

Highgate Library and Community Center



Policies

Table of Contents

Mission and Objectives	4
Personnel Policy.....	5
Non-Discrimination Policy	5
Timesheets.....	5
Vacation, Sick and Holidays	5
Director Remote Work Policy.....	5
Health Insurance	6
Retirement	6
Probationary Period	6
Bereavement Leave	6
Jury/Witness Duty	6
Staff Children at Work.....	6
Subs.....	6
Annual Evaluations	6
Emergency Closures	7
Discipline and Grievances.....	7
General Library Policies	8
Library Use	8
Rules of Conduct.....	8
Incident Report.....	9
Supervision of Children in the Library.....	9
Use of Facilities and Grounds.....	9
Loan and Overdue Policy.....	10
Library Hours	10
Cooperation with Other Libraries.....	11
Services of the Library	11
Computer and Internet Usage	12
Materials Selection Policy	13
Confidentiality	14
Function of Board of Trustees.....	14
Library Forms	
Building Use Agreement	16

Disciplinary Action Form 17

Patron Complaint Form..... 18

MISSION

Our mission is to promote community growth and engagement. We provide and support diverse lifelong learning opportunities in an inclusive, imaginative, and welcoming environment.

General Objectives

1. To assemble, preserve, and administer educational and recreational materials, to promote communication of ideas, enlightened citizenship, and personal enrichment.
2. To serve the community as a center of diverse and unbiased information.
3. To provide a place where inquisitive minds may encounter original, sometimes unorthodox and critical ideas.
4. To foster and maintain a close working relationship with local schools whose students make use of the library.
5. To maintain continuing contact with the Vermont Department of Libraries and other libraries.
6. To work in concert with other community organizations.
7. To provide opportunity and encouragement for all persons to pursue lifelong learning experiences.

Personnel Policy

Non-Discrimination Policy:

It is the policy of the Highgate Library and Community Center to provide equal employment opportunity to all regardless of race, religion, color, sex, marital or civil union status, disability, ancestry, age, national origin, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

Timesheets:

The Director will email all timesheets bi-weekly to the Town Treasurer for approval and payment. All employees must properly and accurately account for their time (hours worked, vacation, and sick hours) on their daily time cards. All time within their normal work hours must be accounted for. The Director will email all timesheets bi-weekly to the Town Treasurer for approval and payment.

Vacation, Holidays, and Time off:

Full time employees at the HLCC shall accrue vacation, sick, and personal days at the same rate as other full time Highgate town employees. See Town of Highgate Personnel Rules, Benefits, and Guidelines: Article IV, Section 4.1 Vacation; 4.3 Sick Time; 4.6 Holidays.

Director Remote Work Policy

This policy applies exclusively to the Director of HLCC and does not extend to other staff or volunteers unless separately authorized by the Trustees.

The Director is expected to work on-site during hours the library is open, a minimum of 32 hours per week, and may work remotely, not to exceed 8 hours per week, under the following conditions:

- Remote work must not interfere with the Director's ability to fulfill core responsibilities, including staff supervision, community engagement, and operational oversight.

Trustees reserve the right to modify or revoke remote work privileges at any time based on performance, community needs, or operational requirements.

This policy is effective immediately.

Health Insurance:

See Town of Highgate Personnel Rules, Benefits, and Guidelines: Article III-Compensation , Section 3.6 Insurance.

Retirement Program:

See Town of Highgate Personnel Rules, Benefits, and Guidelines: Article III-Compensation, Section 3.7 Retirement Program.

Probationary Period:

See Town Personnel Rules, Benefits, and Guidelines: Article II, Section 2.6

Bereavement Leave:

See Town Personnel Rules, Benefits, and Guidelines; Article III, Section 3.8, Funeral Leave.

