

Okefenokee
Regional Library System

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

*Approved by the Regional Library Board of Trustees on November 2, 2015,
last revised February 6, 2023*

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EMPLOYEE / EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIP

AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Employees of the Okefenokee Regional Library System (OKRLS) are hired “at will” which means employees enter into employment voluntarily and are free to resign at any time for any reason or for no reason. Similarly, OKRLS is free to conclude its relationship with any employee at any time for any reason or no reason, except an illegal one.

This Manual does not create a contract of employment between OKRLS and its employees. Statements of salary in annual, monthly, or weekly intervals are for information purposes and do not create a contract for the specified time. Our relationship remains at-will, notwithstanding any provision within OKRLS’s personnel policies. No manager or representative of OKRLS other than the Okefenokee Regional Library Board of Trustees as a whole has the authority to enter into any agreement with an employee regarding the terms of employment that changes the at-will relationship or deviates from the provisions within OKRLS’s Personnel Policy Manual.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

Okefenokee Regional Library System

Personnel Policy Manual

**version dated February 6, 2023*

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Okefenokee Regional Library System (OKRLS) Personnel Policy Manual. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in the Manual as well as any revisions made to it. I also understand that if I need additional information, or if there is anything I do not understand in this Manual, I should contact my immediate supervisor or the Human Resources and Business Manager.

I understand that OKRLS is an "at-will" employer and, as such, employment with OKRLS is not for any definite period of time and may be terminated at the option of either me or OKRLS, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice. I also understand that nothing contained in the Manual may be construed as creating a promise of future benefits or a binding contract with OKRLS for employment, benefits, or any other purpose.

In addition, I understand that this Manual reflects policies, practices, and procedures in effect on the date of publication and that it supersedes any prior policy manual, handbook, work rules, benefits, and practices of OKRLS. I further understand that the rules, policies, benefits, and practices referred to in this Manual are continually evaluated and may be modified, reduced, or discontinued at any time by the Okefenokee Regional Library Board of Trustees, in its judgment and discretion, with or without notice.

SIGNED BY: _____ DATE: _____
(Employee signature) *(Date signed)*

EMPLOYEE NAME: _____
(Print employee's name)

POSITION: _____
(Employee's position)

BRANCH: _____

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

DISCRIMINATION

The Okefenokee Regional Library System does not discriminate in any way (including, but not limited to, failure to hire, failure to promote, unwarranted discipline, or unlawful termination) on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, or disability. OKRLS is committed to creating a safe and productive workplace environment for all employees.

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at OKRLS will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities.

OKRLS will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

Any incident of workplace discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, or disability will be given immediate and effective attention, including, but not limited to, investigating the incident, taking suitable corrective action, and providing employees with appropriate resources.

RETALIATION

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their supervisor. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of OKRLS to provide a place that is comfortable for employees and patrons to work and use library resources. In compliance with applicable federal and state laws, OKRLS will be a place that is free of any form of harassment, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, flirtations, propositions, sexually degrading words to describe an individual, refusal to respect an individual's gender identity, graphic or suggestive comments, or requests for sexual favors. It includes the display in staff work areas of sexually suggestive pictures or objects, including photographs or illustrations of nude or seminude figures. All employees are responsible for assuring that the workplace is free of sexual harassment and should promptly report incidents or possible incidents of sexual harassment to their supervisor, the Director, or the Human Resources and Business Manager. After investigation, any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary actions that range from counseling and education up to and including termination of employment.

Patrons are not permitted to sexually harass other patrons or staff members. An OKRLS employee may refuse to assist a patron if he or she believes that such assistance will require the employee to view printed or computer screen materials that the employee finds to be offensive or interprets as harassment. The OKRLS employee must immediately ask a supervisor for assistance with the patron's request. Patrons who harass staff or other patrons will be asked to leave the Library, and, if appropriate, their behavior will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

It is the policy of OKRLS that every employee is entitled to work under the safest conditions reasonably possible. Every reasonable effort will be made to provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace, safe equipment, and proper materials, and

to establish and insist upon safe methods and practices at all times. It is the basic responsibility of every employee to make safety a part of their daily concern. Employees are obligated to observe all guidelines governing safety and appropriate conduct, to properly use the safety equipment provided, and to follow common-sense safety practices.

Following Safety Guidelines

All employees should participate in training in the correct way to perform their jobs. Any questions or suggestions about better or safer methods of performing tasks should be discussed with their supervisor. Employees should always be conscious of the safety of others, as well as themselves. Employees should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Observe all safety rules, practices, and procedures.
2. Promptly report any unsafe condition, accident, damaged or malfunctioning vehicle or equipment, any employee who is performing his or her job in an unsafe manner, and any other type of hazardous situation.
3. Operate only equipment assigned to the employee and for which the employee has received full training.
4. Use proper safety clothing, equipment, and personal protective equipment wherever provided, assigned, or required, as designated for the work performed.
5. Wear a seat belt when in an OKRLS vehicle, when driving on OKRLS business, or when operating any vehicle on OKRLS premises.
6. Abide by the Hands-Free Georgia Act (§40-6-241) when driving an OKRLS vehicle or when driving on OKRLS business.¹
7. Use appropriate, safe methods to lift heavy objects, and use handcarts or other devices to assist with lifting or moving activities.
8. Never endanger oneself or other individuals through inappropriate actions, horseplay, practical jokes, or by taking unnecessary chances.
9. Be prepared for fire or other emergency situations – know what to do, what actions to take, where to go, and the location of exits, firefighting equipment, and alarm pulls within the work environment.
10. Observe proper maintenance practices to keep work area, vehicles, tools, or other equipment in clean, safe, and operable condition.

Reporting Safety Hazards or Deficiencies

Any employee who believes that a safety or health risk exists must report the matter to his or her supervisor so that OKRLS may take appropriate action. The employee should make this report immediately upon detection of the safety or health risk. A safety or health risk may consist of, among other things, a condition in the workplace or the work methods of other employees.

Reporting Employee Injuries or Accidents

All workplace injuries and accidents must be reported immediately to the supervisor. This ensures prompt and appropriate medical treatment, allows for timely completion of reports as required by law, and enables eligible employees to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible. Except for emergencies (in which case the employee should seek immediate emergency treatment), if medical attention by a physician is needed, the employee must use one of the physicians specifically listed on the Workers' Compensation Notice posted by OKRLS on the staff bulletin board. Failure to report an injury or to receive medical treatment from a physician on the posted panel may jeopardize payment of medical bills or other benefits under workers' compensation insurance.

EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS

The Director (or designee) may close a library when, in his or her best judgment, conditions are such that they pose a safety risk or danger to staff and patrons. Branch Managers will alert the Library Director (or designee) when conditions warrant closure. Conditions that warrant closure of the Library include those that endanger the health or safety of the staff or public. Staff members who are sent home will be paid for the remainder of their normal work shift.

¹ Appendix A: Hands-Free Georgia Act

If the building must be evacuated, the staff member in charge must ensure that all members of the public and staff have left the building. The building will then be secured to the extent possible (doors locked, security system armed, etc.) based on the current situation. The Director and the police department are to be informed of the evacuation and closure as quickly as it is safe to do so.

