

CHEROKEE REGIONAL LIBRARY

PERSONNEL POLICY

PURPOSE

The Cherokee Regional Library System has prepared this personnel policy manual for the information and convenience of its employees. It serves as a guide and source of information for employees and is not intended in any way to be construed as binding employment contract.

Employment at the library is voluntarily entered into and employees are free to resign at will at any time, with or without cause. Similarly, the Cherokee Regional Library System is an at will employer. All employees are hired on an at-will basis; the employment relationship may be terminated at will at any time, with or without cause, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

This policy manual is specifically for employees, both locally and state funded, who are employees of the Cherokee Regional Library System assigned to work at the Regional Administrative Headquarters, and the libraries located in Trenton, Chickamauga, LaFayette, and Rossville.

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PERSONNEL POLICY CHEROKEE REGIONAL LIBRARY

ARTICLE I. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Section 1. Hours of work.

A. Standard work week.

The standard work week for employees of the Cherokee Regional Library shall be 40 hours per week. The work week begins at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday.

B. Saturday, Sunday and night hours.

Saturday, Sunday and night hours are part of the weekly schedule.

C. Schedules.

Schedules are assigned by the Director or a person designated by the Director, taking into consideration the needs of the Library first, and when possible, the personal preferences of the employees.

D. Changes in schedules.

Changes in employees' schedules shall be approved by the Director or the person designated by the Director.

E. Schedule adjustments.

1. Forty-hour-per-week employees.

If it becomes necessary for an employee to work more than his/her assigned number of hours per week, a schedule adjustment providing the employee equivalent time off must be made within the standard work week. Library Managers and other supervisors are expected to consult in advance with the Director about assignments requiring additional hours if it is expected that adjustments cannot be made according to this policy.

2. Employees working less than forty hours per week.

When the library requires the additional hours, employees who work less than forty hours may be scheduled for additional hours within the work week up to but not exceeding forty hours.

When it is necessary to schedule part-time employees for hours beyond their regular, approved number of hours per week, adjustments must be made in their schedules within the pay period (calendar month) in order not to exceed the approved number of hours for the pay period.

Part-time is defined as 29 hours or less.

3. Pay for extra hours.

If funds are available and at the Director's discretion, pay for the extra hours may be given. If pay is provided, it shall be at regular rates if the employee's total work time for the standard work week is forty or less. If the total work time for the work week is more than forty hours, time and a half shall be paid.

4. Schedules in emergencies.

If an emergency occurs so late in the week that a schedule adjustment is not possible, the Library Manager should consult with the Director.

F. Time for meals and relaxation (break time).

1. Meals.

Up to one hour of the employee's own time is allowed for lunch or supper. If an employee works more than six hours in a day, at least ½ hour must be scheduled as a meal break.

2. Break time.

Break time is scheduled to provide employees with a break during the workday. Fifteen minutes during the first four hours and fifteen minutes during the second four hours of library time may be taken by the employee to refresh him/herself. Break time may not be used to extend lunch or dinner hours, or to leave work early, nor may morning and afternoon break times be combined and taken at one time. If break time is not taken at the scheduled times, it is lost, and the library has no obligation to reimburse the employee in any way for this time.

G. Fair Labor Standards Act.

All professional positions have exempt status under the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Other positions may also meet the requirements for exempt status.

H. Meetings, workshops, training activities, conferences, and work at sites other than the employee's usual place of work that are assigned and/or approved by the Director are considered work assignments. Any changes in those assignments must be approved in advance by the Director.

Section 2. Pay period.

The library pay cycle is semi-monthly. Payroll dates are the second and fourth Thursday of each month. When these dates fall on a holiday, payroll will run the business day before the holiday. A time clock system will be provided, and paychecks will be cut only from the information provided on the time cards.

Employees are paid by electronic deposit into their designated bank accounts. The Business Office will send each employee a check stub detailing all withholdings and deductions.

Section 3. Holidays.

- A. Salaried and regularly scheduled employees who work 30 hours per week or more will receive their usual pay for the following holidays:

NEW YEAR'S DAY
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY
MEMORIAL DAY
INDEPENDENCE DAY
LABOR DAY
THANKSGIVING PLUS THE FOLLOWING DAY
CHRISTMAS DAY PLUS THE NORMAL "OPEN DAY" BEFORE
AND THE NORMAL "OPEN DAY" AFTER

The library will remain closed on these holidays. If the employee is *not* regularly scheduled to work on the day on which the holiday falls, she/he takes a SUBSTITUTE DAY, or part of a SUBSTITUTE DAY as a HOLIDAY with pay as follows:

<u>If working.....</u>	<u>Hours allowed....</u>
39-40 hours	8 hours substitute holiday
30-38 hours	6 hours substitute holiday

All substitute days must be scheduled with the employee's supervisor. Generally, they will not be scheduled during the holiday week.

- B. Birthday Leave

All employees shall be given a time off on his or her birthday, according to the pro-rated holiday schedule. Anyone working part-time whose birthday does not fall on their regularly scheduled work day will be entitled to 5 hours of compensatory time. The time off may be re-scheduled for either the convenience of the library or the convenience of the employee. Birthday leave must be requested on the Leave Request Form at least two weeks prior to the day the employee wishes to take it. If the date requested is not in the best interests of the library's public service, the employee shall be asked to select another date within one month after the employee's birthday.

Birthday leave may be used to extend annual leave if the annual leave is scheduled within the one-month period that the Birthday Leave may be taken.

Section 4. Annual Leave.

A. Full-time is defined as 30 hours and above.

All newly hired employees will earn annual leave during their six month probationary period but leave may not be taken until the end of a satisfactory probation period.

B. Full-time, locally paid employees.

Each full-time, locally-paid employee shall earn annual leave for each full calendar month of consecutive service at the Cherokee Regional Library System as follows:

Leave earned in hours per calendar month

	Up to 5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	15+ years
39-40 hrs/wk	8	10	14	18
30-38 hrs/wk	6	8	10	12

C. Full-time professional employees.

Each full-time librarian and other professional employees shall earn annual leave for each full calendar month of consecutive service at the Cherokee Regional Library System as follows:

Leave earned in hours per calendar month

Up to 5 years at CRL	14 hours
5-10 years	16 hours
10-15 years	18 hours
15+ years	20 hours

D. Part-time employees on a regular schedule.

Part-time employees working 29 hours or less do not earn annual leave.

No annual leave allowance is given those employed on a temporary, substitute, or contractual basis.

Employees who leave and then are re-employed at a later date do not retain the right to leave based on previous time worked.

E. Reporting and scheduling of leave.

All requests for any number of days of annual leave shall be submitted to the Director (or person designated by the Director) in advance. Requests shall be submitted on the Annual Leave Request Form (available from the Regional Office). Requests for more than two days' leave should be submitted at least two weeks in advance. The Director shall schedule vacations to interfere to the least possible extent with the operation of the library and to provide, insofar as possible, for the preferences of employees. Annual leave is scheduled at the convenience of the library.

F. Annual leave accumulation.

Annual leave may be accumulated to a maximum of the individual's annual allotment plus one-half of the annual allotment. Employees are encouraged to use each year's annual leave allowance in the year in which it is earned. When the maximum has been accumulated, no additional annual leave will be earned until some of the accrued leave has been taken.

G. Annual leave taken as earned.

Annual leave must be earned before being taken. Leave is earned at the end of the 7th day of the month.

H. Leave of absence without pay.

When an employee is on leave of absence without pay, she/he does not earn annual leave credits.

I. Separated employees.

Employees who resign or retire or are dismissed from library employment shall be paid for accrued vacation leave.

Employees terminated for cause are not compensated for annual leave.

Section 5. Sick Leave.

A. Definition of sick leave.

Leave from work with pay may be charged as sick leave if the absence is due to sickness, bodily injury, quarantine, required physical and dental examination or treatment that cannot be arranged outside of the employee's scheduled working hours for the employee and his/her minor children, exposure to a contagious disease when continued work might jeopardize the health of others, or illness in the employee's immediate family (spouse, child, parent, brother, or sister, or anyone who lives with the employee and/or is recognized by law as a dependent).

B. Reporting illness.

An employee who is sick must report to his/her supervisor, and supervisors to the Director, an hour before his or her starting time, so that arrangements may be made to cover assignments. A person who becomes ill while working must report to his/her supervisor before leaving work.