*Additional leave may be granted pending the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Jury/Witness Duty:

See Town of Highgate Personnel Rules, Benefits, and Guidelines: Article IV, Section 4.9

Staff Children at Work:

Children of staff are encouraged to use HLCC as patrons. It is inappropriate for any staff member to use HLCC facilities as an alternative to regular childcare. Infrequent emergency situations, such as the sickness of a babysitter, or for short periods when a child may stop to visit or wait for transportation, are acceptable. During these periods, it is the responsibility of the staff member/parent to ensure that the child's behavior is appropriate when in the building and that the child is not disruptive to patrons, staff members, of programs.

Subs:

Any sub, when needed, will be paid at minimum, the Vermont minimum wage. All subs must pass a state and federal background check prior to being approved for work.

Annual Evaluations:

An annual written evaluation will be completed between May and June for the Director by the Board of Trustees.

During this same time period, the Director will complete Support Staff evaluations and notify the board of completion.

Completed evaluations will be filed with the Town Human Resources designee. An employee's personnel file is available for their inspection and copying per the Town of Highgate Personnel Policy, Section 1.8.

Emergency Closures:

In the event of an emergency closure, the library may be closed at the discretion of the Library Director in conjunction with the Board of Trustees. No one else has the authority to close the library. In the event of an unexpected closure, the Director will update social media accounts and staff. In the absence of a Director, this decision and implementation would be made by the staff in conjunction with the Board of Trustees.

Discipline and Grievances:

The Highgate Library and Community Center follows these disciplinary steps:

- 1) Oral warning
- 2) Written warning via Disciplinary Action Form
- 3) Suspension from duty
- 4) Termination

An aggrieved employee will discuss or submit a written grievance with their appropriate supervisor (Support Staff to Director; Director to full Board Library Trustees) within five working days of the time in which the grievance action took place. The supervisor will give a verbal response within 5 working days of the discussion.

All staff are to receive a copy of HLCC policies, Town of Highgate Personnel Policies, and their Job Description when hired and will be notified in writing each time a revision is made.

The Board of Trustees has the final authority over the interpretation of all HLCC policies. The Director has the responsibility for the day-to-day administration of policies.

General Objectives

Who May Use the Library:

Anyone is entitled to use the library facilities, resources, and programs. However, in order to borrow materials, patrons must register with the library by filling out a Library Card Application and getting a Highgate Library Card.

Residents and Non-Residents:

Adults: All residents of Highgate and non-residents are eligible to register for a library card free of charge. Adults under guardianship must have their registration countersigned by the guardian.

Juveniles: All children of Highgate and surrounding towns may register for a library card. Parents/guardians are required to sign their registration. The application states that the parents/guardians alone have the responsibility to restrict their child's reading and computer use, not the library staff.

Rules of Conduct in the Library:

The library is a public space and library patrons and staff share the responsibility of making it a safe and welcoming place. The use of the library or its services may be denied for due cause such as, but not limited to, the destruction of library property, disturbance of other patrons and/or staff, through, but not limited to, abusive, threatening, obscene language, or any other objectionable conduct on the library premises or during any library programming. Library patrons whose behaviors are disruptive or who interfere with others' use of the library will be required to leave the library.

HLCC has a zero-violence policy. Any acts of violence towards a staff member or patron of HLCC will be handled by local law enforcement.

Library patrons will respect the rights of others to use the library in peace. Respectful behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Not using tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal substances in the library or on library property
- Not using obscene, threatening, harassing, or inappropriate language/behavior in the library or on library property
- Bringing only service animals or animals used as part of a program into the library

Library patrons will treat the library materials and other library property, as well as library staff, with care and respect. The privilege of borrowing library materials may be denied at any time by the Director for abuses such as, but not limited to, repeatedly neglecting to return materials when

they are due and refusing to reimburse the library for damages to or loss of books and other materials.

Incident Report:

If there are concerns regarding library programs or staff or patron behavior, please file an incident report with the Director or Highgate Human Resources Director immediately.