Emergency kits, including basic first aid supplies, a flashlight and batteries, biological hazard gloves and masks, and a battery-operated radio, will be maintained at the circulation desk and in the branch manager's office. Branch Managers will check these kits monthly to ensure that all items are available and supplies are replenished as needed. In case of a disaster requiring shelter, e.g., tornado or flood, the staff member in charge should direct other staff and patrons to a designated area where basic survival supplies are maintained.

In the event that inclement weather or other conditions make it unsafe to open the Library, the Director (or designee) will notify staff that they should not report to work or that the Library will open on a delayed schedule. Staff members who are notified that they should not report to work will receive their regular pay. Staff on sick or vacation leave during an emergency closure will have their time charged to those pay accounts. Depending on the exact nature of the emergency closure, key staff may be required to report to work. Failure to report to work when directed may result in disciplinary action. The Director (or designee) may also assign staff to work at different locations during times when the Library is closed.

Following any emergency, branch managers must assess any damage to their areas of operation and submit a report to the Director. The Director will provide a report on the emergency and its handling to the appropriate Library Board of Trustees at its next meeting.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

OKRLS is concerned about the well-being and personal safety of its employees and anyone doing business with the Library and, consequently, strictly prohibits workplace violence. Acts of violence or threats of violence, whether expressed or implied toward individuals in the Library, will not be tolerated. All reports of incidents or perceived incidents of workplace violence or threats of workplace violence will be taken seriously and addressed appropriately. This policy concerns prohibited conduct, as well as general procedures and potential responsive steps in the event that workplace violence occurs despite preventive measures.

Workplace violence is any conduct that is severe, offensive, or intimidating enough to make an individual reasonably fear for his or her personal safety or the safety of family, friends, or property. Examples of conduct that may be considered threats or acts of violence under this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Threats of any kind (veiled or direct, verbal or non-verbal), intimidation or attempts to instill fear in others.
2. Physically aggressive or hostile behavior.
3. Behavior that suggests a propensity for violence, such as belligerent speech, excessive arguing or swearing, or sabotage or threats of sabotage of OKRLS or another's property.
4. Intentional damage or destruction of OKRLS property or of another's property.
5. Harassing or threatening physical, verbal, written, or electronic communications, including comments, phone calls, emails, letters, faxes, website materials, diagrams or drawings, gestures, or any other form of communication that causes a reasonable fear or intimidation response in others.
6. Stalking (defined as following, placing under surveillance, or contacting another person without the consent of the other person for the purpose of harassing and intimidating the other person, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-90).
7. Unauthorized or illegal possession of firearms, ammunition, explosives, knives, or weaponry of any type on OKRLS property is strictly prohibited. A lawfully possessed firearm may be stored within a personal vehicle that is locked out of sight within the trunk, glove box, or other enclosed compartment or area within such vehicle.

Reporting Incidents

Any employee who is subjected to, observes, hears of, or becomes aware of any of the above actions or behavior by an individual in the Library must immediately report such incidents to a supervisor. The supervisor should make sure an incident

report is completed as soon as possible within a 48 hour period.²

Decisions may need to be made quickly to prevent a threat from being carried out, a violent act from occurring, or a life-threatening situation from developing. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent quick action to stop or reduce the risk of harm to anyone, including requesting immediate assistance from law enforcement or emergency response resources.

All acts of violence, or threats thereof, should be reported no matter how minor or insignificant they may appear. Failure to report any threats or acts of violence in violation of this policy is, in itself, a violation of this policy and may subject any employee involved to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Investigations

All reports of acts or threats of violence will be promptly investigated. OKRLS may consult with law enforcement authorities or other resources as it deems appropriate. To the extent possible, identities of the reporting employee, any witnesses, and any individuals alleged to be involved in actual or threatened violence will be protected against unnecessary disclosure. All persons involved in the investigation are expected to refrain from discussing the matter with any person outside the investigation process. All employees – whether complainant, witness, or accused – are required to be truthful, accurate, and cooperative during the investigation. OKRLS will decide whether the workplace violence policy has been violated and, based upon its findings, will take appropriate preventive, corrective, or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Consequences

Any employee found by OKRLS to have engaged in violence or threats of violence will be subject to immediate and appropriate disciplinary action, ranging from a written reprimand up to and including termination.

Non-Retaliation Policy

Retaliation will not be tolerated against an employee for reporting in good faith a suspected act or threat of violence, or for providing information in good faith regarding a report made by another employee. Any complaints about retaliation should be reported in the same manner as violations of this policy are to be reported. Any employee found by OKRLS to have retaliated against another employee for these reasons will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, ranging from a written reprimand up to and including termination. Conversely, an intentional or malicious false accusation could have a serious effect on an individual who has been falsely accused, and any individual found to have knowingly made false complaints will be disciplined based on the extent of the false accusation, up to and including termination.

Orders of Protection

OKRLS may seek orders of protection (or restraining orders) against any person who violates the workplace violence policy. Employees who either obtain or are subject to an order of protection have additional responsibilities to report their situation to their immediate supervisor.

Searches and Inspection

All OKRLS equipment, property, and facilities (including, but not limited to, desks, workstations, file cabinets, lockers, computers and computer-stored information, email, voicemail, business records, vehicles, or any other property or equipment owned, leased, or provided by OKRLS) are subject to inspection at any time and for any reason. No employee shall have any privacy interest or reasonable expectation of privacy whatsoever in any OKRLS equipment, property, or facility. If a search uncovers evidence of employee wrongdoing, illegal activity, or employee violations of OKRLS rules or policies, such evidence may be used to support disciplinary action up to and including termination. In cases involving suspected illegal activity, the evidence may be provided to the proper law enforcement authorities. Further, if OKRLS reasonably suspects that an employee has violated a policy that directly affects the safety or security of its employees, patrons, or facilities, OKRLS will take

² Appendix B: Incident Report

appropriate actions (such as contacting law enforcement officials, placing the employee on administrative leave while an investigation is conducted, or other actions as deemed appropriate).

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

Employees of OKRLS may not engage in the manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of illegal drugs and controlled substances in the workplace. Employees who violate the terms of this policy statement will be subject to immediate termination.

OKRLS and its governing body recognize that the use of illegal drugs, or the abuse of legal substances such as prescription drugs or alcohol, may be a symptom of chemical dependency or mental health issues. Employees who pursue treatment under OKRLS's health care program may be granted sick leave, vacation leave, or emergency leave at the discretion of the Director.

Drug/Alcohol Testing, Reasonable Suspicion

Alcohol and/or drug testing may be required when there is reason to believe that an employee is not free of alcohol and/or illegal drugs while in the workplace or performing assigned duties.

Reasonable suspicion may occur due to an employee's appearance, behavior, speech, odors, or other evidence found or reported. When it is determined that an employee will be tested due to reasonable suspicion, he or she will be accompanied and transported to the testing site by a supervisor, and all costs incurred for testing will be paid by OKRLS.

Since alcohol metabolizes rapidly, reasonable suspicion alcohol testing will be completed at the closest testing site as soon as possible.

