



# VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND & SAFETY POLICY

Friends of the Cuba Library, Inc.

## I. Purpose

Volunteers are essential to the operation, management, and purposes of the Friends of the Cuba Library, Inc. and the 'Friends' actively invite the participation of its members and community members to help in achieving its goal to support the library.

The purpose of this policy is to provide overall guidance in the involvement and management of volunteers, maintaining a safe environment for the community. These policies do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contract or personnel agreement. Areas not specifically covered shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

## II. Definition of Volunteer

A volunteer is a person who gives their time or labor to perform an on-site task, wherever the designated location may be, at the direction of and on behalf of the Friends of the Cuba Library, Inc. This labor is offered without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of agreed-upon expenses.

Volunteers shall not be considered employees of the Friends. To ensure smooth operations and avoid unreasonable administrative burdens for simple tasks (such as setting up for an event), any Committee Chair or Event Chair has the authority to accept a volunteer on behalf of the organization, provided the volunteer has completed the appropriate Self-Disclosure Statement and/or required background checks specified later in this policy.

## III. Volunteer Structure

To balance organizational safety with accessibility and low-barrier onboarding, the Friends of the Cuba Library, Inc. utilizes a two-tiered volunteer system based on the level of risk and responsibility associated with the volunteer's tasks:

### Tier 1: General Volunteers

1. **Practicable Roles:** Book and bake sale clerks, event setup and cleanup assistants, and general advocacy volunteers.
2. **Risk Level:** Low. These roles typically involve supervised activities.
3. **Screening Requirement:** To avoid pricey and lengthy background checks, Tier 1 volunteers are **not** required to submit to a formal background check. Instead, they must complete and sign the **Self-Disclosure Statement** (Section V) and act in accordance with organizational policies.



## Tier 2: High-Risk & Fiduciary Volunteers

- **Practicable Roles:** Elected officers, Board of Director members, or any volunteer who regularly and independently handles large sums of cash, including but not limited to, amounts that would reasonably require additional oversight.
- **Risk Level:** High. These roles carry substantial fiduciary, financial, or direct safety responsibilities.
- **Screening Requirement:** Tier 2 volunteers must complete and sign the **Self-Disclosure Statement** (Section V) **and** submit the necessary information for a formal background check prior to nomination, appointment, or acceptance.

## IV. Background Check Protocols

To uphold our commitment to a safe and secure environment for everyone involved with the Library, the following procedures apply:

1. **Submission:** Background check information for Tier 2 volunteers will be submitted to a professional consumer reporting agency or background check service designated at the discretion of the Board of Directors. The selected service must be capable of searching multi-jurisdictional databases, county criminal courts, and national sex offender registries. Submissions may be completed securely online or by other approved methods by the President and verified by the Recording Secretary.
2. **Frequency:** Background check information for Tier 2 volunteers will be resubmitted to the designated background check service at least once every five years.
3. **Mandatory Disqualification:** Anyone with a sexual offense conviction is strictly ineligible to be a volunteer in any capacity. To ensure continuous safety, a search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) and/or state registries shall be conducted each year, between January 1 and March 31, for all elected officers, Board of Directors, and committee chairs, using a service designated by the Board.
4. **Refusal:** Refusal to submit to a background check when required shall preclude the individual from serving in a high-risk or fiduciary volunteer position.
5. **Confidentiality:** All personal volunteer information collected is for internal purposes only and shall be kept strictly confidential.

Backgrounds that are inconsistent with our mission or create unacceptable risk for a particular event or role, may result in a volunteer role being denied.

## V. Volunteer Self-Disclosure Statement

All volunteers (Tier 1 and Tier 2) must complete and sign the Volunteer Attestation & Self-Disclosure form prior to performing any volunteer tasks.



## VI. Supervision and Safety

To ensure the safety of both our volunteers and the community, the Friends of the Cuba Library, Inc. maintains a "Buddy System" approach to volunteerism:

1. **Supervision:** No volunteer should be scheduled to work alone while performing tasks on behalf of the organization.
2. **Tier 1 Limitations:** To the extent practicable, Tier 1 volunteers should work within sight or sound of a Tier 2 volunteer, a Board member, or Library staff.
3. **Facility Safety:** To the extent practicable, a single volunteer should not be the sole representative of the Friends when interacting with the public, and/or minors.

## VII. Youth Volunteers

Student members and youth under the age of 18 who serve in a volunteer capacity shall be accompanied by a parent or guardian or shall provide a written letter of permission to participate prior to volunteering. The letter shall be formally accepted in a monthly board meeting and filed with the meeting minutes.

## VIII. Service at Discretion and Removal

Friends of the Cuba Library, Inc. accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the Friends. Volunteers agree that the Friends of the Cuba Library, Inc. may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the organization.

Consistent with the organization's Bylaws, the Board of Directors retains the right to remove any officer, board member, or committee chair for any reason by a majority vote of the Board. Furthermore, discovery of a falsified Self-Disclosure Statement or failure to pass a required background check will result in immediate removal from the organization.

# VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Friends of the Cuba Library!

Please complete this form and return it to any Committee Chair or Event Coordinator.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Events you would help with:

- Book Sales
- Spring Tea
- Bake Sales
- Cheers, Cheese, & Chocolate
- Small Town Christmas Activities

## Which things are you willing to help with?

- Event Setup & Cleanup  
*(Lifting, moving tables, decorating)*
- Book Sales  
*(Sorting books, cashiering, stocking)*
- Bake Sales  
*(Baking items, serving, event greeting)*
- Fundraising  
*(Ticket sales, planning, spreading awareness)*
- Administrative  
*(Mailings, phone calls)*

## Volunteer Attestation & Self-Disclosure

I hereby certify that the information provided by me in this application is true, correct, and complete. I understand that any misstatement or omission of fact on this statement may result in my immediate dismissal as a volunteer.

### I certify that:

I have never been convicted of a sexual offense.

I have not been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor involving theft, fraud, physical violence, or child endangerment within the past seven (7) years.

I agree to comply with all New York State laws, the policies of Friends of the Cuba Library, Inc., and the policies of the Cuba Circulating Library. I understand that I am responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which I may be exposed while serving as a volunteer.

I understand that my service is at the sole discretion of the Friends and that the relationship may be severed by either party at any time.

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

For Office Use Only:

[ ] Tier 1 [ ] Tier 2

Received By (Name/Title): \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_