

STANDARDS OF SERVICE

Library's Mission Statement: The Antioch Public Library District provides materials and services to help the community residents obtain information meeting their recreational, educational, and professional needs. The Library features current high demand, high interest materials in a variety of formats for all ages. Special emphasis is placed on stimulating a child's interest and appreciation for reading and learning. The library supports students in meeting their educational objectives and it actively provides timely, accurate and useful information for its community.

To fulfill this mission to the people of Antioch we must provide "service". We do this by collecting, storing, and retrieving information. We must provide enough staff during the hours of operation to meet the patron's needs at a given moment. We must all organize our work similarly and we must understand the role each of us plays in that work. To that end the Library has adopted this personnel mission statement:

Personnel Mission Statement: We are committed to providing the highest level of service in everything we do. We are committed to projecting an image of service excellence through every employee. We are committed to practicing these Standards of Service Excellence with every employee every patron, individual or organization with whom we interact.

Part I: Standards for Employee's Personal Work Habits

A. Scheduling Flexibility: Providing service means that the library must have someone staffing its service desks every hour that it serves the public. This means that an employee may have to work nights and weekends. It may mean that an employee will have to work five days a week for his scheduled time in order to provide service. Sometimes it might mean a six day week or working a split day in order to meet the public demand. Therefore it is important that our employees be flexible enough to work whenever they are scheduled without hesitation. It is important that our employees accept schedule changes graciously.

B. Substitutes: Because our work is so specialized it is difficult to train and keep a pool of substitutes for those moments when illness, vacations or other legitimate reasons keep our staff away from their posts. We depend on our staff to substitute for other members of our team. We depend on the close feeling of team effort that comes when we all know that the work we perform is important to the community. We depend on each other.

C. Attendance: Quality service depends on the trained person to be at his/her post when assigned. It is important that absences be kept to a minimum.

D. Timeliness: Quality service depends on the trained person being at his/her post on time. It is important to be on time for every scheduled work experience.

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E. Personal Appearance: Personal appearance affects quality service. When a patron or team member is distracted from his purpose by his/her own or another team members appearance, service suffers. The distractions can come from radical hair colors or short attire to name a few items. A team member's appearance should be clean, neat and within the realm of accepted business attire, hairdos, jewelry, and makeup. This appearance will give the team and the team member confidence. A confident team member provides the best service.

F. Physical Fitness: Service depends upon the ability of the team member to work consistently and with only moderate fatigue.

G. Housekeeping: Team members need to keep their work areas clean and orderly in order to support the team's activity and to serve the patron.

Part II: Standards of Task Performance

Each member of our staff is a part of the team. As a part of the team, the rest of the staff depends on individual team members to perform their own tasks to support the activity of the team.

A. Accuracy: Accuracy is the correctness of work performed.

B. Alertness: Alertness is the ability to grasp instructions, to meet changing conditions and to solve novel or problem situations.

C. Creativity: Creativity is talent for having new ideas, for finding new and better ways of doing things and being imaginative.

D. Dependability: Dependability is the ability to do required jobs well with a minimum of supervision.

E. Drive: Drive is the desire to attain goals, to achieve.

F. Job Knowledge: Job knowledge is the information concerning work duties which an individual should know for a satisfactory job performance.

G. Quantity of Work: Quantity of work is the amount of work an individual does in a work day.

H. Stability: Stability is the ability to withstand pressure and to remain calm in a crisis situation.

I. Knowledge of Collection: A person's knowledge of the collection is his/her ability to use any book in the collection and their ability to find any book, material within the collection.

J. Professional Reading: Reading about one's profession is very important. It helps the team member keep up on new trends and innovations.

K. Machine Operation: Library work is getting more and more technical every year. A strong team member learns how to use all the machines in the facility. They should be able to use a typewriter, computer, microfilm reader, and paper copiers. It is also the ability of that person to change paper, ribbons, and cartridges, set margins, bring up programs, focus lenses or any other minor adjustments necessary to facilitate the patrons' use of the equipment.

Part III: Standards of Personal Behavior

A. Friendliness: Creating an atmosphere that makes patrons feel welcome the moment they enter the building. Greeting patrons with a "Hello!" when possible.

B. Attentiveness/Observant: Acknowledging with eye contact or a smile as quickly as possible the presence of an individual who approaches you. Patrons always come before paperwork. Being aware of the actions of an individual that may signal he or she may need special assistance

C. Enthusiasm: Being enthusiastic whether employed for only a few hours or full time. Enthusiasm is contagious, and not only does the work environment improve, but patrons look forward to visiting our library as well.

D. Empathy: "What if this were happening to me?" Is one of the best questions to asking yourself when an individual is experiencing a problem. "What would I want the library to do for me if I were in this situation?" gives us an indication of the action necessary to show that we understand and appreciate the situation that the person is in.

E. Knowledgeable: Developing a thorough knowledge of the library's services and which department(s) provides them. Using this knowledge to answer questions, solve problems or direct an individual to the appropriate department or individual.

F. Professionalism: Looking and conducting ourselves as professionals, regardless of our job classification. Professional appearance should be consistent with the highest standards in the field. Professional demeanor includes such things as refraining from personal conversations and telephone calls in the public view, refraining from eating, drinking or chewing gum in the public view, refraining from any negative comments about other employees, patrons, the library or other organizations in the public view.