An employee found to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while at work will receive discipline up to and including termination.

SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE

OKRLS complies with the Georgia Smoke-free Air Act of 2005. All OKRLS grounds, buildings, and vehicles are designated as smoke-free and tobacco-free areas. In addition, the use or inhalation of e-cigarettes ("vaping") is prohibited in OKRLS buildings and vehicles. Smoking, tobacco use, and vaping are prohibited anywhere on OKRLS grounds. This policy applies to the use of any tobacco or vaping product, including smokeless tobacco. It applies to both employees of and visitors to the library.

Further, smoking (which means the burning of a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, e-cigarette or vaping substance, or any other matter or substance) is strictly prohibited in all privately owned vehicles while used in the course of OKRLS work whenever other OKRLS employees or persons are present in the vehicle, regardless of whether the vehicle's windows are open. Smoking and tobacco use in privately owned vehicles are otherwise permissible, provided that it is done within the vehicle and is not within 50 feet of any Library entrance or exit.

OKRLS understands that tobacco is a legal product and further recognizes that, as an employer, OKRLS may not require that employees or prospective employees refrain from tobacco use when not at work, and OKRLS will not discriminate against employees who use tobacco outside of employment. The success of this policy will depend on the courtesy and cooperation of both tobacco users and nonusers. All OKRLS employees are responsible for following and helping to enforce this policy and should report any problems or violations to a supervisor. Violations of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action, ranging from a written reprimand up to and including termination.

CODE OF EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, OKRLS expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following is an illustrative list of examples of unacceptable conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

1. Theft or inappropriate removal of possessions of OKRLS or employee property.
2. Committing or attempting to commit deliberate damage to OKRLS property, facilities, tools, or equipment.
3. Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
4. Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs on the premises.
5. Fighting or threatening violence on the premises.
6. Removing, sending, or furnishing OKRLS and/or PINES records or information to unauthorized persons.
7. Violating OKRLS's anti-discrimination or anti-harassment policies.
8. Retaliating against any person who reports discrimination or harassment.
9. Sleeping or dozing on the job.
10. Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
11. Violations of safety or health procedures.
12. Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, on the premises.
13. Falsification of patron records or OKRLS reports or documents.

DRESS CODE

Public image plays an important role in developing and maintaining support for the Library. In order to maintain a public image consistent with a professional organization, each staff member's dress and grooming should be appropriate for a business environment and in keeping with his or her work assignment. Health and safety standards must also be considered in dressing for work.

Clothing and accessories must be neat and clean and should not draw inappropriate or disruptive attention to the individual. Staff members working with the public must dress appropriately for a casual business environment, defined as professional attire that is neat and tailored. Staff who primarily shelve materials, work outdoors, or whose work is confined to the back office areas may dress more casually, but shorts, halter tops, and bare feet are never permitted. T-shirts or other attire that promote political or religious causes, campaigns, or issues may not be worn. Obscenities, euphemisms or slang words for foul language, and foreign phrases that could be interpreted inappropriately are also not permitted.

The Director has final discretion of all dress code interpretation.

EMPLOYEE DUTY TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY

Library patron records that contain the identity of library users are confidential under the law. Employees have a duty to ensure that this information is not disclosed to non-library personnel. In the event an employee is presented with a court order or subpoena for patron records, the Director should be notified, and the determination of the propriety of the disclosure will be made by the Director.

STAFF USE OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

OKRLS employees must exercise extreme caution in the access and use of materials and equipment placed in their trust. Staff members are prohibited from using OKRLS facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources for personal use, except to the extent that those resources are available to the public. OKRLS materials and equipment taken for personal use must be checked out if they are to be removed from the Library or if the item(s) will be kept away from the normal location for more than four (4) hours. Large quantities of material, as well as high value or popular use resources, should not be held out of the collection for extended periods for staff use.

Staff will not be charged for overdue fines but will be subject to disciplinary action if materials are not returned and discharged in a timely manner. Violation of any part of this policy may be considered theft of property or services and subject employees to disciplinary and/or legal actions.

COMPUTER, EMAIL, & INTERNET

This policy governs employee use of OKRLS's electronic communication systems, which include email, computers (including internet access), voicemail, fax machines, telephones, and any other device used for communication (collectively referred to as "Communication Systems"). However, it does not pertain to an employee's use of any Communication Systems available to the public used by an employee during non-working hours.

Use of the Communication Systems constitutes a commitment by OKRLS's employees to observe and be bound by the provisions of this policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that OKRLS's Communication Systems are protected, properly managed, used for appropriate and acceptable purposes, and utilized in cost effective ways.

Equipment and Resources

Communication Systems are made available for staff to conduct OKRLS-related business. Except for emergencies, use of OKRLS's equipment for personal reasons is limited to breaks and other times that fall outside of work schedules. Conducting personal or other non-work related business when at a public service desk at a time when the Library is open to the public, whether such action involves the use of OKRLS's equipment and resources or not, is strictly prohibited. Doing so may subject an employee to disciplinary action including termination. When on breaks, personal use is permitted so long as it does not interfere with the performance of an employee's job or the transaction of library business, consume significant resources, give rise to more than nominal additional costs or interfere with the activities of other employees.

All equipment, including individual computers, tablets, and laptops, as well as all data entered into the computer network or any component thereof (such as individual computers, tablets, and laptops), is the property of OKRLS. Staff may not store personal or other non-work related information and/or documents on OKRLS's equipment. The hardware, software, and accounts are given to employees to assist them in performance of their jobs. Employees should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, or receive on OKRLS's equipment, network, or software. At the discretion of the Director or the Library Board of Trustees, any and all data stored on OKRLS's equipment, network, or software may be accessed and reviewed. This may happen at any time and without notice to those who use or have used the equipment. Such data is subject to applicable Open Records requests submitted by the general public.

Equipment and software is installed and maintained by the OKRLS Systems Librarian. Use of other software or equipment without prior approval by the Systems Librarian is strictly prohibited. Staff may not download and install programs on OKRLS's equipment without authorization from the Systems Librarian.

Accounts and passwords are set up and issued by the Systems Librarian. Accounts and passwords may not, under any circumstances, be shared with, or used by, persons other than those to whom they have been assigned or by the Systems Librarian for the purpose of computer network maintenance.

File Sharing

Staff must exercise caution when downloading or forwarding/sharing files. If such files are copyrighted, downloading or sharing them without licensing permissions is illegal and may subject OKRLS and the individual employee to legal sanctions. Willful file sharing of any copyrighted material is prohibited.

Software License Abuse

OKRLS requires strict adherence to software vendors' license agreements. Using OKRLS's equipment and/or resources to copy licensed software contrary to vendor agreements or installing unlicensed and/or pirated software is strictly prohibited. Questions regarding software licenses should be referred to the Systems Librarian.

Unacceptable Practices

The following list provides examples of unacceptable practices for which employees will be held accountable. This list is not exhaustive and should not be interpreted as such.