C. Amount and accumulation of sick leave.

Each employee working 30 hours or more shall earn leave at a rate as follows:

<u>If working Hours</u>	<u>Earn Hrs. per Month</u>	<u>Maximum accumulation</u>
39-40	10	240
30-38	8	192

If more is needed, the Director will consider special circumstances. Temporary employees and employees working 29 hours per week or less do not earn sick leave.

Sick leave must be earned before being taken. Leave is earned at the end of the 7th day of the month.

D. Physician's certificate.

A physician's statement will be required if:

1. The employee is not at work for five or more consecutive work days due to illness/injury.
2. The employee's illness/injury requires treatment by a physician.

The physician's statement must include a statement that the employee was treated and the physician's release for the employee to resume his/her work, along with a statement of any restrictions in activity the employee must observe and the length of time such restrictions are expected to continue. If the physician's release to return to work includes restrictions, the employee must return to the physician at the end of the anticipated restricted period for a full release or an additional statement of restrictions.

- E. Fraudulent use of sick leave.

False or fraudulent use of sick leave is cause for disciplinary action and may result in the employee's dismissal.

- F. Workers' Compensation-related medical appointments.

Employees who have medical appointments for conditions resulting from job-related physical injury, illness, or other conditions requiring medical evaluation and treatment covered by Workers' Compensation shall be allowed to keep such appointments on work time. If the appointment requires time beyond the employee's regular work day, that shall not be considered overtime or additional time requiring pay or compensatory time off.

- G. Separated employees.

Employees who resign, retire or are dismissed from library employment shall not be paid for any accrued sick leave.

- H. If the employee is on sick leave, and while s/he is out the library is closed for inclement weather, emergencies, or other reasons determined by the Director, the employee must take the full time s/he was originally scheduled to work for that day as sick leave, rather than reducing the time of the sick leave by the amount of time the library was closed.

Section 6. Maternity Leave.

A. Eligibility.

Any female employee who works 25 hours or more per week is eligible for maternity leave—under the provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act.

B. Request for maternity leave.

Upon submission of a physician's statement to the Director, female employees may be granted all accrued annual and sick leave during any pregnancy.

A pregnant employee shall notify her supervisor and the Director in writing at least two months before the anticipated due date when the baby is expected and her plans for the length of her absence using sick and/or annual leave, short-term disability, family leave, or leave without pay. This will allow the supervisor and the Director to make plans for scheduling the continued activities of the employee's position in her absence. The supervisor and the director to make plans for scheduling the continued activities of the employee's position in her absence. The supervisor and the director must be notified of any change in these plans or of any medical or family emergencies as soon as possible.

C. Duration of leave.

The employee will be expected to return to work within six weeks of delivery, except when the employee qualifies for an extension through the Family Leave policy.

There is no prescribed time before delivery that a pregnant employee must cease working. She may continue working for as long as the conditions of her pregnancy do not adversely affect either her work performance or her health, as determined by her physician and her supervisor. If the employee has no sick and/or annual leave, she must qualify for Family Leave.

D. Return to work.

The employee's permanent position and all benefits accrued by the employee prior to taking Maternity Leave shall remain in place pending the employee's return to work. The Cherokee Regional Library System may employ a temporary employee to execute the duties of the position during the permanent employee's absence.

E. Continuation of benefits during leave.

Employees on Maternity Leave without pay do not accumulate leave. Health benefits under the State Health Benefit Plan may be continued under certain circumstances. The employee should contact the Cherokee Regional Library System Business Office for information about continuing health benefits during leave without pay.

F. A male employee who wishes to take leave to assist in the care of his own newborn or newly adopted child may do so by following the same procedures.

Section 7. Family Leave.

Under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) any employee who has been employed for at least 12 months, and has worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period before any leave, may take up to twelve weeks of leave during a 12-month period measured forward from the date an employee's first FMLA leave begins. An employee is entitled to leave without pay for the birth or adoption of a child to care for that child; the placement of a foster child to care for that child; the serious illness of a child, spouse or parent to care for that person; or due to the employee's serious illness, which illness renders the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's position. The twelve (12) weeks include total accrued annual and sick leave balances and unpaid leave.

A. Request for leave.

A request for unpaid family leave, stating the reason and the dates of leave requested, must be submitted in writing to the employee's supervisor, and approved by the Library Director. In the case that such leave is foreseeable, as for the expected birth or adoption of a child; the employee shall make his or her request at least 30 days in advance of the expected date of commencement of the leave. If an employee is absent for more than five days due to a FMLA-

qualifying reason, the library will notify the employee within two business days that the leave will be counted against the employee's annual FMLA leave entitlement.

The FMLA permits employees to take leave on an intermittent basis or to work a reduced schedule under certain circumstances.

B. Certification of medical condition.

The Director may request written certification of the medical condition of the employee, or the employee's child, spouse or parent, including the date on which the condition began, the probable duration of the condition, a statement that the employee is needed to care for the child, spouse or parent, and an estimate of the amount of time that the employee will be needed. The Director may request that the employee obtain, at Library expense, the opinion of a second health-care provider when certifying the need for a leave of absence. If a second opinion differs from the first, the Director may request, at Library expense, a third opinion which shall be the final opinion, binding on the Library and the employee.

C. Reporting.

The employee's supervisor or the Director may request employees on Family Leave to report periodically on their status and intention to return to work.

D. Return to work.

The employee's permanent position and all benefits accrued by the employee prior to taking Family Leave shall remain in place pending the employee's return to work. The Cherokee Regional Library System may employ a temporary employee to execute the duties of the position during the permanent employee's absence.

E. Extension of leave.

Any request for unpaid leave in excess of twelve weeks in any consecutive 12-month period shall be referred to the Regional Library Board of Trustees, which may extend unpaid leave for an employee at its discretion.

F. Benefits during leave of absence.

Employees on leave of absence without pay do not accumulate leave. Health benefits under the State Health Benefit Plan may be continued under certain circumstances. The employee should contact the Cherokee Regional Library System Business Office for information about continuing health benefits during leave without pay.

Section 8. Inclement weather.

Employees are expected to report to work as soon as safely possible during a winter storm or other severe weather conditions. If weather conditions disrupt transportation, personnel who are unable to report to work are required either to make up the time lost or to count it against annual leave time. If the library is closed due to weather conditions by order of the Director, or her designee, employees are not required to make up the time.

Staff members scheduled to work will be called within an hour of their shift's start time.

On days when the library is closed or delays opening for inclement weather (or other emergency reasons) by order of the Director or her designee, an employee who is on sick leave or annual leave must take as sick leave or annual leave the full number of hours for which that employee was originally scheduled.

Section 9. Military leave.

The Director may grant as much as two weeks of military leave with pay in any fiscal year to any regular employee for Reserve or National Guard training. The leave shall not be charged against the accumulated leave for which the employee may be eligible.

Section 10. Civil leave.

A library employee called for jury duty or as a witness for the Federal or State government or a subdivision thereof, shall be entitled to leave with pay for such duty during the required absence. The employee may keep all fees received for jury duty in addition to his/her regular compensation. The Director must be given a copy of the notification as soon as it is received so that arrangements for absence may be made.

Section 11. Educational leave.

- A. A special leave of absence at full or part pay may be granted by the Regional Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the Director to permit a regular employee with an outstanding service record to take courses of study which will better equip the employee to perform his/her duties. These courses may be in either library service or an appropriate field.
- B. Short term leaves of absence with pay or adjustments of schedule may be made for a regular employee to attend special workshops, institutes, or training courses to increase his/her competencies and skills.
- C. The Regional Board of Trustees may require the employee granted educational leave to agree to work for the library for a specified time following the completion of the training to allow the library to benefit from the employee's new competencies and skills.

Section 12. Administrative leave.

Administrative leave is leave with pay for activities that will benefit the library system. Administrative leave may be granted by the Director for appropriate functions that are not defined in this policy.

Section 13. Bereavement leave.

Employees will be allowed three days with pay when there is a death in their immediate family (mother, father, spouse, son, daughter, brother, sister, legal guardian, mother-in-law, father-in-

law, grandparents). Leave for death in the family may be requested in writing, or verbally (followed by a written request after the fact) as soon as the individual is aware of the need to take the leave. Consideration of the library's staffing when scheduling the leave is appreciated.

