result in a lower salary than that held by the employee while employed in that position.

Disciplinary Demotion

A demotion for just cause may be made to reduce the salary of an employee by twenty percent (20%).

Reduction-in-Force Demotion

An employee may be offered a lower position as a result of a reduction in force necessitated by economic condition, reorganization, lack of work, and/or job abolition. If library management must consider several employees in the same classification for reduction in force demotion, lowest tenured employees will always be demoted first.

Voluntary Demotion

An employee may be assigned to a lower position when the demotion is initiated by the employee. The same criteria applies for voluntary demotions that apply for demotions because of inadequate performance.

Volunteers

CCLS recognizes that volunteers are a valuable resource for the library. Volunteers enhance, rather than replace, adequate staffing. Their services aid the libraries in making the best use of their fiscal resources and help connect the libraries to other community groups and organizations.

CCLS volunteers are coordinated by the director and must be at least 14 years of age. Each volunteer must complete an application which will be kept on file. In some cases, volunteers will be interviewed to better determine their skills and level of experience.

CCLS volunteers are bound by the rules contained in all library policies and guidelines as applicable, especially as they relate to patron privacy and confidentiality. Library managers should record volunteer hours in a manner proscribed by the Library Director.

CCLS accepts volunteers requiring court-ordered community service at the discretion of the Library Director. Volunteers in this category must be interviewed prior to beginning service.

Grievance Procedure

The CCLS Board of Trustees guarantees all staff members fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of employment. From time to time, misunderstandings and problems arise in any organization. It is the intent of this policy to serve as a means for a peaceful settlement of all disputes that arise as expeditiously as possible.

A grievance is an allegation by an employee that there has been a breach, misinterpretation, or improper application of policy, practices, or procedure; or an arbitrary or discriminatory application of terms and conditions of employment. The content of the policy, the content of the annual budget, organization structure, the establishment and revision of salaries, position classifications, benefits and other responsibilities of the Board of Trustees as outlined in section 39-5-15 of the Mississippi Code are not issues subject to the grievance procedure.

It is the policy of the library to assure to every employee an opportunity to have the unobstructed use of this grievance procedure without fear of reprisal or without prejudice in any manner to employment status.

Step 1

An employee must identify the complaint verbally to immediate supervisor within five (5) days of becoming aware of the cause of the complaint.

Immediate supervisor has five (5) working days from date of initial discussion before orally informing employee of his or her decision.

Step 2

If not satisfied with the Step 1 decision, the employee advances his or her written complaint to the Library Director within three (3) working days following receipt of the Step 1 supervisor's response.

The Library Director is required to meet with the complainant employee within three (3) working days. Copies of the employee's complaint and the Library Director's response are put on file.

The Library Director is required to give the complainant employee a written response within three (3) working days. Copies of the employee's complaint and the Library Director's Response are put on file.

Step 3

If the Step 2 written response is not acceptable to the employee, the employee should specify in writing his or her desire to advance the complaint to the Board of Trustees for consideration. This must be done within three (3) working days of the employee's receipt of the Library Director's response.

The Board of Trustees will meet with the Library Director and the complainant employee within twenty (20) calendar days after receipt of the written complaint. The employee may have a representative of his or her choice and the appropriate witnesses present at the meeting. The Board of Trustees will respond with a written decision within five (5) working days.

Patron Comments and Complaints

The primary duty of the library is to serve the public. The Board of Trustees and the administration welcome the public's suggestions for improvement in the library's operation and/or improvement in library service.

The policies of CCLS and the minutes of the Board of Trustees are public record and any patron is welcome to examine these documents upon written request to the Board of Trustees allowing ten (10) days for a response. There will be a fee associated with copying costs as aligns with typical library fee for these services. Such material may be read at no charge providing it is not removed from the premises.

If a patron has a question concerning policies, administrative procedures, library finances, etc., staff members shall forward the patron's name, address, and telephone number to the Library Director or ask the patron to visit, call, or email the Library Director. The Library Director will contact the patron in a timely manner to discuss the patron's issues.

If a patron wishes to file a complaint in a library, the library staff shall offer the patron the *Patron Comment Form* to fill out. The staff should inform the patron that this form will be forwarded directly to the Library Director and that the Library Director will contact the patron within five (5) working days of receipt of the form. The staff member will then forward the complaint immediately to the Library Director and also inform the Library Director by phone or email of the complaint.

Within five (5) working days of a notice of a complaint, the Library Director shall arrange to contact the dissatisfied patron(s) to resolve the matter if possible. If resolution can be achieved, the Library Director shall submit a written report to the Board of Trustees at the next regularly scheduled meeting, stating the name(s) of the dissatisfied patron(s), description of the facts of the matter causing dissatisfaction, summary of the efforts made to resolve the matter, and resolution. If resolution cannot be achieved, the Library Director shall inform the patron(s) that the matter will be brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees. The Library Director will present the complaint at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees to consider the complaint and shall notify the dissatisfied patron(s) of the board's decision.

Anonymous complaints shall be forwarded to the Library Director who shall in turn forward them to the Board of Trustees. Anonymous complaints shall be investigated but cannot be considered as seriously as complaints presented in signed written form for they do not allow for further discussion with and/or clarification by the dissatisfied patron(s).

Appendices

Appendix I – Privacy Statement

Privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association. In this library the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one's interest examined or scrutinized by others. Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf. The courts have upheld the right to privacy based on the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution. Pursuant to the Mississippi Code section 39-3-365. Confidentiality of library user records.

Records maintained by any library funded in whole or in part by public funds, which contain information relating to the identify of a library user, relative to the user's use of books or other materials at the library, shall be confidential. Such records may only be released with the express written permission of the respective library user or as the result of a court order.