All complaints shall be referred to the Director or Highgate Human Resources Director, who shall initiate the following procedures:

1. The complainant must file their concern in writing and they will be given an incident report to complete.
2. The Director will review the report, speak with the complainant, consult library policies, and determine the type of action that is necessary (if any).
3. The Trustees will be notified of any incident report that has been filed at their next scheduled meeting. The issue may be discussed at a legally warned Board meeting and a group decision may be made on how to proceed.

The Director or Chair of the Board of Trustees will inform the complainant via letter on the outcome of a Board decision.

Supervision of Children in the Library:

Parents, legal guardians, and/or a responsible caregiver are always responsible for the well-being and safety of their children/the children in their care while at the library.

- Toddler and preschool age children shall at all times be attended to and adequately supervised by parents, guardians, or a responsible caregiver (excluding library staff) while at the library or a library sponsored event.
- School-aged children must adhere to the library's rules, regulations, and policies.
- Parents/guardians assume all liability for damages done by their children at the library. This includes damage to materials, computers, furnishings, or to the facility itself.
- Director will notify parent, guardians, or responsible caregivers whose children are in need of additional supervision and/or are not following library rules or expectations.
- The library is not responsible for enforcing the restrictions a parent/guardian deems appropriate in terms of the materials the child may access.

Use of the Facilities and Grounds:

The library is available for use as a meeting space, as long as they do not interfere with the regular library programming and use. Permission from the Library Director or the Board of Trustees is

necessary before any meeting can be scheduled in the library. Groups using the library must fill out a Building Use Agreement form and submit for approval.

No fee is charged for the use of the library space, although donations to the library may be accepted if offered.

Loan and Overdue Policy:

1. Library materials are loaned for a two-week period.
 - a. There are no overdue fines, but patrons are encouraged to make donations to a conscience fund.
2. A patron may place a hold on material available at the HLCC. Holds can be placed through the HLCC online catalogue-as long as the registered borrower has their online account set up. The initial online account setup (username and password) needs to be done by staff.
 - a. Holds can also be placed on material by staff members.
 - b. Items placed on hold will only be held for one week from the date of the first notification.
3. Renewals are possible for materials that are not considered New or on reserve by other patrons. Renewals may be done by patrons through their online account, or by calling the library. There is a limit of two consecutive renewals.
4. Library materials that are not available at HLCC may be requested through inter-library loan (ILL). The exception to this is new releases, as libraries will not lend items newer than six months.
 - a. A patron may only have three ILL requests (in process or checked out) at a time. New requests will not be placed until one or all of the previous items have been returned.
5. Borrowers may be billed or borrowing privileges revoked for non-returned, damaged, or lost materials, at the current purchase price, to be determined by the Director.

Library Hours:

1. The library will remain open on a regular schedule. Hours of operation will be determined by the Director, with approval of the Board of Trustees, in accordance with the needs of the community and will be posted at the front door.
2. The library will be closed on all State and Federal holidays.
3. The library Director, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, may call for the closing of the library or a delay in opening due to inclement weather or unexpected reasons. A closing notice will be given as far in advance as possible and will be posted on social media and on the door if possible.

Cooperation with Other Libraries:

HLCC realizes that it is the right of every person to have total library service available to their own town, and that the only means of accomplishing this is by full cooperation with other libraries.

HLCC accepts the responsibility for securing information beyond its own resources by borrowing material through ILL and through the Vermont Department of Libraries Special Service Unit.

HLCC will work with the local schools and school librarians to provide coordinated and complete services for children and young adults. The school library serves the child in their school life; the public library serves the child's community life. The services of the two agencies should complement each other.