Section 14. Other leave without pay.

A library employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay for up to one year by the Regional Board of Trustees, upon recommendation of the Director, for reasons of personal or family illness, for completion of his/her education, or for special work which will profit the library by the experience gained or work performed. The employee on leave without pay does not accrue vacation or sick leave. Health benefits are described under the State Health Plan benefit. Any other leave without pay not otherwise covered in the Cherokee Regional Library Personnel Policy must be approved by the Regional Board.

Section 15. Activities and affiliations.

- A. Leave with pay is allowed for employees to attend conferences and other professional meetings, workshops and similar functions. The Cherokee Regional Library Board encourages employees to attend professional meetings whenever possible when such meetings will contribute to the employee's knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their job.
- B. Preparation for radio and television broadcasts, story hours, book talks, displays, and similar activities is legitimate library work and may be done on library time.
- C. Staff members are encouraged to become involved in civic, educational and professional organizations. Regularly scheduled and paid work time, however, may not be used to attend meetings that are not job related.
- D. Employees are free to engage in whatever civic and/or political activity they choose so long as their involvement does not infringe on library time. Staff members are prohibited from actively campaigning for any candidates for public office while on library time. No employee or library support group may speak or act in any official capacity

representing the Cherokee Regional Library System or any of its affiliates in a political campaign. Library employees are prohibited from endorsing or advertising a political candidate or issue on library premises with the exception of bumper stickers on employee cars in library parking lots. No promotional materials will be attached to the vehicles owned by the library and political materials will not be permitted on public bulletin boards. The library can provide materials of an educational and informational nature on local, state and national political issues.

No Library employee shall hold an elective government office in or be appointed to an agency or other group which affects or directly controls the ongoing appropriated funding of the Library System or any of its affiliates. If a Library employee finds that she/he wishes to hold such an elective office or appointed position, the employee shall resign before assuming the duties of that office or position.

Section 16. Library –related travel expenses. (See also additional details in Appendix C.)

A. Cherokee Regional Library System abides by the Statewide Travel Regulations of the State of Georgia, published by the Georgia Department of Audits. This document is located in all branches, at the Regional office, and is also accessible on the web page of the State of Georgia at <http://www.audits.state.ga.us/internet/>.

B. Reimbursement.

A rate per mile, to be determined at appropriate intervals by the State of Georgia, shall be paid for travel that is library-related. Staff members are expected to keep travel to a minimum and to combine trips whenever reasonable. A record of each staff member's travel expense is maintained in the Cherokee Regional Library office.

C. Reporting travel expenses.

Mileage for each trip must be reported on the official travel form, with a precise record of odometer readings at both the start and the end of the trip. Travel at library expense by

other means must also be reported on the official travel form and appropriate original receipts provided.

D. Approval of travel.

Travel outside the Region must be approved in advance by the Director. The Director of the Cherokee Regional Library System authorizes and approves travel for all employees. The Chairman of the Cherokee Regional Library Board of Trustees authorizes and approves travel of the Director. Prior written authorization is not required unless requested by the Director; the reverse side of the travel expense statement shall be used to document authorization.

E. Limits.

Mileage cannot be paid to individuals traveling from the same place to the same place at the same time in separate vehicles, except with advance permission. Rides must be shared whenever reasonable. Personal reasons for taking additional vehicles to a meeting are not considered sufficient reason for the library to pay the mileage.

F. Use of travel funds.

Expenses for approved trips to library meetings, workshops, conferences, etc., may be paid to some extent if the budget allows. The Director may approve administrative leave for staff members who wish to attend approved meetings at their own expense if the travel budget is exhausted or otherwise allocated.

G. Requests to attend and reports on meetings.

Requests to attend meetings may be submitted by the staff for approval, or the Director may assign attendance to appropriate staff members as needed. A brief report of each meeting or conference shall be submitted to the Director following the event.

H. Duplication of reimbursement.

Under no circumstances will duplicate reimbursement be made by the library for that portion of an employee's expenses paid or reimbursed from another source.

I. Expense receipts and vouchers.

Receipts or vouchers for lodging, parking and transportation tickets, and other related expenses shall be submitted along with the appropriate travel form for reimbursement. Itemized meal receipts are required. Other receipts may be required as detailed in the Statewide Travel Regulations.

Section 17. Communication channels

The Cherokee Regional Library System Board of Trustees expects all staff members to respect and follow the chain of command when registering complaints, making suggestions and in any other way communicating with the Regional Board or any of the affiliated Boards about the business of the library. As the administrator of the library system, the Director is in the best position to research a problem or suggestion and depending on the situation, with appropriate input from staff, trustees, and community members, the Director will make decisions. The Director will decide if a suggestion, complaint, or situation should be taken to the library board for action. Staff members who take complaints, requests, criticism or other library business directly to the regional or local library board without working through the Director will be considered insubordinate and subject to disciplinary measures by the Director.

Section 18. Staff use of library computers

A. Purpose of the Staff Computer Use Policy

The Cherokee Regional Library System provides employees access to computer hardware, software, email accounts, and Internet access to aid them in attaining the mission and goals of the library, to improve the performance of their duties and to support their continuing education and professional development. The following is aimed at helping staff use computers responsibly and productively.

B. Use of computer hardware and software

1. The library does not allow unauthorized use, installation, copying or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented software on library computers. Only software that has been approved by the library director and for

which the library holds appropriate license or other rights to use may be installed on library computers. All requests to install software on library computers, including “shareware” or World Wide Web browser “plug-in” programs, shall be referred to the technology consultant for handling.

2. Library staff may not make a copy of any library software for the purpose of downloading on their own or anyone else’s personal or business computer.
3. The primary use of library computer hardware and software is for work-related purposes. Staff members are allowed to use library computers for incidental personal use that does not interfere or conflict with staff duties, as long as the total amount of time used in this manner is strictly limited and the personal use does not occur where it may be observed by patrons.
4. Games may not be downloaded on computers located in public areas. During work hours no games may be played on library computers, unless directly related to the employee’s job.
5. Each employee’s assigned computer is the property of the Cherokee Regional Library System. The Library Director has the authority to review each employee’s assigned computer files or email correspondence at any time.

C. E-Mail and Internet usage

1. The library furnishes e-mail accounts and Internet access to its staff as communications and research tools to assist them in their work. The primary use of these tools shall be for work-related purposes.
2. Staff may not send, or attempt to send, Spam (unsolicited bulk commercial e-mail) of any kind from a library e-mail account or from third-party networks using a return library e-mail address or referencing a library e-mail address.
3. Staff may not send harassing e-mail, chain letters, or other misuses of resources which result in complaints from the recipient or the recipient’s e-mail provider or

which results in blacklisting of the sender's e-mail address or e-mail server.

4. Staff may not use library e-mail or Internet for illegal activities such as copyright violation, slander, theft, threats, or to send, receive, view, or download visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography, or material that is harmful to minors.
5. Use of e-mail accounts for personal fundraising or profit-making activities is not permitted.

D. Security

1. Staff may not divulge any library passwords, codes or security procedures to any patron or a third party unless authorized to do so by a direct supervisor.
2. Staff may not violate the authentication or security of the library's network, servers or computers or deliberately attempt to crash, overload or disrupt the computer system.
3. Staff may not share any information or records about a patron or staff member with another person, staff member or a third party.
4. Any person receiving a request for disclosure of e-mail, Internet or voicemail message, by subpoena or otherwise, shall refer such request to the Library Director for appropriate handling.

Section 19. Appropriate dress.

All employees are expected to dress appropriately for their work. The library is a place of business, and employees' dress shall reflect that fact. From time to time, the Director may issue guidelines about specific kinds of fashions that are considered inappropriate for work in the library. Employees whose jobs or assignments require certain kinds of exceptionally active, heavy, or dirty work may dress appropriately for those activities in jeans or other casual or heavy work clothing.

Section 20. Personal use of telephone.

Telephones are used to conduct the business of the library. Employees are expected to be considerate in their personal use of the business telephones.

- A. Employees are expected to tell their families and friends that calls should be made to them only in urgent or emergency situations.
- B. Personal calls are to be limited to three minutes.
- C. Employees should avoid placing or taking personal telephone calls at the circulation desk. If another telephone is available, calls should be handled away from public areas.