- Excessive use of OKRLS's equipment and/or resources to conduct non-library-related business. This includes phone calls, saving non-business related documents to OKRLS's network, and printing non-business related materials on OKRLS printers.
- Sending/forwarding chain letters or participating in the creation or transmission of unsolicited commercial e-mail ("spam").
- Accessing unauthorized networks, servers, drives, folders, files, or information.
- Making unauthorized copies of OKRLS's files or documents.
- Destroying, deleting, erasing, altering, or otherwise tampering with OKRLS's files or other data needed by or potentially useful to other staff members and/or the Library in general.
- Disabling, defeating, or circumventing any security mechanisms such as Windows policies, Internet screening programs, security programs, or firewalls. Any employee who does so shall be subject to disciplinary action including termination.
- Deliberately or habitually propagating any virus or other code or file designed to disrupt, disable, impair, or otherwise harm either OKRLS's networks or systems or those of any other individual or entity.
- Willfully creating congestion, disruption, disablement, alteration, or impairment of OKRLS's networks or systems (e.g. adversely affecting Internet speed by streaming videos or unplugging computer equipment).
- Using abusive, profane, threatening, racist, sexist, or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages when using OKRLS's resources.
- Infringing, attempting to infringe, or aiding in any way in infringement or attempted infringement on another person's or entity's intellectual property rights or copyrights.
- Browsing, retrieving, displaying, or disseminating any offensive, inflammatory, pornographic or inappropriate communications, including sexually explicit and racially derogatory material.
- Composing, sending or forwarding communications which reasonably could cause another employee to feel offended, embarrassed, or harassed including any material relating to race, color, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, military status, order of protection status, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Sending or forwarding any communications which mask or misrepresent the identity of the sender, or which have unauthorized encryption.
- Engaging in activities for personal financial gain or for commercial use or profit.
- Using OKRLS's equipment or other resources to promote or oppose a political issue, political candidate, a religious belief, or a commercial vendor.
- Failing to properly log off or lock any secure, controlled-access computer or other form of electronic data system.
- Posting passwords on or near a computer, especially in a public area.
- Sharing or distributing passwords to unauthorized persons.
- Willful or recurring use of OKRLS's equipment and resources for purposes, or in ways, that are inconsistent with the policies, guidelines, or best practices will subject an employee to disciplinary action including termination.

PERSONAL CELL PHONE USAGE

Employees may carry and use personal cell phones while at work. However, at the discretion of the supervisor, cell phones shall be turned off, silenced, or set to vibrate during meetings and conferences. Cell phones shall be turned off or silenced when employees are working in service locations such as the front desk.

If employee use of a cell phone causes disruptions or loss in productivity, the employee may become subject to disciplinary action.

SOCIAL MEDIA

OKRLS recognizes that Internet-provided social media can be a highly effective tool for sharing ideas and exchanging information. However, OKRLS also seeks to ensure that social media usage serves the need to maintain the Library's integrity while minimizing actual or potential legal risks. OKRLS, therefore, establishes the following rules and guidelines for communicating employer information via social media. Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action including termination.

OKRLS employees may utilize social media and social network sites to further enhance communications with patrons and the public in support of Library goals and objectives. OKRLS employees have the ability to publish articles, facilitate discussions, and communicate information through various media related to conducting Library business. Social media facilitates further discussion of Library issues, operations, and services by providing members of the public the opportunity to participate in many ways.

1. All OKRLS social media sites shall be:
 - A. Approved by the Systems Librarian and the requesting Branch Manager;
 - B. Published using approved OKRLS social networking platform and tools; and
 - C. Administered by the Systems Librarian or their designee.
2. All OKRLS social networking sites shall adhere to applicable state, federal, and local laws, regulations and policies including all Information Technology and Records Management policies and other applicable OKRLS policies.
3. Freedom of Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies apply to social media content and therefore content must be able to be managed, stored, and retrieved to comply with these laws.
4. OKRLS social networking sites are subject to Georgia's public records laws. Relevant Library and Georgia records retention schedules apply to social networking content. Records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule shall be maintained for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible using the approved OKRLS platforms and tools.
5. All social network sites and entries shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure.
6. Content submitted for posting that is deemed not suitable for posting by a OKRLS social networking moderator because it is not topically related to the particular social networking site objective being commented upon, or is deemed prohibited content based on the criteria in this policy, shall be retained pursuant to the records retention schedule along with a description of the reason the specific content is deemed not suitable for posting.
7. OKRLS reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.
8. Each library's social networking site shall include an introductory statement which clearly specifies the purpose and topical scope of the blog and social network site. Where possible, social networking sites should link back to the official OKRLS website for forms, documents, and other information.
9. OKRLS social networking content and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed for posting:
 - A. Comments not topically related to the particular site or blog article being commented upon;
 - B. Profane language or content;

- C. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - D. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - E. Solicitations of commerce;
 - F. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 - G. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
 - H. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party
10. All OKRLS social networking moderators shall be trained regarding the terms of this policy, including their responsibilities to review content submitted for posting to ensure compliance with the policy.
 11. All social networking sites shall clearly indicate they are maintained by OKRLS and shall have OKRLS contact information prominently displayed.
 12. Where appropriate, OKRLS IT security policies shall apply to all social networking sites and articles.
 13. Employees must follow the “Employee Guidance for Participating in Social Networking”.³
 14. Employee social media activity is covered by all of OKRLS’s policies including, among others, the Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and -Harassment, Confidentiality, and Internet policies.
 15. Employees may use social media for non-business purposes while at work, but only if they are complying with all OKRLS policies and the activity occurs during a break or meal period.
 16. Employees should expect that OKRLS will use software and search tools to monitor comments or discussions about OKRLS, its employees, its vendors, and its patrons that are posted publicly on the Internet, including social media.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following terms are defined as provided below:

1. Social Media: Social media is content created by individuals using accessible and scalable technologies through the Internet. Examples of social media include Facebook, blogs, MySpace, RSS, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Delicious, Flickr, etc.
2. Blog: (an abridgment of the term web log) is a website with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video.⁴
3. OKRLS author: An authorized OKRLS employee that creates and is responsible for posted articles and information on social media sites.⁵
4. Article: An original posting of content to an OKRLS social media site by an OKRLS author.
5. Commenter: An OKRLS employee or member of the public who submits a comment for posting in response to the content of a particular OKRLS article or social media content.
6. Comment: A response to an OKRLS article or social media content submitted by a commenter.
7. OKRLS moderator: An authorized OKRLS employee, who reviews, authorizes and allows content submitted by OKRLS authors and public commentators to be posted to an OKRLS social media site.

OKRLS respects employees’ rights to communicate concerning terms and conditions of employment. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with an employee’s rights under federal and state laws, including the National Labor Relations Act.