Numerous decisions in case law have defined and extended rights to privacy. This library's privacy and confidentiality policies are in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

User rights, as well as our institutions responsibilities, outlined here are based in part on what are known in the United States as the five *Fair Information Practice Principles*. These five principles outline the rights of Notice, Choice, Access, Security, and Enforcement.

Our commitment to your privacy and confidentiality has deep roots not only in law but also in the ethics and practices of librarianship. In accordance with the American Library Association's Code of Ethics:

We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted.

Data Integrity: The data we collect and maintain at the library must be accurate and secure. We take reasonable steps to assure data integrity providing our users access to their own personally identifiable data and only their own; updating data whenever possible and destroying untimely data or converting it to anonymous form.

Data Retention : We protect personally identifiable information from unauthorized disclosure once it is no longer needed to manage library services. Information that is regularly purged or shredded includes personally identifiable information on library resource use, material circulation history, and logs.

Tracking Users : We remove links between patron records and materials borrowed when items are returned and we delete records immediately when the original purpose for data collection has been satisfied. We permit in-house access to information in all formats without creating a data trail. Our library has invested in appropriate technology to protect the security of any personally identifiable information while it is in the library's custody, and we ensure that aggregate, summary data is stripped of personally identifiable information. We do not ask library visitors or web site users to identify

themselves or reveal any personal information unless they are borrowing materials, requesting special services, registering for programs or classes, or making remote use from outside the library of those portions of the Library's Web site restricted to registered borrowers under license agreements or other special arrangements. We discourage users from choosing passwords or PINs that could reveal their identity, including social security numbers. Cookies, Web history, cached files, or other computer and Internet use records and other software code are never written to a public computer's hard drive or network and are erased immediately upon computer reboot.

Third Party Security : We ensure that our library's contracts, licenses, and offsite computer service arrangements reflect our policies and legal obligations concerning user privacy and confidentiality. CCLS will not enter agreements with any third party vendor that provide access to our users' personally identifiable information, or the server the data is stored on. Further our agreements address appropriate restrictions on the use, aggregation, dissemination of that information regardless of age of user. Our agreements strictly prohibit the sale of that information. In circumstances that there may be a risk that personally identifiable information may be disclosed by a user by completing a user profile, we will warn our users about the potential dangers to personal privacy by revealing such data. When connecting to licensed databases outside the library, we release only information that authenticates users as "members of our community." Nevertheless, we advise users of the limits to library privacy protection when accessing remote sites and provide users with available tools to protect their anonymity.

Cookies: Users of networked computers will occasionally need to enable cookies in order to access a number of resources .A cookie is a small file sent to the browser by a Web site each time that site is visited. Cookies are stored on the user's computer and can potentially transmit personal information. Cookies are often used to remember information about preferences and pages visited. You can refuse to accept cookies, can disable cookies, and remove cookies from your hard drive. We will not share cookies information with external third parties. Cookies are automatically deleted when a public computer is rebooted.

Security Measures: Our security measures involve both managerial and technical policies and procedures to protect against loss and the unauthorized access, destruction, use, or disclosure of the data. Our managerial measures include internal organizational procedures that limit access to data and ensure that those individuals with access do not utilize the data for unauthorized purposes. Our technical security measures to prevent unauthorized access include encryption in the transmission and storage of data; limits on access through use of passwords; and storage of data on secure servers or computers that are inaccessible from a modem or network connection.

Staff access to personal data: We permit only authorized Library staff with assigned confidential passwords to access personal data stored in the Library's computer system for the purpose of performing library work. We will not disclose any personal data we collect from you to any party except where required by law or to fulfill an individual user's service request. The Library does not sell or lease users' personal information to companies, universities, or individuals.

Children: Parents should remind their children to ask their permission before providing personal information to any website or purchasing any products or services online. The Library urges all parents to participate in their children's exploration of the internet and to teach them about protecting their

personal information while online. For further information, see A Safety Net for the Internet: A Parent's Guide

5. Enforcement & Redress

Our library will not share data on individuals with third parties unless required by law. Library users who have questions, concerns, or complains about the library's handling of their privacy and confidentiality rights should file written comments with the Director of the Library. We will respond in a timely manner and may conduct a privacy investigation or review of policy and procedures. 22 V.S.A. § 173. provides a right of patron action if their confidentiality rights have been violated.

Only the Library Director is authorized to receive or comply with requests from law enforcement officers. We will not make library records available to any agency of state, federal, or local government unless a subpoena, warrant, court order or other investigatory document is issued by a court of competent jurisdiction that shows good cause and is in proper form. All library staff and volunteers should refer any law enforcement inquiries to the Library Director.

Appendix II – Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004

Appendix III – Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, age, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Appendix IV – ALA Code of Ethics

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees, and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed Citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted.
- IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of coworkers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; and January 22, 2008.

Appendix V – Internet Safety Policy

Introduction

It is the policy of the Covington County Library System to:

- a. Prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications.
- b. Prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity.
- c. Prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors.
- d. Comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act.

Access to Inappropriate Material

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “Internet filters”) shall be used to block or filter the Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, from access to inappropriate information. Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Covington County Library System online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes:

- a. Unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking”, and other unlawful activities
- b. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Education, Supervision and Monitoring

It shall be the responsibility of the Covington County Library System designated staff to be educated, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children’s Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children’s Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of designated staff.

Adoption

This Internet Safety Policy was adopted by the Administrative Board of Trustees of the Covington County Library System following discussion during an open public meeting held on October 2, 2015 and following publication of a legal public notice on September 23, 2015.