Section 21. Smoking.

Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the library.

Section 22. Tattooing and piercing.

While on work time, employees may not expose tattoos on body parts that are normally covered by business-type clothing. Wearing jewelry or decorative items in body piercings, other than for earrings in ear lobes, that are located in areas that are not covered by clothing is not allowed while the employee is on work time. Jewelry or decorative items worn in tongue piercings are distracting to others and may interfere with clear speech, thus limiting the employee's ability to communicate with others. Therefore, tongue studs and similar items are not allowed in the work place.

Section 23. Solicitation and sales.

It is against library policy for sales people and those soliciting contributions to approach employees during work hours. This applies to both for profit and non-profit businesses and organizations. The library shall not place collection jars or boxes in any public place, except for specific library purposes approved by the Director.

Section 24. Drugs and alcohol.

The library is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy work place free from the influence of alcohol and drugs. In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act, employees are prohibited from possessing, using, purchasing or distributing alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances during work hours, on work premises, or while on duty.

Section 25. Children of Employees or Volunteers in the Library

Library employees or volunteers are not permitted to use the library as their child care solution. Children of library employees or volunteers who must occasionally spend after-school or other extended periods of time in the library due to extenuating circumstances must have prior approval from the Branch Manager or Director. If permission is granted, the child will be expected to follow the same rules and policies which apply to all children in the library. Each employee or volunteer will be responsible for ensuring that library work remains a top priority, and that library time is not used for supervision of children. The following special provisions will apply:

- Children must remain in public areas of the library. Employee work areas, including parent's offices, are off limits.
- If an employee or volunteer's child becomes a disruption or distraction for staff, a supervisor may ask the staff member to make other arrangements for the child's library use.

Section 26. Staff Social Media Policy

Social media can be defined as content created by people using highly accessible Internet-based publishing tools for sharing and discussing information. Some examples of social media are blogs, wikis, and video hosting sites.

These emerging platforms for online collaboration offer new ways to engage with patrons, colleagues, and the world at large, and have the potential to help staff build stronger professional relationships

and take part in national and global conversations related to the work we are doing.

The Cherokee Regional Library System encourages the use of social media tools; however, due to the nature of social media, which encourages free-flowing conversations and allows for instantaneous publication reaching a potentially wide audience, the following guidelines are provided in order to assure effective and appropriate information, security, responsible speech, and privacy protection.

- 1) Ensure that all departmental or branch library social media sites are sanctioned by the Cherokee Regional Library System Director.
- 2) Ensure that the focus of the social media site is consistent with the mission of the Cherokee Regional Library System and that participating staff have the requisite expertise to post information and have understood and agreed to the principles and guidelines set forth in this document. Ensure that Regional Library staff has administrative access to all Social Media sites.
- 3) Respect confidential information, the privacy of others, and do not discuss documents and decision-making and conversations which are internal to the library without appropriate approval. Know and comply with library policy related to confidentiality of patron records. Never comment on legal matters or litigation related to the library without approval from the Director.
- 4) Ensure that staff posts and comments are respectful and considerate and contain no remarks that are offensive or off-topic. When responding to others' posts which you may disagree with, keep it appropriate and polite. Do not denigrate others. Airing grievances against management, patrons, fellow employees, departments or State agencies is not appropriate.
- 5) Ensure transparency when posting or commenting by identifying yourself and your role within the library. Remember that you are personally responsible for your content. Be sure that all of the content associated with you is consistent with your work and the library's values and professional standards. Make sure that you write and post about your areas of expertise and assigned duties, and that you make it clear to your readers when writing about a topic outside of your expertise. When modifying earlier posts, make it clear you have done so.

6) In some social media formats, you may encounter comments which cause you concern as a moderator or responsible party. If user content is positive or negative and in context to the conversation, then the content should be allowed to remain, regardless of whether it is favorable or unfavorable to the Library. If the content is ugly, offensive, denigrating and completely out of context, then the content should be rejected and removed.

Section 27. Outside Employment

It is recognized that some employees are also employed by other organizations or individuals. It is not the desire of the library system to interfere with the employment or income opportunities of employees except where such employment might interfere with the satisfactory performance of the work of the library system.

Under the following circumstances, accepting or continuing outside employment is prohibited:

1. When outside employment interferes with the regular and punctual discharge of library duties.
2. When outside employment would place the employee in a conflict of interest position.
3. When the official position of the employee may otherwise be compromised by reason of outside employment.
4. When outside employment prevents the employee from working their scheduled hours.
5. Involves use of CHRL equipment, materials, supplies or property.
6. Results in the employee or the outside employer providing products or services to CHRL.

Outside employment must not involve the use of confidential information learned directly or indirectly through employment with the library. A statement describing outside employment must be on file.

ARTICLE II. APPOINTMENTS, SUSPENSIONS, AND DISMISSALS

Section 1. Equal Opportunity Statement.

The Cherokee Regional Library System is an Equal Opportunity Employer. No person shall be denied employment or advancement, nor shall be evaluated, on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual preference, national origin, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.

The Cherokee Regional Library System subscribes to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take affirmative action to insure that applicants are employed and/or promoted on the basis of merit, qualifications and professional ability.

The Library will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship.

If an employee has a question or concern about any type of discrimination in the workplace, s/he is encouraged to bring the issue to the attention of the supervisor or the Director. Employees are assured that they can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Furthermore, anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Section 2. Appointments.

A. Regular appointments.

Regular appointments are for Full Time (40 hours per week) and Part Time (less than 40 hours per week).

Appointments to positions with the Cherokee Regional Library shall be made on the basis of the qualifications required for the specific position, as described in the job description. These will include, but not be limited to, education, personal qualifications, and ability to perform the

job. Successful completion of the probationary period is required.

B. Temporary appointments.

Temporary appointments (less than 18 hours per week) are made on the same basis as those for regular appointments.

C. Substitute appointments.

Substitutes may be engaged for irregular or temporary emergencies and are appointed on the basis of qualifications comparable with those of regular staff members for whom they are substituting.

D. No person employed or seeking employment will be discriminated against because of race, sex, age, marital status, physical disability, political affiliation, or religion.

E. Employment of relatives.

Close relatives of employees shall not be hired. This includes parents, children, siblings, spouses, aunts, uncles, grandparents or grandchildren, and in-laws. Should a close relative of a Trustee be a candidate for a position, the Trustee will not take part in any discussion or vote in connection with that position; should the Trustee's relative be hired, the Trustee will be required to resign immediately from the Board. Trustees may not be employees of the library. Contractual arrangements may be made with the approval of the Regional Board of Trustees.

F. Manner of appointment.

All employees will be appointed on a probationary status by the Director. The Director shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees of the Cherokee Regional Library System.

Section 3. Probationary period.

A. All staff appointments, including professional, paraprofessional, and nonprofessional, to regular and temporary positions in the service of the Cherokee Regional Library shall be subject to a probationary period of six months. During this period, the staff member's work performance is reviewed and evaluated by the supervisor

and his/her strengths and weaknesses discussed with him/her. New staff members are given orientation in the operation of the library, its objectives and history, as well as instruction concerning their duties. All staff members are expected to familiarize themselves with the policies, rules and practices of the library system. All member libraries will keep a copy of the Personnel Policy at the library and make it accessible to all employees.

B. Termination of probationers.

The library is not obligated to retain a probationer throughout his/her probationary period.

C. Regular appointment.

At the time of regular appointment, the evaluation of the probationer is reviewed and the decision for regular appointment is made by the Director. The probationary period may be extended at the discretion of the Director.

D. Probation for promotion.

All regular and temporary employees who are promoted to another position will be on probation for six months before receiving a regular appointment to the new position. At the end of the probation period, the Director will make a decision concerning regular appointment to the new position. If the employee receives regular appointment, s/he has the right to decline promotion without prejudice. The Director and/or the employee may, at any time during the probationary period, rescind the promotion. In this case, the employee will revert to his/her previous position at the previous rate of pay or a different position for which the rate of pay is at least equal to that of the previous position.

E. Voluntary termination of probationer.

Employees may elect to leave the employ of the library at any time during or at the conclusion of the probationary period without prejudice.