SELLING AND SOLICITING IN THE LIBRARY

It is recognized that OKRLS employees may engage in the sale of goods or services outside of their employment with OKRLS. However, it is never appropriate to solicit business from staff or patrons during work time. Soliciting business from patrons during off-work time while on OKRLS property is not permitted; however, staff may offer a business card if one is requested. Information regarding personal business may be distributed to other employees by placing ads on the staff bulletin board,

³ Appendix C: Employee Guidance for Participating in Social Networking

⁴ Appendix D: Blog Standards

⁵ Appendix D: Blog Standards

posting information in the staff lounge, and by leaving catalogs or brochures in the staff lounge. Oral and written invitations to product parties or distribution of information may not be made through interoffice mail. Display of items for sale is not permitted on OKRLS property.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Employees may engage in political activities on their own time. However, employees' rights to express their political opinions during work hours or as a representative of OKRLS are limited. Employees should refrain from wearing campaign or political buttons, distributing campaign or political literature except as permitted in OKRLS's policy on "Policy for Limited Public Display of Posters and Fliers of Not-For-Profit Organizations" and expressing political opinions while on work time.⁶ T-shirts or other attire that promote a particular political issue, person, or cause are not appropriate. Bumper stickers may not be applied to OKRLS property or vehicles unless specifically approved by the Director.

SOCIALIZING AND CELEBRATIONS

Good staff relations and the development of a cohesive work team benefit from some socializing. Therefore, OKRLS encourages a reasonable amount of socializing and staff celebration so long as these events do not interfere with the normal flow of work.

NON-FRATERNIZATION

While OKRLS does not wish to interfere with the off-duty and personal conduct of its employees, certain types of off-duty conduct and relationships may interfere with OKRLS's legitimate business interests. To prevent unwarranted sexual harassment claims, confidentially lapses, uncomfortable working relationships, morale problems among other employees, and even the appearance of impropriety, managers and supervisors of OKRLS are strictly prohibited from engaging in consensual romantic or sexual relationships with any other OKRLS employees.

VISITORS IN THE WORKPLACE

OKRLS is unlike most workplaces in that Library facilities are open to the public. This can present a challenge when friends or relatives of employees come to the library. The following guidelines are designed to ensure that employees do not become distracted or neglect their duties when friends and family are visiting the Library.

Children or Other Family Members at Work

In order for the Library to maintain a professional and productive work environment, employees may not bring children to their work areas during scheduled work times. An exception may be allowed in the case of an emergency (with supervisory approval). However, the Library workplace should not be used in lieu of childcare or adult daycare services. Parents should plan accordingly for the care of their children on days when children may be sick, on snow days, during school holidays, or other occasions. Standards for "child" or "children" also apply to any person who is in the care of the employee (e.g., disabled parent).

Employees are allowed to have children at the Library during their work hours only if:

- The child remains in the public areas of the library during open hours;
- The child does not require the employee's care or attention during work hours;
- The child does not distract the employee from his or her work;
- The child does not distract other OKRLS employees from their work; and
- The child's connection to the OKRLS employee would not be apparent to patrons.

⁶ Appendix E: Policy for Limited Public Display of Posters and Fliers of Not-For-Profit Organizations

An example of an acceptable situation would be an employee bringing an older child to the Library and the child independently reading or completing homework in the public area while the employee is working.

Employees are required to follow OKRLS's Child and Dependent Person Safety Policy.⁷ Supervisors may disallow an employee from having a child at the Library while the employee is working if, in the judgment of the supervisor, the child is disruptive, distracting, or in need of care or attention.

In all cases, children are not allowed behind Public Services desks, and are not allowed to be unattended in staff areas.

Visitors in the Workplace

Employees should limit their personal conversations with family members or acquaintances who visit the Library. Visits are permissible, but should be infrequent and brief in order to maintain a productive work environment.

Restricted Access to Non-Public Areas of the Library

Access to non-public areas of the library is limited to current employees, volunteers, and scheduled maintenance or service workers. Visitors, such as family members or friends of employees and business-related vendors or consultants, are to be accompanied in these areas by an employee at all times. (For purposes of this section, non-public areas are those areas behind the public service desks, employee workrooms, employee offices, hallways, storage areas, computer equipment rooms, and break rooms.)

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Director (or designee).

⁷ Appendix F: Child and Dependent Person Safety Policy

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

RECRUITMENT OF CANDIDATES FOR POSITIONS

OKRLS is committed to developing a diverse workforce while also selecting the most qualified persons available for OKRLS positions. When hiring new staff or promoting current staff, OKRLS will systematically and aggressively make reasonable efforts to provide an equal opportunity for all employees and applicants. An applicant pool that is representative of the makeup of the community is desirable; however, no person under the age of 18 will be considered for full-time regular positions. Positions will be advertised as widely as appropriate for the position, and, when possible, advertising will be targeted to reach qualified applicants from minority groups and persons with disabilities. Reasonable accommodation, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, will be provided to all applicants. Funds will be expended, subject to budgetary limitations, to pay travel costs for candidates selected for interviews for positions at the Regional management level. Whenever possible, prescreening interviews will be conducted by telephone or video conferencing; however, when these methods are used, all candidates will be screened by the same prescreening method.

IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE

OKRLS is committed to full compliance with federal and state immigration laws and will hire only individuals with the legal right to work in the United States.

Pursuant to Section 2 of the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act, all employees must complete Form I-9 and provide legal documentation of citizenship and/or work status as set forth on the form. Within three (3) business days of hire, OKRLS will electronically verify the accuracy of the employee's Social Security number and other documentation through the United States Department of Homeland Security verification system. The employee will be immediately notified of a non-confirmation of his or her Social Security number and will be provided a referral letter. It is the employee's responsibility to resolve the discrepancy with the Social Security office within eight (8) federal government working days. On the tenth federal government working day after the date of the referral letter, OKRLS will make a second inquiry to the Social Security Administration database for a final confirmation. A final non-confirmation will result in immediate termination. This policy and its procedures are intended to comply with the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act. Should any portion of said Act be amended, modified, revised, or repealed, or if other or additional controlling federal or state immigration laws or regulations become adopted in the future, the processes and requirements set forth in such Act, laws, or regulations shall govern.

NEPOTISM

Dependents of the Director and any Library Board of Trustee members are ineligible for employment with the Library. In addition, no immediate family member of a current staff member and/or current Library Board of Trustee member will be eligible for employment within an individual branch. Each case of a second family member applying for a position that is not covered above will be judged individually.

Employing relatives in the same organization may cause conflicts or problems with favoritism and employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried into working relationships.

If a relative relationship is established after employment, the Director (or designee) will work with the individuals concerned to decide if there is a problem and, if a transfer is available, who is to be transferred. If a voluntary solution cannot be reached within 30 calendar days or if a transfer is unavailable, termination may be considered.

For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with an employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

SALARY

Salary ranges are established for each position classification by the Director and set forth in the personnel classification plan.⁸ New employees are generally hired at the base level of the salary range. When approved by the Director, new hires may enter at a higher salary range based on exceptional experience, relevant education, or other appropriate factors. The Regional Library Board of Trustees will set the salary for the Director and approve it each year; this action will be reflected in the minutes of the corresponding meeting. The Regional Board of Trustees may consider a higher salary range for the Director as a tool to recruit candidates.

Pay Increases

Pay increases are not automatic and depend on a variety of factors. Any type of pay increase will be dependent on funding. Merit increases will be based on an employee's job performance. In order to qualify for a merit increase, employees must have all "satisfactory" or above ratings on their performance evaluations. Market adjustments (i.e., cost of living adjustments) are not based on performance but are applied "across the board" to all employees at the same time and will result in an updated pay scale. Promotion to a position in a higher pay grade will also result in a pay increase based on the pay scale for the new pay grade. Regardless of the reason for the pay increase, employees may receive pay increases only to the maximum amount for their pay grade.