Services of the Library:

1. The library provides programs, books, and other materials for information, entertainment, intellectual development, and enrichment of the people in the community.
2. The library will endeavor to do the following:
 - Select, organize, and make available books and other materials
 - Provide guidance and assistance to patrons
 - Initiate programs and exhibits
 - Cooperate with other community agencies and organizations
 - Secure information beyond its own resources when requested
 - Lend to other libraries upon request
 - Maintain a balance in its services to various age groups
 - Cooperate with and enhance, but not perform, the function of the school or other institutional libraries
 - Periodically review and evaluate library services being offered
3. Area daycare centers and school groups (including after-school and summer camps/programs) are encouraged to bring supervised groups to the library, providing they have notified the Director of their intentions. Special story hours and orientation sessions or specifically requested programs may be arranged at the discretion of the Director.
4. Books or other materials may not be purchased from the collection. Materials which no longer meets the stated objectives of the library, including outdated, seldom used, or worn items, are systematically removed from the collection. Only these items that have been discarded may be purchased at scheduled book sales.

Computer and Internet Use:

The library provides its patrons with electronic information resources.

The Director will establish procedures for use of HLCC computers and internet access, in order to ensure equitable access to resources. Library staff will not monitor an individual's internet use, except for the length of use, in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone. The user, or the parent of a minor, is responsible for their internet session at all times. Wi-fi users are expected to comply with all library policies regarding the use of the internet.

HLCC reserves the right to terminate an internet session that disrupts library services or that involves user behavior that violates the library policies. As with all library resources, the library affirms the right and responsibility of parents or guardians, not the library staff, to determine and monitor use of the library resources and facilities, including the internet, by people under the age of 18 years. Parents who believe that their children cannot responsibly make use of the library's internet access are requested to monitor their children's internet use.

Library users are reminded that computers are located in public areas where screens are easily viewed by staff and other patrons of all ages. Individuals are expected to respect the sensibilities of others when accessing potentially offensive content.

Access to the internet is a privilege. Library users are expected to use the internet in a responsible and ethical manner. This includes complying with library policy as well as local, state, and federal laws while using the internet.

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using library computers or wireless connection for any purpose that violates local, state, or federal laws (including, but not limited to, committing fraud, hacking, or engaging in communications which are libelous or slanderous)
- Using library computers to engage in threatening or harassing communications
- Offering for sale or use any substance of which the possession or use of is prohibited by law
- Viewing, transmitting, or downloading any illegal materials
- Viewing child pornography
- Violating copyright law or software licenses
- Compromising the privacy of users
- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to the library's network or to cause degradation of system performance
- Uploading any form of harmful programming or vandalism
- Attempting to install or delete software on any of the library computers

- Altering the library computer settings, moving library equipment, or in any way modifying or damaging the library computer equipment or software
- Disrupting the intended use the library computers

Response to violations: The user's access to the library computer network and internet connectivity is a privilege, not a right. Failure to comply with this policy and computer use procedures will result in the loss of computer/internet privileges at HLCC.

Materials Selection Policy:

Please remember that ownership does not imply endorsement.

1. Responsibility of the selection: The responsibility for the selection of materials rests with the library Director.
2. Selection Criteria: Selection of library material shall be made on the basis of interest, information, and enlightenment of the people of the service area. No material shall be excluded because of race, nationality, religion, gender preference, or political views.

The guidelines for selection of materials includes:

- Recreational, educational, and/or informational value
 - Representation of varying points of view
 - Authority, effectiveness, and timeliness of presentation
 - Availability of materials elsewhere (ILL, SSU)
 - Funds and space
3. Selection Tools: The library subscribes to current selection tools and the library Director attends material review sessions when offered to help in the selection process.
 4. Gifts: Gifts will be accepted at the discretion of the Director. The same criteria that applies to purchased materials will apply to gifts.
 5. Challenged Materials: Despite the care taken to select materials for the public, and the qualifications of those people who select the materials, the patrons might make occasional objections to a selection.