Section 4. Performance evaluations.

All employees, including the Director, will be evaluated annually. Each supervisor will evaluate the employees who report to him/her. The Cherokee Regional Library Board will evaluate the Director.

Section 5. Promotions and transfers.

When a vacancy is declared, it will be advertised in such a way as to notify the appropriate pool of possible candidates. Promotions and transfers within the existing library staff are considered when a vacancy occurs, although the library is free to seek candidates from other sources to fill the vacancy with the best qualified person. Promotions are based on performance evaluations, educational, technical and personal qualifications. Length of service is not a determining factor. Individuals may be transferred to provide a necessary balance of the staff in a particular facility, or to enhance experience and knowledge and expand skills.

Section 6. Disciplinary action and dismissal.

A. Employees who fail to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of their positions will be subject to progressive discipline. The supervisor is responsible for documenting the need for disciplinary action, in consultation with the Director. The Director shall be informed before any disciplinary action is taken. Except in the case of causes that will result in immediate dismissal (B.2. below), no disciplinary action will be initiated without prior counseling of the employee. Listed below are the actions, in sequence, that will usually be taken in carrying out disciplinary actions. Generally, documentation of such counseling must be on file before the following actions are taken.

- (1) Oral reprimand, documented for the personnel file
- (2) Written reprimand, signed by both the supervisor and the employee, with a copy to the employee and a copy in the personnel file
- (3) Probation of up to three months
- (4) Suspension without pay for up to one week, if deemed appropriate by the Director
- (5) Termination by the Director

B. The following causes relative to failure in the performance of duties or to personal conduct are representative of, but not limited to, those considered adequate grounds for dismissal.

(1) Causes which, if repeated, may be grounds for dismissal:

- (a) Failure to fulfill work obligations and assignments
- (b) Discourteous treatment of the public or other employees
- (c) Inefficiency, negligence or incompetence in the performance of duties
- (d) Misuse or appropriation of library supplies, equipment or funds
- (e) Refusal to accept a reasonable and proper assignment from an authorized supervisor, or subversion of the supervisor's goals (insubordination)
- (f) Conviction for commission of a misdemeanor
- (g) Engaging in activity that would adversely affect job performance
- (h) Failure to comply with the policies and procedures of the library

(2) Causes that shall result in immediate dismissal

- (a) Guilty of gross misconduct that could bring contempt, ridicule, or public derision to the Library
- (b) Conviction of a felony
- (c) Publication or distribution of legally protected information from official records
- (d) Falsified job information to secure position
- (e) Willful damage or destruction of property while on the job
- (f) Willful acts at the work site that would endanger the lives and property of others
- (g) Possession of firearms or lethal weapons on the job
- (h) Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or partaking of such on the job
- (i) Viewing pornographic sites and/or materials at work (outside the requirements of the job).

- C. An employee charged with an offense that may be grounds for dismissal is subject to disciplinary action as described in Section 5.A.
- D. A staff member charged with an offense that would necessitate immediate termination for cause may be suspended without pay by the Director, pending action by the Library Board. If the employee is cleared by investigation, restitution of unpaid salary will be made.

Section 7. Notice of resignation.

In resigning employment, library employees are expected to give as much notice as possible. Professional personnel shall give at least one month's notice and other employees at least two weeks. A letter of resignation shall be submitted to the Director. The Director shall submit his/her letter of resignation to the Cherokee Regional Library Board.

Section 8. Layoffs and reductions in force.

A. Definition.

A layoff is considered a separation of an employee from service in the Cherokee Regional Library System made necessary by:

- (1) reason of shortage of funds or work;
- (2) the abolition of the position, or other material changes in the duties or organization; or
- (3) related reasons that are outside the employee's control and are not related to fault, delinquency or misconduct on the part of the employee.

Layoff should be affected only after all other courses of action have been attempted. It should not be used as a vehicle for any other cause than lack of funding or available work.

B. Reassignment of duties

The duties formerly performed by any employee laid off may be reassigned to other employees already working who hold positions in appropriate classes.

- C. Employees will be scheduled for layoff at the discretion of the Director based on factors including but not necessarily limited to performance, seniority and job duties.
- D. Regular employees shall be notified in writing by the Executive Director at least fourteen calendar days prior to the effective day of the layoff. This written memorandum will serve as the official notice of layoff. Copies shall be provided to the employee and to the Business Office to be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- E. During a reduction-in-force all employees will be completely informed about the entire process. Persons who are laid off shall be given primary consideration should conditions warrant rehiring.
- F. Employees being laid off shall be paid for all annual leave for which they are eligible.

Section 9. Civil rights officer.

A Civil Rights officer is named by the Cherokee Regional Library Board of Trustees. The Civil Rights Officer receives any employee's complaints of violations of civil rights and sexual harassment and advises the employee on action that needs to be taken. The Civil Rights Officer also serves as the contact person in any such issue that arises. Once named, the Civil Rights Officer retains that position until the Cherokee Regional Library Board of Trustees names another employee to that position.

Section 10. Employee appeals and grievances.

A. Objective.

The objective of this policy is to resolve grievances promptly and harmoniously, and to facilitate communication among Cherokee Regional Library employees.

B. Reprisal against grievant.

Every employee shall have the right to present his/her problem or grievance in accordance with the procedures prescribed by this library free from interference, coercion, restraint, discrimination, or reprisal.

C. Responsibility.

It is the responsibility of supervisors at all levels, consistent with authority delegated to them, to consider and take appropriate action fairly and in a timely manner on a grievance of any employee. The Director of the Cherokee Regional Library is responsible for coordination and direction of the grievance procedure; provided, however, in the event the Director is the aggrieved employee or is otherwise directly involved in the complaint, the Chairman of the Cherokee Regional Board or other appropriate board member appointed by the Chairman of the Cherokee Regional Board shall assume the responsibility for coordination and direction of the grievance procedure.

D. Grievance preparation time.

An employee may be allowed reasonable and necessary time during regular working hours, without loss of pay or leave credits, to make necessary contacts for processing a grievance, not to exceed a total of four hours. Time taken for this purpose shall be at a time agreed upon by the employee and the Director and shall be at a time which least interferes with library activities. The Director or designee shall maintain a record of all time used for this purpose and shall make this information a part of the grievance maintained at each level of the grievance process. The Chairman of the Regional Board shall be the authority to resolve any dispute regarding what is reasonable and necessary time, within the four-hour limitation, for the preparation of a grievance.

E. Prompt resolution.

- (1) In order to assure prompt resolution, a grievance will be processed in a timely manner and within the time requirements stipulated.
- (2) Emergency situations that require modification of time requirements must be coordinated through the Chairman of the Cherokee Regional Library Board. Time will be modified only upon written notice to the parties of the grievance by the Chairman of the Cherokee Regional Library Board.

F. Group grievance.

- (1) A grievance may be filed by a group of employees if the situation affects each person in the group. In such cases, the group shall name a spokesperson from the group who will represent them in all matters concerning the grievance process.
- (2) A group grievance shall be filed at the lowest level of the organizational structure where issues are applicable to the group.

G. Termination of a grievance.

- (1) If the grievant fails to proceed to the next step of the grievance procedure within the time requirements specified, the grievance will be terminated.
- (2) The grieving party shall be provided with written notice of the termination of a grievance along with reasons of termination.

H. Confidence of grievance.

A grievance is a personal matter and, as such, is confidential to the parties involved. It is important that no informal discussion concerning the grievance take place between individuals involved in the grievance (including members of the hearing board, i.e., members of Board of Trustees of the Cherokee Regional Library) and those not directly involved. Confidence of grievance must be honored by all parties. Written grievance of an employee is entered in his/her record; any modification of the complete written grievance must be requested by the grievant and approved by the hearing board or Director under whom the grievance is settled.

I. Responsibilities of parties to a grievance.

Willful falsification or deliberate misrepresentation of facts relating to a grievance or the use of grievance procedure for the purpose of harassment or retaliation, on the part of either the grievant or the respondent, may result in disciplinary action or dismissal of the employee.

J. Grievance procedure steps.

Step 1: Discussions between employee and supervisor.