Pay Reductions

A pay reduction may occur in the event of a demotion. Pay reductions due to a demotion will correspond to the pay range of the assigned position, and no employee's pay will be reduced to a point below the minimum of the pay range for that position. When an employee is demoted to a lower pay grade, the employee's salary will typically decrease by the dollar difference between the minimum salary of the old pay grade and the minimum salary of the new pay grade. Staff-wide pay reductions may occur if OKRLS receives significant funding reductions. In this situation, employees already at the minimum of their pay grades may temporarily be paid below the minimum of the pay scales for their positions.

Bonus Payments & Monetary Reward Programs

Employee bonus payments or monetary reward programs are prohibited by the Gratuities Clause of the Georgia Constitution.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD FOR NEWLY HIRED AND REHIRED EMPLOYEES

OKRLS is an "at-will" employer and, as such, employment with OKRLS is not for any definite period of time and may be terminated at the option of either employee or OKRLS, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice. OKRLS considers the probation period a tool to evaluate the suitability of newly hired and rehired employees; the probation period does not change the "at-will" status of employment with OKRLS.

The probation period for newly hired and rehired employees is ninety (90) days. During this period, management will observe and evaluate the employee and periodically discuss progress. The first written performance evaluation will occur after completion of the employee's probationary period. After that review, performance evaluations will be conducted at least annually.

Employees who are still under their probationary period can accrue vacation and sick leave as outlined in the section on Paid and Unpaid Time Off, but are not eligible to take vacation or sick leave until they successfully complete their probationary period.

⁸ Appendix G: Personnel Classification Plan

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Okefenokee Regional Library System provides a wide range of benefits to eligible employees. Employees are encouraged to become familiar with the benefit programs for which they are eligible. Contact the Human Resources and Business Manager for additional information and answers to any specific questions.

Eligibility for benefits is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification.

- A Full-Time Employee is defined as an employee who works thirty (30) hours or more each week. Full-time employees are eligible for health, retirement, and flexible benefits.
- A Part-Time Employee is defined as an employee who works less than thirty (30) hours each week. Part-time employees are not eligible for health benefits. Part-time employees are eligible for other benefits as follows:
 - Part-Time Employees who work 17.5 hours or more each week are eligible for flexible benefits.
 - Part-Time Employees who work twenty (20) hours or more each week are eligible for flexible benefits and retirement benefits.

ATTENDANCE

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential function of each employee's job at OKRLS. Any tardiness or absence causes problems for fellow employees and management staff. When an employee is absent, his or her work usually must be performed by others. Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled, on time and prepared to start work. Employees also are expected to remain at work for their entire work schedule, except for break periods or when required to leave on authorized OKRLS business. Late arrival, early departure, or other absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided. In all cases of absence or tardiness, employees must provide their supervisor with an honest reason or explanation. Documentation from medical representatives regarding the reason for the absence may be requested.

Employees also must inform their supervisor of the expected duration of any absence. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, an employee must call in within 30 minutes of his or her regular starting time on any day on which the employee is scheduled to work and will not report to work. Excessive absenteeism may be grounds for discipline up to and including termination of employment. Generally, any unpaid absence not protected by law will be considered excessive. Each situation of excessive absenteeism or tardiness will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any employee who fails to report to work without notification to his or her supervisor for a period of three days or more may be terminated unless this absence is protected by law.

PAID AND UNPAID TIME OFF; LEAVE

Paid Holiday Leave

The OKRLS Regional Library Board of Trustees will approve a holiday schedule at the Fall Board meeting for the coming year to celebrate the eleven (11) Federal holidays, plus one additional holiday for a total of twelve (12) holidays, with pay for eligible employees.⁹ The Regional Library Board of Trustees may add to or alter this schedule each year as they see fit. For the current year's schedule, please see Appendix I.¹⁰

NEW YEAR'S DAY	January 1
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	3 rd Monday of January
PRESIDENTS DAY	3 rd Monday of February
MEMORIAL DAY	Last Monday of May
JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY	June 19
INDEPENDENCE DAY	July 4
LABOR DAY	1 st Monday of September
COLUMBUS DAY	2 nd Monday of October
VETERANS DAY	November 11
THANKSGIVING DAY	4 th Thursday of November
CHRISTMAS DAY	December 25
ADDITIONAL HOLIDAY	To be decided by the Regional Board each year

Full-time employees will be credited with an eight (8) hour work day and part-time employees who work 17.5 hours or more each week will be credited with a four (4) hour work day.

In the event a holiday falls upon a Sunday, the following Monday shall be deemed to be the paid holiday. In the event the legal holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be deemed to be the paid holiday. When a holiday falls within a period of paid leave, the holiday shall not be counted as a leave day in computing the amount of leave debited. An employee who is absent without leave on the day immediately preceding or following a holiday shall lose the holiday as well as pay for that day.

In the event a holiday falls on a Friday, the Library will be closed the following Saturday. In the event a holiday falls on a Sunday or Monday, the Library will be closed the preceding Saturday. Saturday closures are not considered paid holidays. Affected staff will need to work those hours during the normal work week (Monday-Friday).

⁹ For a list of the current year's Federal Holiday schedule, please see the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's website: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/#url=Overview>

¹⁰ Appendix H: Current Year's Paid Holiday Schedule

Vacation Leave Policy

Employees shall accrue vacation time as outlined below. Newly hired or rehired employees who are still under their probationary period can accrue vacation according to the schedule below, but are not eligible to take vacation until they successfully complete their probation period.

Regular Employees:

All permanent full-time employees and part-time employees who work 17.5 hours or more each week shall earn vacation leave on the basis of the following schedule:

1. Eligible Part-time Employees: Four (4) hours for each month of service from the date of employment up to and including December 31 next following the date of employment. Total vacation hours shall not exceed 48 hours.
2. Full-time Employees:
 - First Year of Employment Through the Completion of Five (5) Years of Employment - Ten (10) hours for each month of service. Total vacation hours shall not exceed 120 hours.
 - Five (5) and More Years of Employment - Fourteen (14) hours for each month of service. Total vacation hours shall not exceed 168 hours.

**The Regional Board of Trustees may consider a different allotment of vacation leave for the Director as a tool to recruit candidates.*

Calculations of length of service are based on the anniversary date of the employee's hiring. For the purposes of calculating annual leave accrual rates, rehired employees will receive credit for prior years of classified service. Vacation leave may be carried over from one (1) fiscal year to the next; however, any vacation leave in excess of the maximum allowable will be forfeited if not taken by the end of the fiscal year ending June 30th.

Upon resignation or retirement from OKRLS employment, an employee who has attained regular status shall be paid cash at the normal rate of pay for his or her unused vacation leave, not to exceed the maximum accrual allowable. An employee who either terminates employment or is terminated by OKRLS prior to completion of his or her probationary period is not eligible for payment for unused vacation time.