G. Pride: Displaying an attitude of pride in the quality of our work and the services we provide. Acknowledging the achievements of our colleagues.

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H. Diplomacy: Be diplomatic. Although technically a patron may not always be right, it is essential that he or she always be treated as if he or she is not wrong. Care must be taken to avoid offending or embarrassing a patron.

I. Listening: Communication occurs only when what is being said is heard by the person to whom we are talking. We should always listen carefully to understand, not to judge a situation or individual. By understanding, we are able to respond in calming, confidence-building language and avoid aggravating, confidence-destroying language.

J. Personalized service: Avoiding robot-like responses. Learning and using patron's names. Recalling details of a patron's last visit that you can ask about, such as "Did you enjoy that novel?" Being sincere in wishes for a "Nice day."

K. Courtesy: Always conducting ourselves in a gracious and courteous manner to everyone.

L. Appreciation: Always thanking patrons for using our services and facility. Always thanking other employees for their thoughtfulness or help.

M. Cooperation: Being a "team player." Understanding, accepting and acting on these standards. Understanding that they are the benchmark against which all our activities will be seen and evaluated.

Part IV: Standards for Team Work

A. Willingness to Compromise: As a coworker, displaying nonconfrontational problem solving techniques. Such techniques would include negotiation to resolve differences of opinion.

B. Growth: The process of continually learning new skills and using them to support and educate the team.

C. Respect: Displaying respect for opinions even the unpopular ones.

D. Acceptance: Valuing the openness, honesty and the trust of all one's peers. Encouraging the feedback of all team members.

E. Self Esteem: Supports the team by helping to build self-esteem and integrity as well as productivity.

F. Commitment: Displays an attitude of doing anything necessary to achieve the goals of the team, the total organization.

Part V. Standards for Processes and Procedures

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A. Convenience: Within the framework of the library's purpose and mission, all our processes and procedures are designed for the convenience of the library patron, not ourselves. Our services and facilities must be easily understood and used. Our responsibility is to accommodate the patron.

B. Flexibility: Although rules and regulations are important, they can never be detailed or extensive enough to cover every situation. Rules cannot solve problems - people can. Rules exist to give us guidelines and parameters within which to solve problems. Unnecessary rules or rules that are too restrictive do not permit excellent service. These should be brought to the attention of management.

C. Solution-driven: Avoid giving a patron the run-a-round. Every effort should be made to respond positively to every question or complaint at the level it is received, even if the response is "Yes, that is a problem. Let me take you to someone who will help you."

D. Responsive: Always follow through with every request. Be as specific as possible with a patron concerning when he or she may expect a response. Always respond by the time we said we would, even if it is to tell the patron that we are still working on his or her request. Remember that the entire organization - every staff member - has promised the patron excellent service.

E. Image Conscious: Guarding and promoting our image, being aware that image and quality are linked. Understanding that every move we make, every word we say, every decision we make is always a statement about quality, and reveals to patrons what we think about ourselves, our services and them.

F. Efficiency/Accuracy: We are responsible to understand all procedures and processes and keep informed regarding changes so that all tasks can be performed correctly the first time they are done.

Part IV: Standards for Telephone Use

For many patrons, the telephone may be their first or only contact with the library. Their image of the library will be based on the impressions they receive over the telephone. We must make every effort to project over the telephone the same standards of excellence, the same desire to help, as we do in the library. We must be aware that, when serving a patron by telephone, we do not have the advantage of eye contact or body language to help us convey these standards, and therefore must concentrate fully on what we say and how we say it.

A. Answer the telephone by the third ring.

B. Use an enthusiastic, "Smiling" tone of voice.

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C. Answer with “Good morning (Good afternoon, Good evening), Antioch Public Library District. How may I help you?”

D. Allow the caller to hang up first to avoid the possibility of an additional comment or question, or the sound of our receiver being hung up.

E. When taking a message, always make sure it is complete: name, telephone number, date, and time of call, best time to return call, message takers initials, and message if possible.

F. When taking a call for an employee who is not at work or who is unavailable, answer “Mrs. LaBuda will be in on Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.” or “Jan is unavailable at the moment. May I take a message for her?” Never say “not in yet,” “at lunch,” “on vacation,” “in a meeting” or any other phrase of this nature.

G. Never give out any personal information about an employee over the telephone, such as name, address, telephone number or hours of employment.

H. If it is necessary to put a caller on hold, ask if he or she is able to hold. As much as possible, let the callers know how long he or she will be on hold, and give the option of having the call returned.

Part VII: Pro-active Standards

A. Every employee must be aware that these standards require the acceptance and cooperation of all to be effective. These standards are only as good as our understanding and implementation of them. Just as with rules and procedures, they are designed to be guidelines. They are regularly reviewed and revised.

B. Every employee is responsible to contribute ideas for change and improvement, or to communicate problems that they have in implementing these standards, no matter how small the ideas or problems may seem.

C. Employees should be aware that the administration of the library - Board of Trustees, Administrative Librarian and Department Heads are committed to these standards. The administration has the responsibility to respond to employee’s questions, problems and ideas concerning these standards. A major responsibility of administration is to enable employees to implement these standards.

D. Employees should look for opportunities to go beyond these standards when serving patrons. These “Added value actions will be remembered long after the need for a specific service has been met, and will cause a patron to support the library more strongly.