- a. If the employee has a problem or complaint that has not been resolved in reasonable conversations with the staff members concerned, it must first be submitted in writing to the immediate supervisor within ten working days after the problem first arose. The supervisor shall document the discussion for the file.
- b. The employee shall receive an answer within five working days or be advised as to the conditions which prevent an answer within five working days and when an answer may be expected. The answer shall be in writing.
- c. If the employee's immediate supervisor is the Director, then the employee shall follow the requirements of subsection (a) above, and if dissatisfied with the result, proceed directly to Step 3 of this grievance procedure.

Step 2: Discussions between employee and Director.

If an employee is dissatisfied with the answer provided in Step 1, s/he may bring the problem or concern to the Director within five working days after receiving the answer from his/her supervisor. The employee must identify the problem or concern in writing to the Director and must attach a copy of the supervisor's answer.

Step 3: Appeal to the Regional Board.

- a. If an employee is dissatisfied with the decision reached in Step 2, the matter may be appealed to the Regional Board for a hearing. Any such appeal shall be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Regional Board within five working days from the date the Director issued his/her decision. The Chairman of the

Regional board shall set a hearing date for the first mutually convenient date that is acceptable to all parties; however, the hearing shall take place within two weeks from the date of the appeal, unless otherwise agreed in writing by all parties.

- b. The aggrieved employee shall provide a written summary of the specific facts of the problem to the Chairman of the Regional Board and to the Director at least 48 hours prior to the hearing.
- c. All parties involved shall be present at any hearings held.
- d. A quorum of the Cherokee Regional Library Board must be present at any hearing held.
- e. Within ten working days of the date of the hearing, the Chairman of the Regional Board shall issue the Board's decision, including any required action, in writing to the employee and to the Director.
- f. The Director will implement the decision of the Cherokee Regional Library Board immediately.
- g. The decision of the Cherokee Regional Library Board is final and no further appeals are available to the employee.

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ARTICLE III. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Section 1. Social Security.

All library employees are covered by Social Security. Each employee shall have the employee's tax or FICA deducted from his/her salary each month. The Library contributes the designated amount to the employee's account. The amount of contributions and benefits received are established by the Congress of the United States.

Section 2. Retirement.

- A. All employees who work at least 20 hours per week are covered by the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia. Coverage is mandatory.
- B. Regular deductions are taken from the employee's salary with the Library making a contribution for each member. Rates are set by the Georgia State Legislature.

Section 3. Worker's Compensation.

All library employees are covered by the Worker's Compensation Act.

Section 4. Health Benefits.

The State Health Benefit Plan is available for regular library employees who are eligible (work 20 hours or more) and who wish to participate. Continuation of health benefits during leaves of absence without pay are described under the State Health Plan. For information about continuation of health benefits during any period of leave without pay, the employee should consult with the Cherokee Regional Library System Business Office.

Section 5. Flexible Benefits Plan.

Various benefits offered by the State of Georgia under the Flexible Benefits Plan are available to employees who qualify. Deductions are made from the employee's monthly pay for the cost of benefits selected by the employee from those offered. Enrollment is at time of employment and changes in selections may be made during the Open Enrollment period.

Section 6. Age Discrimination Act of 1967

The Cherokee Regional Library complies with Public Law 95-256 (Amendments to the Age Discrimination Act of 1967). Fringe benefits for active employees over age 65 but under age 70 are at least equal to those for employees under age 65.

A. Employee purchases of books, videos, and audios through vendor staff accounts

The Cherokee Regional Library has a staff account with Baker & Taylor that has been set up with the vendor's knowledge and endorsement. Staff members may order books, videos, and audios through this account. Orders should be placed with the Branch Services Librarian. Books may not be ordered for individuals other than staff, unless an employee is willing to assume the responsibility for payment.

State taxes will be paid on all materials ordered by individuals for personal or gift use.

Checks for purchases must be written directly to the vendor by a library employee. Under no circumstances will the library accept a check from a non-employee. Checks must be received in the Business Office no later than the 5th of the month following the receipt of the materials by the employee.

The book or other materials will be sent to the employee with an invoice from the vendor. The employee should return the invoice (or a copy) with a personal check for the full amount to the Business Office.

Employees are expected to respect this special benefit and comply with the procedures. The vendor has every right to withdraw this privilege, and it will do so if bills are in arrears or there are other problems.

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B. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Every employee of the Cherokee Regional Library System is expected to follow certain general policies while performing their assigned duties.

It is the primary responsibility of every employee to meet the needs of library users needing service, whether in person, by phone, or email or other method of communication. Everyone with circulation desk responsibilities is expected to answer the telephones and observe the circulation desk to be aware of customers who need assistance. Never assume that another employee will do it. Routine duties (shelving, etc.) are to be performed only after all customers have been helped.

The person standing in the library takes precedence over the person on the telephone. Answer the phone, but tell the caller you are helping someone else and offer to let him or her hold or return the call when you are finished.

All employees must treat each library user with dignity and respect, and give equal service without regard to age, race, gender, or economic status. Never make assumptions about library users based on appearance.

All employees are expected to become proficient in the use of all equipment in the library, including computers, copiers, fax machines, microfilm reader/printers, etc.

All employees are expected to familiarize themselves with library system policies and procedures and with state library law as it pertains to interactions with library users, and to be able to interpret these to the public.

Breaks are to be taken only when the workload permits, and the employee can expect to be interrupted if the library becomes busy.

Employees are expected to notify their supervisor promptly in the event of absence or tardiness. Employees should keep each other informed of their whereabouts during the day, especially if leaving the building.

All employees must be familiar with safety and emergency procedures and know what to do in the event of fire, tornado, disruptive patron, etc.

All employees are expected to be considerate of each other in their work and in scheduling vacation time or other absences.

In addition, all employees are expected have, and to practice on a daily basis, the following qualities:

- enthusiasm for work
- cooperation
- tact and courtesy
- dependability
- initiative
- receptiveness to new ideas and interest in learning
- adaptability
- good communication
- good teamwork
- listening skills
- flexibility
- punctuality
- consideration
- efficient use of time and resources
- constructive acceptance of correction and guidance

These responsibilities and qualities will be considered during annual performance evaluations, which will be conducted by the employee's supervisor.

C. GUIDELINES FOR TRAVEL (an interpretation of the Statewide Travel Regulations for the Cherokee Regional Library)

State regulations require that public libraries use state travel funds in compliance with the *Statewide Travel Regulations*, issued by State of Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts and Office of Planning and Budget. These regulations are updated periodically. The per diems and mileage reimbursements, particularly, are changed to reflect current costs. The Cherokee Regional Library complies with the Statewide Travel Regulations in the expenditure of all budgeted funds designated for travel. The Statewide Travel Regulations may be accessed at <http://www.audits.state.ga.us/internet/> and copies are available from the Cherokee Regional Library Business Office and from Library Managers.

The following guidelines and regulations are designed to call attention to specific requirements of the *Statewide Travel Regulations*, interpret *Statewide Travel Regulations* for the Cherokee Regional Library, and establish guidelines and policies where the *Statewide Travel Regulations* specify that such may be established by the agency.

Employees who travel are expected to be familiar with both the *Statewide Travel Regulations* and these guidelines.

Authorization and Approval of Library Travel

The Director authorizes and approves travel of all employees. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Cherokee Regional Library authorizes and approves travel of the Director.

While prior written authorization of travel is not required, it is expected that employees will discuss travel plans with the Director and obtain approval for all travel on work time. The reverse side of the travel expense statement will be used to document authorization.

Reimbursement of Meal Expenses

Employees may be reimbursed for the actual cost of meals eaten while in approved travel status, within the maximum limits and the regulations established in the *Statewide Travel Regulations*. Limits are based on the length of day that an employee is officially on travel status. The daily meal limits shown below may be considered as a single daily total. The Business Manager will adjust the amounts over the meal and per diem rates according to the *Statewide Travel Regulations* and reimburse the employee appropriately.

Taxes and tips are allowable expenses; however, they should be included in the total expense for the meal.

Generally, employees who travel overnight should not be reimbursed for three full meals on the day of departure or return. The following guidelines apply to reimbursement of meal expenses for these days:

Employees may only be reimbursed for the meals purchased while officially on travel status. (For example, if an employee departs at 3:00 p.m., the employee should not claim breakfast or lunch expenses for the day of departure.)

Employees may be reimbursed for meal expenses incurred within the 30-mile radius, provided the travel destination is more than 30 miles.