All vacation leave shall be taken at such time as shall be approved by the employee's supervisor. Vacation leave advances are limited to the amount of available accrued vacation benefits. Vacations shall be scheduled at such times as the supervisor finds most suitable after considering the wishes of the employee and the requirements of their department. All requests for vacation must be approved by the employee's supervisor prior to the commencement of the requested time off.

If an employee transfers between branches or departments, the vacation leave credits shall also be transferred. The established period of determining vacation leave balance will be from the employee's date of hire.

Vacation leave earned by an employee cannot be transferred to another employee.

Temporary employees shall not earn vacation nor be entitled to vacation upon separation.

Paid holidays occurring during vacation are not charged to vacation leave.

Earned vacation leave and sick leave accruals must be exhausted prior to taking an unpaid medical leave of absence.

Sick Leave Policy

Employees shall accrue sick leave as outlined below. Newly hired or rehired employees who are still under their probationary period can accrue sick leave according to the schedule below, but are not eligible to take sick leave until they successfully complete their probation period; exceptions for extenuating circumstances may be considered by the Director (or designee).

Prior to their return to work, OKRLS may require an employee to be examined by a physician designated by OKRLS to verify fitness to return to normal duties; an employee may not be permitted to return to work until the verification is received.

Regular Employees:

All full-time and eligible part-time permanent employees shall earn sick leave as follows:

1. Part-time Employees who work 17.5 hours or more each week: Four (4) hours for each month of service from the date of employment up to and including December 31 next following the date of employment. For the purposes of the retirement benefit, employees can accrue an unlimited amount of sick leave but are not eligible to take more than 160 hours of sick leave in a calendar year.
2. Full-time Employees: Ten (10) hours each month. Total sick hours shall not exceed 384 hours. For the purposes of the retirement benefit, employees can accrue an unlimited amount of sick leave but are not eligible to take more than 384 hours of sick leave in a calendar year.

All regular employees shall be entitled to sick leave as follows:

1. As used herein, sick leave means paid leave that may be granted to an employee who through sickness or injury becomes incapacitated to a degree that makes it impossible for the employee to perform the duties of the position or who is quarantined (by the Board of Health) because of exposure to a contagious disease, or illness in the immediate family which requires the personal attendance of the employee to insure care for member of the immediate family. The term "immediate family" as referred to herein shall mean father, mother, spouse, child, foster child, brother or sister. Sick leave to care for members of the immediate family will not be approved for extended periods of time except as permitted by the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA").
2. Temporary / seasonal employees or part-time employees who work less than 17.5 hours each week shall not be eligible for paid sick leave.
3. If an employee is unable to report for work due to illness, this fact shall be reported to the employee's supervisor (or designee) no later than one-half hour after the start of the normal workday. The employee must speak directly to his or her supervisor or higher staff member within OKRLS's chain of command.
4. Thereafter, employees shall be entitled to sick leave, with a doctor's note needed to return to work after five (5) or more consecutive days of sick leave taken. A doctor's note will also be necessary after five (5) singular sick leave days taken within a period of less than 90 days.
5. Sick leave benefits shall apply to bona fide cases of sickness, accidents, doctor or dental appointments, funerals of friends and/or extended family members, maternity leave, and requests for the employee's presence by immediate family, doctor, or clergy due to family illness or emergency.
6. When an employee goes on sick leave, he or she must speak directly to his or her supervisor immediately. Notification should be within 30 minutes or as soon as possible given certain extenuating individual circumstances, after the beginning of the scheduled workday. Failure to do so may result in denial of such leave pay. The employee should also let the supervisor know when he or she expects to return to work.
7. Sick leave shall be rounded off to the nearest half hour. When possible, sick leave should be taken in increments of no less than four (4) hours.
8. No sick leave will be given to an employee in excess of the amount earned and available to the employee.
9. All sick and vacation leave must be exhausted prior to taking an unpaid medical leave of absence. (See section: FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT POLICY.)
10. It is the responsibility of the Director (or designee) to ensure the provisions of this policy are observed. Corrective action should be taken in instances of suspected abuses or misinterpretation of the utilization of sick leave.
11. The employee's supervisor and the Human Resources and Business Manager will ensure that any sick leave used will be reflected with the submission of time sheets.
12. It is the responsibility of the Human Resources and Business Manager to ensure that proper accountability of sick leave is kept on all eligible employees.

Unused sick leave may be tracked for the purpose of retirement. However, unused sick leave is forfeited upon termination or resignation.

Donating Leave Policy

Employees may voluntarily donate vacation leave to another OKRLS employee(s). A recipient of donated leave may use the leave for absence due to prolonged medical conditions, such as personal illness or disability, or the illness or disability of an immediate family member requiring the employee's presence.

Policy Conditions:

1. The Director (or designee) must approve the request for solicitation and the number of vacation hours to be solicited prior to solicitation or use of donated leave. Vacation leave donations must be made in whole hour increments.
2. Newly hired or rehired employees who are still under their probationary period are not eligible to receive donated leave.
3. To be eligible to receive donated vacation leave, recipients must have exhausted all available vacation and sick leave and have been on authorized leave without pay for at least twenty (20) consecutive work hours.
4. The Human Resources and Business Manager will determine how many hours to solicit, based on medical documentation and the employee's typical weekly schedule; an eligible part-time employee working 17.5 hours or more each week may receive up to 48 hours for the solicitation and an eligible full-time employee may receive up to 120 hours for the solicitation.
5. Multiple solicitations are allowed but recipients cannot be credited with more than 96 hours of donated leave (as stated in #4) within a twelve (12) month period.
6. In addition to a review of medical documentation, consideration of leave donation requests will be based on leave usage and attendance history.
7. Employees may not solicit/receive leave donations for medical conditions resulting from the following:
 - a. Any occupationally-related accident or illness which is compensable under Workers' Compensation Law;
 - b. Disability incurred in the course of committing a felony or assault;
 - c. During periods of eligibility for disability insurance benefits;
 - d. When employee is on probation or under disciplinary action;
 - e. To retroactively cover a period of absence.
8. Donors may contribute up to, but not exceeding, 50% of their available vacation leave; forfeited leave cannot be donated.
9. Donors shall be anonymous to recipients.
10. No employee shall threaten, coerce, or attempt to threaten or coerce another employee for the purpose of interfering with rights involving the donation, receipt, or use of leave. Such prohibited acts shall include, but are not limited to, promising to confer or conferring a benefit such as appointment, promotion, or salary increase, or making a threat to engage in or engaging in an act of retaliation against an employee. Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action including termination.
11. Employees who wish to request solicitation of donated leave must contact the Human Resources and Business Manager at least five (5) business days prior to entering leave without pay status. The employee must provide a specific statement of the medical condition and medical certification from a physician or licensed health care provider including the projected period of absence.

Bereavement Leave Policy

An employee who has a member of his immediate family taken by death shall receive up to the equivalent of three (3) work days off with pay as bereavement leave to arrange and attend funeral activities with approval of the employee's supervisor.

- Full-Time Employees: The equivalent of three (3) work days is 24 hours.
- Part-Time Employees: The equivalent of three (3) work days is 12 hours.