HLCC abides by and supports the principle of the Freedom to Read statement and the Library Bill of Rights. All complaints shall be referred to the Director who shall initiate the following procedures:

1. The complainant must file their objections in writing (Patron Complaint Form)
2. Director will read and examine the complaint
3. Meet with the complainant, review written complaint, and explain the position on the material
4. Inform the Board of Trustees

5. If the complainant desires, the Trustees will review the challenged material to determine if it meets the criteria set forth in the Selection Policy and determine if the procedure outlined above has been followed.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality: All records relating to the library patrons and their use of library materials and services, including computer and internet use are confidential. Under 22VSA § 172 only authorized library personnel shall have access to patron records and only for necessary library administrative purposes. The library will not share patron registration or transaction records without written permission from the patron to whom the records pertain, except in response to an authorized judicial order or warrant directing disclosure, or to custodial parents or guardians of patrons under 16. Parents seeking records of their minor children, under age 16, may be asked to provide proof of their child's age, as well as evidence that they are the custodial parent.

Library users who have concerns or complaints about the library's handling of their confidential information should file written comments with the Director. 22VSA § 172 authorizes civil action if patrons feel their confidentiality rights have been violated.

Registration: A number system for registering borrowers will be used to ensure privacy. All patrons upon registering for a library card and or updating their records may receive a copy of Information for Borrowers which states: "As required by 22VSA § 172, all library records of individuals age 16 or over are confidential unless an individual waives that right through written permission. Records of individuals under age 16 may be released upon request to custodial parent(s) or guardian(s) as indicated on the individual's library card application. (It is the responsibility of the custodial parent(s) or guardian(s) to notify the library of changes.)

Circulation: The library circulation records, computer, and their hard drives are confidential and shall not be made available to any agency of local, state, or federal government except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of and pursuant to, local, state, or federal law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures of legislative investigatory powers.

Functions of the Board of Trustees:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the following:

1. Selection of and supervising of a competent library Director
2. Adopting and implementing the written policies and bylaws to govern operations of HLCC
3. Attendance and participation at monthly board meeting
4. Working for financial support of HLCC, assist in preparing a yearly operations budget with the Director and the Town Treasurer, and presenting it to the voters
5. Planning for the future development of the library

6. Informing the Select Board of the maintenance needs of the library buildings and grounds
7. Assisting in fundraising events

The Board of Trustees has the final authority over the interpretation of all library policies. The Director has the responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the policies.



Highgate Library and Community Center

Building Use Agreement

Please sign and return along with your Building Use Form

- Please schedule your space to avoid conflicts with other programs/events, by contacting librarian@highgatevt.org
- Please be respectful of our workspace and those using the building. If you are using the room during operating hours, please maintain a considerate level of noise.
- Please remember to leave things as you found them when you arrived.
- Do not use the computers unless they are specifically requested to be used for your event.
- If you need to make copies there will be a charge. Please work with the Director for further information.

Thank you for your cooperation and help in keeping our building in tip-top shape for our community! By signing this you/your organization/group is agreeing to respect the building use agreement and understands that at any time the Director and/or Board of Trustees feels that this agreement is not being honored, all building use privileges will be revoked.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____



Highgate Library and Community Center

Disciplinary Action Form

Employee Name: _____

Date: _____

Reason for Disciplinary Action: (Check all that apply)

____ Attendance

____ Conduct

____ Insubordination

____ Productivity

____ Safety

____ Quality

____ Miscellaneous

You are receiving this disciplinary warning because of the following actions:

Unless the problem is corrected, further disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination of your employment.

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Board Representative Signature: _____ Date: _____

Patron Complaint Form

Please complete all fields below. We will resolve your complaint quickly and fairly.

Date:_____ Name:_____

Address:_____

E-mail:_____ Phone Number:_____

Are you a Highgate Library and Community Center cardholder? _____

Please briefly explain the nature of your complaint in the space below. Please use additional space as necessary.

Please include the following information:

- Location, date, and time of complaint
- Names of those involved
- Nature of the complaint
- Effort(s) made to solve the complaint
- Desired action

Signature:_____ Date:_____