Employees who depart for an overnight trip prior to 6:30 a.m. are entitled to reimbursement for breakfast expenses, provided an expense was incurred.

Employees who return from an overnight trip later than 7:30 p.m. are entitled to reimbursement for dinner expenses, provided an expense was incurred.

When a hotel/motel offers a complimentary breakfast, employees are not required to eat breakfast at the hotel/motel. However, if an employee chooses to eat breakfast at the hotel/motel, s/he should reduce the amount of allowable reimbursement for the day by the amount allowed for breakfast.

Reimbursement of Meals Not Associated with Overnight Travel

Employees who are required to travel for their job and do not stay overnight may be reimbursed for certain meal expenses under the following situations:

Employees acting as an official representative for the library may be reimbursed for meals that are an integral part of a scheduled, official meeting. Reimbursement is only authorized, however, if the meeting is with persons outside the Cherokee Regional Library System and if the meeting continues during the meal. Employees cannot be reimbursed for meal expenses if they leave the premises of the meeting site.

Employees may be reimbursed for a noon meal not associated with overnight lodging if the meal is a scheduled part of an intra-departmental meeting or training session (i.e., the meeting or training session continues during lunch and the employees do not leave the premises of the meeting site.) Reimbursement is only authorized; however, if the meeting or training was previously approved by the department head, equaled or exceeded six hours in length, and was held more than 30 miles from the employee's office. Reimbursement for the meal expense may be documented by a copy of the formal written agenda.

Employees may be reimbursed for noon meals that are part of a required registration fee.

Employees who are more than 30 miles away from home or headquarters on a work assignment and are away for more than 13 hours may be reimbursed for meals, even when there is no overnight lodging. In this situation, employees are entitled to reimbursement for the noon meal. In addition to the noon meal, employees who depart prior to 6:30 a.m. are entitled to reimbursement for breakfast expenses, and employees who return later than 7:30 p.m. are entitled to reimbursement for dinner expenses.

Employees who are more than 30 miles away from home or headquarters on a work assignment and depart prior to 5:30 a.m. are entitled to reimbursement for breakfast expenses, even when there is no overnight lodging.

Employees who are reimbursed for any of these circumstances are still expected to remain within the authorized meal limits.

It should be noted that the Statewide Travel Regulations do not authorize employees to be reimbursed for meals purchased during a "lunch meeting" in which the meal and meeting are one and the same.

Required Documentation of Meal Expenses

All meal expenses must be itemized on the employee travel expense statement, indicating the date, location (city), and actual cost of each meal. Taxes and tips are reimbursable; however, they should be included in the total meal cost subject to the authorized limits. Itemized meal receipts are required.

Expenses that exceed the authorized general meal limits due to travel in high cost areas or out-of-state should be explained on the expense statement.

Sharing Lodging

When employees on travel status share a room, reimbursement will be calculated, if practical, on a prorated share of the total cost. Employees should ask for separate bills citing each employee's share of the cost. When an employee on travel status is accompanied by someone who is not an employee on travel status, the employee is entitled to reimbursement at a single room rate.

Exemption of County and Municipal Excise Tax

Employees are required to submit a copy of the tax-exempt form when registering at a hotel/motel. This form may be obtained from the Business

Manager. This does not apply to out-of-state hotels/motels. The Cherokee Regional Library will not reimburse employees for the excise tax, should they fail to submit the exemption form to the hotel/motel. It is good practice to examine the bill before paying it to assure that local hotel taxes have not been charged.

Travel by Library Vehicle or Personal Automobile

Employees are encouraged to use the library van when possible. If more than one trip is planned for the same time, the employee traveling the most miles has priority. Exceptions to this may occur, for example, if there is a large group traveling together, because such a group would be more comfortable in the white van. NOTE: If an employee does not have a valid driver's license or has a suspended license, s/he may not drive any library vehicle. In this situation, the employee must drive or be driven in his/her own car, and the library cannot pay mileage.

In case of an accident, if the individual is driving or riding in the library vehicle, the library's insurance is primary.

If an employee should have an accident while traveling in his/her own automobile for the library, the individual's accident insurance is primary. The library's insurance may be secondary under certain conditions.

Mileage Reimbursement Rate for Use of Personal Vehicles

The regular mileage reimbursement rate is set by state statute and is linked to the federal mileage rate. The state has established a dual reimbursement rate. If a library-owned vehicle is available, and its use is determined to be the most advantageous to the library, but a personal vehicle is used, reimbursement will be made at the rate of 28.5 cents. 'Advantageous use' may be determined based on energy conservation, total cost to the Library (including cost of overtime, lost work, and actual transportation cost), total distance traveled, number of points visited, and number of travelers. In determining advantageous use, employees should consult with the Business Manager. Documentation of the determination of "advantageous use" shall be retained in the Business Office with the employee's travel claim for audit purposes. Documentation may include a written explanation of the travel claim form, the statement that a library-owned vehicle was not available (including which employees were using the vehicles during that time), or other evidence.

Employees will be reimbursed at the state rate for each library-use mile traveled in a personal vehicle, subject to the conditions above.

Employees may be reimbursed for the mileage incurred from the point of departure to the travel destination. During the normal workweek, the point of departure will be either the employee's residence or headquarters, whichever is

nearer to the destination point. During weekends and holidays, employees should use the actual point of departure to calculate travel mileage. In all cases, the employee should deduct, as personal miles, the number of miles that s/he would generally drive to and from work. All other miles are considered library-use miles and are subject to mileage reimbursement.

Employees are not entitled to mileage reimbursement for travel between their place of residence and their official headquarters, or personal mileage incurred while on travel status.

Required Documentation of Mileage, Parking, and Toll Expenses

All requests for reimbursement of mileage, parking, and toll charges must be documented on the employee travel expense statement.

Employees traveling by personal vehicles and requesting reimbursement must record the actual odometer readings on the expense statement. Employees should claim mileage based on the most direct route from the point of departure to the destination. Deviations from the most direct route (i.e., due to field visits, picking up passengers, etc.) should be explained on the travel expense statement.

Employees are expected to obtain receipts for parking fees and tolls. If it is not possible to obtain a receipt, then a written explanation should be included on the expense statement.

Employees who share a vehicle with another employee on a trip for which other reimbursement is requested (i.e., meals and/or lodging) and do not claim reimbursement for mileage should indicate the name of the person with whom they rode and the dates of the trip(s) on the travel expense statement.

Registration Fees

Receipts are required for reimbursement of registration fees. Any part of a registration fee applicable to meals will be reported as a meal expense, and not as a registration fee, if the costs can be separately identified.

Unallowable Expenses

The following expenses are not reimbursable:

- Laundry
- Valet services
- Theater
- Entertainment
- Alcoholic beverages

Travel Advances and Charge Card

Travel advances are allowed to minimize the financial burden on employees who travel on behalf of the Cherokee Regional Library.

The Cherokee Regional Library has a charge card, which will be used by the Business Manager (or the Director) to purchase airline tickets, reserve and/or pay for hotel/motel reservations, rental cars, and the like.

When it is necessary to use the charge card, it must be checked out and signed for in the Business Manager's office. The card may not under any circumstances be used for personal expenses.

The Director or his/her designee is required to authorize specifically each cash advance made to an employee. The written authorization for a cash advance must be included on the travel advance authorization form. This form must also be signed by the employee to document that the cash advance was received. Funds may be advanced for anticipated subsistence (meals and lodging), and for other travel costs that are approved in advance by the Director. The forms are available in the Cherokee Regional Library Business Office.

Receipts for meals and other expenses purchased with advanced travel funds are required.

All employees are fully responsible for funds advanced to them and shall account for the funds in accordance with the *Statewide Travel Regulations* and these Guidelines. Unused funds must be returned within two business days of the employee's return from the trip. Employees are liable for any advanced funds that are lost or stolen.

Required Documentation of Travel Expenses

Employees requesting reimbursement for travel expenses are required to submit their claim to the Business Manager on the employee travel expense statement. Requests for reimbursement should include the following information:

Itemized expenses for authorized meals, lodging, mileage, transportation, and miscellaneous expenses. The types of expenses that are authorized and the allowable limits are outlined in the *Statewide Travel Regulations* and these Guidelines; Explanation of any expenses that exceed the established limits and of any unusual expenses; Explanation of the purpose for the trip; and Description of the type(s) of transportation used.

Employees are required to sign their travel expense statement, attesting that the information presented on the form is accurate. Employees who provide false information are subject to criminal penalty of a felony for false statements, which

is subject to punishment by fine or not more than \$1,000 or by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than five years.

Employees are also required to submit receipts for the following expenses:

- lodging
- airline or railroad fares (boarding pass and ticket stubs as well as itinerary)
- rental of motor vehicles
- supplies, and
- registration fees.

When an electronic airline ticket is purchased, employees should submit the e-mailed verification of the ticket purchase and any ticket stubs and boarding passes that are the result of the flight. Electronic tickets have resulted in less paper evidence that a flight was actually taken; therefore, it is the responsibility of the traveler to attach any such paper receipts as part of the request for reimbursement. It has become the practice for airlines to charge additional fees for issuing paper tickets. If the employee has a preference for paper tickets, the fee charged for issuing such tickets is the responsibility of the employee.

Receipts for parking, toll way, mass transit/taxi/airport vans, and communications expenses are recommended. Although receipts are recommended, employees are not required to submit receipts for travel by, local bus, taxi, or airport vans, unless the cost is more than \$5.00. A point-to-point explanation is required for each item reimbursed. If receipts are not available, employees are required to include an explanation of the expense on the travel expenses statement.

Frequency of Reimbursement

The Cherokee Regional Library will reimburse employees for travel expenses on the first day that vendor checks are issued following the receipt in the Business Office of an approved travel expense statement. Vendor checks are ordinarily issued about the middle and the end of the month. Employees may inquire in the Business Office for specific dates on which checks will be issued. It is expected that it will take no more than fifteen days to reimburse employees for travel expenses.

Compensatory Time for Travel

The *Statewide Travel Regulations* do not require the Cherokee Regional Library to grant compensatory time for personal hours spent traveling. The Cherokee Regional Library will adjust time for such hours as follows.

It is the policy of the Cherokee Regional Library System to rearrange work schedules as much as possible to avoid the need for compensatory time off. Employees in official travel status for assigned workshops, meetings, and other

library business may adjust their schedules within the week to allow time off for time spent traveling. Adjusted time is on an hour-for-hour basis.

Time spent at a meeting or other official library business, plus the travel time, are considered in figuring adjusted work time. If the time from the start of the travel day until the employee returns to the workplace is seven hours or more, the employee is not required to return to the workplace to complete the eight hour work day. Employees whose usual assigned number of work hours for that day is less than eight are not required to return to the workplace if the travel assignment and their assigned work schedule will allow them to be at the workplace one hour or less. When calculating work time for days when the employee leaves from home or returns to home, the amount of time usually spent traveling to and/or from home to usual workplace should be subtracted from the travel time.

A planned meal with a program is considered work time. Employees may not count as work time any meal times during meetings for which there is not a planned meal with a program. If a planned program meal is scheduled, but the employee leaves the premises of the meeting or workshop during the meal function for personal reasons (shopping, meeting a friend or relative, take a nap, etc.), that time is not considered work time.

Time beyond eight hours, or the employee's usual assigned number of work hours for that day, is considered work time for which the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) non-exempt employee shall adjust time. Employees are expected to schedule adjusted time with the approval of their supervisor and within the week. When there is sufficient foreknowledge of working extra time, supervisors may schedule some or all of the time off prior to the earning of the extra work time, as long as it is within the week. If travel time results in extra work hours at the end of the week, and it has been impossible to adjust the employee's schedule to accommodate for the additional work time, the library manager or regional staff should consult with the Director. Library managers are authorized to adjust the schedules of other employees if necessary to accommodate such time adjustments.

Library managers are expected to consider the scheduling of time adjustments, as well as other factors, when authorizing additional hours of work or travel. If an assignment is important, but it creates a time adjustment problem, managers should consult with the Director. In library emergencies, additional hours may be approved and a solution worked out with the employee and the Director after the fact.

If an unexpected situation requiring over time which neither the employee nor the employer has no control occurs while an employee is in travel status, the additional time required by that situation beyond the regularly scheduled work day shall not be counted as work time nor shall the employee earn adjusted time for such situations. For example, if an employee is stranded at an airport

because of schedule changes made by the airline or by weather, the additional hours beyond the normal travel schedule time is not considered work time. If the situation runs into another day, the employee shall be paid as though s/he were at work for the regularly scheduled hours that day.

Employees are expected to record on their time sheets the *actual* hours worked (including the travel time). When time adjustments occur only the actual time worked is recorded. Accurate record keeping for work time is a requirement of all employees. Library managers shall not approve time sheets that do not reflect the actual work time of the employee.

FLSA exempt employees may re-schedule to compensate for extra hours worked for the convenience of the library during travel and their other assignments. It is appropriate to discuss such scheduling with the Director if more than a few hours are involved.

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D. VAN RULES

The CRL owns a white Mazda MPV (2001). We have fulfilled all the requirements of the Special Needs Grant with which the Mazda was purchased. Therefore, both vans are considered available for use by anyone in the Region, using the following guidelines.

Use of the van depends on a number of factors, such as

- distance to be traveled
- load to be carried
- passengers, number and possible disability
- availability

Scheduling

Scheduling is done on the wall calendar in the Regional Office hallway. People who work in the LaFayette Library building will do their own scheduling. Misty is the contact person for people who don't work in LaFayette, and she will write it on the calendar for you. Please indicate which van you are requesting (white or blue) and the destination of your travel, along with an indication of the purpose of your trip.

Filling Up the Vans with Gas

We put mid-grade gas in both vans.

There is a log in each van that must be completed for each trip.

Everyone who drives the van is expected to leave the tank at least half full, or fill it up, before returning it to the library, as a courtesy to the next driver. If you return from a trip late and are unable to fill the tank, be sure to fill it the next morning. If you are going to be late, check the calendar for the next day. If the van is scheduled for an early trip the next day, discuss the situation with the next driver and work out who will fill the tank.

Please see the Regional Office for the credit card to fill up the gas tank.

Other Regular Van Care

There is a sticker on the windshield that indicates when the oil should be changed. Please note the date on the sticker and notify Misty when it is within 100 miles, so she can arrange for service.

If you notice any mechanical problems, please e-mail Misty with a description.

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E. Guidelines on Schedule Adjustments (extra time worked within the week)

The Cherokee Regional Library Personnel Policy states: *“If it becomes necessary for an employee to work more than his/her assigned number of hours per week, a schedule adjustment providing the employee equivalent time off must be made within the standard work week”* (Article I, Section 1. E.)

The following guidelines will be used to implement this policy:

Employees cannot arbitrarily decide to work extra hours. Such extra hours must be assigned by the supervisor (or his/her designee) and necessary to the functioning of the library, for assigned meetings, or for workshops or training that is related to the employee’s job.

For forty-hour-per-week employees:

Supervisors must adjust schedules within the week (from 12:01 a.m. Monday through 12:00 midnight on the following Sunday) to allow time off for employees who are required to work more time than normally assigned. During the week in which the extra hours are worked, such adjustments may be made either before or after the extra hours are worked in order to maintain the normal number of assigned hours within that week.

For part-time employees (those working less than forty hours):

Employees who work less than forty hours may be assigned to work extra hours up to but not exceeding forty hours within the work week. Schedule adjustments must be made within the pay period (25th of one month through the 24th of the next month). The total number of hours of the pay period must not exceed the total number the employee would have worked without the extra hours. Library Managers are cautioned not to schedule time off for anticipated extra hours unless there is relative assurance that the extra hours will be worked as scheduled.

When authorizing additional hours of work, Library managers are expected to consider the adjustment of the employee’s schedule and the schedules of all the other employees, as well as other factors. If an assignment is important, but it creates a time problem, managers should consult with the Director. In library emergencies, additional hours may be approved and a solution worked out with the employee and the Director after the fact.

Employees are expected to record on their time sheets the actual hours worked. If an employee does not work, no time should be shown on the time sheet. If an employee is at work, the actual time worked must be recorded on the time sheet. Accurate record keeping for work time is a requirement of all employees. Library managers shall not approve time sheets that do not reflect the actual work time of the employee.

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Schedule adjustment guidelines/POLICIES