"Immediate family" shall be defined as spouse, mother, father, foster parents, mother-in-law, father-in-law, child, sister, brother, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandparent, and grandchild. All "immediate step family" relatives will also be included. The employee must notify his or her immediate supervisor upon making determination to take time off from work. OKRLS may request documentation of the necessity of Bereavement leave.

If additional time is necessary, it shall be taken as vacation or unpaid leave, if vacation has been exhausted with advance authorization by the appropriate supervisor. Time for attendance at funeral of others may be granted as vacation leave, sick

leave, or without pay if vacation or sick leave is exhausted. Employees who fail to return to work on the date specified to the employee's supervisor are subject to disciplinary action including termination.

Jury Duty Policy

Any regular employee who is required to serve on a jury, or as a result of official OKRLS duties is required to appear before a court, legislative committee, or quasi-judicial body as a witness in response to a subpoena or other directive, shall be allowed authorized leave with pay less any amount received for such service. A probationary employee called will have his or her probationary period extended by the same amount of time as required for serving on jury duty. An employee who receives notice of jury duty or witness service must notify his or her supervisor immediately in order that arrangements may be made to cover the position. OKRLS may request that an employee who is called for jury service be excused if the absence would create a hardship on the operational effectiveness of the department to which he or she is assigned.

Time away will not affect vacation or sick leave accruals.

Employees who appear in court as the plaintiff or the defendant in any action not related to their official duties shall not be paid for time away from work unless that time is accrued vacation or personal leave. Court payments for travel expenses are to be retained by the employee.

Employees are to return to work after jury duty although no more than the regularly scheduled number of hours for both jury duty and work shall be required. If excused as a juror on any given day, the employee is expected to contact his or her supervisor and to report to work as instructed.

OKRLS may require employees to supply documentation, not only of a subpoena for jury duty, but also a slip from the jury manager verifying actual attendance at jury duty.

Family and Medical Leave

The Regional Library Board of Trustees has adopted this policy to implement the terms of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 ("FMLA"). Eligible employees are entitled to family and medical leave on the terms and conditions stated in this policy, the regulations issued by the Department of Labor under the FMLA, and in OKRLS's other applicable leave policies.

A. Definitions:

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

1. "Eligible Employee" means an individual who has been employed by OKRLS for at least 12 months, has worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the requested leave.
2. "FMLA Leave" means leave that qualifies under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, Pub. L. 110-181, and the Department of Labor's regulations and is designated by OKRLS as so qualifying.
3. "Leave Year" means the 12-month period measured backward from the date each employee's leave commenced.
4. "Serious Health Condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider.
5. "Inpatient Care" means an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including a period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with the inpatient care.
6. "Continuing Treatment" includes:
 - a. A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves:
 - b. Treatment by a health care provider two or more times within 30 days of the first day of incapacity; and ii. Treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion, which results in
 - i. A regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of a health care provider;
 - ii. A period of incapacity due to pregnancy or prenatal care;
 - iii. A period of incapacity or treatment for such incapacity due to a chronic serious health condition;

- iv. A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective; or
 - v. Any period of absence to receive multiple treatments by a health care provider.
7. “Covered Service member” means a member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness.
 8. “Covered Military Member” means the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status.
 9. “Active duty or call to active duty” means duty under a call or order to active duty (or notification of an impending call or order to active duty) in support of a contingency operation as either a member of the reserve components or a retired member of the Armed Forces or Reserve.
 10. “Serious Injury or Illness,” in the case of a member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, means an injury or illness incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member’s office, grade, rank, or rating.
 11. “Qualifying Exigency” means the following circumstances:
 - a. Short-notice deployment – to address any issues that may arise due to the fact that Covered Military Member received notice of the deployment seven or less calendar days prior to the date of deployment;
 - b. Military events and related activities – to attend any official ceremony, program, or event sponsored by the military that is related to the Covered Military Member’s active duty; and to attend family support or assistance programs and informational briefings sponsored by the military;
 - c. Child care and school activities – to arrange for alternative childcare, to provide childcare on an urgent or immediate basis, to enroll or transfer a child to a new school, and to attend meetings with school staff that are made necessary by the Covered Military Member’s active duty or call to active duty;
 - d. Financial and legal arrangements – to make or update financial or legal arrangements related to the Covered Military Member’s absence while on active duty; and to act as the Covered Military Member’s representative with regard to obtaining, arranging, or appealing military benefits;
 - e. Counseling – to attend counseling sessions related to the Covered Military Member’s deployment or active duty status;
 - f. Rest and recuperation – to spend up to five days with a Covered Military Member who is on short-term, temporary rest and recuperation leave;
 - g. Post-deployment activities – to attend ceremonies and reintegration briefings for a period of 90 days following the termination of the Covered Military Member’s active duty status, and to address issues arising from the death of a Covered Military Member; and
 - h. Other activities that OKRLS and employee agree qualify as an exigency.

B. Reasons for FMLA Leave:

An Eligible Employee is entitled to a total of 12 weeks of unpaid leave during each Leave Year in the event of any of the following:

1. The birth, adoption, or placement for foster care of a son or daughter of the employee and to care for such child. (Leave must be taken during the 12-month period following the birth or placement and must be taken in a single consecutive period and may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule.)
2. A serious health condition of a qualifying family member, i.e., spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee, if the employee is needed to care for such family member.
3. A serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform any of the essential functions of his or her job.
4. Any “qualifying exigency” arising out of the fact that an employee’s spouse, parent, son, or daughter is on active duty or has been called to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation.

An Eligible Employee is entitled to a total of 26 weeks of unpaid leave during a single 12-month period to care for a parent, son, daughter, spouse, or next of kin who is a Covered Service member, regardless of whether the employee has taken leave for another FMLA qualifying reason in the past 12 months. Any leave taken under any of these circumstances will be counted against the employee’s total entitlement to FMLA leave for that Leave Year.

C. Paid Leave Benefit Coordination with FMLA Leave:

FMLA leave under this policy is generally unpaid leave. If, however, the employee is eligible for any paid leave under any other benefit programs such as accrued vacation, unused sick, or personal days, the employee will be required to exhaust the paid leave upon the commencement of, and concurrently with, FMLA leave (unless the employee's own serious health condition has caused the leave and the employee is receiving workers' compensation benefits). Paid leave will run concurrently with and be counted toward the employee's total 12-week or 26-week period of FMLA leave. Employees on leave that qualifies both as workers' compensation and FMLA leave who are offered a light duty position will have the option of remaining on FMLA leave without pay (and foregoing the light duty position and additional workers' compensation benefits) or accepting the light duty position. If the employee accepts the light duty position, the employee's right to job restoration (as described below) runs through the end of the applicable Leave Year. If the employee accepts light duty, then he or she retains the right to be restored to the same position the employee held at the time his or her FMLA leave commenced or to an equivalent position.

D. Intermittent or Reduced Scheduled Leave:

FMLA leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule basis. If FMLA leave is taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule basis, OKRLS may require the employee to transfer temporarily to an available alternative position with an equivalent pay rate and benefits, including a part-time position, to better accommodate recurring periods of leave due to foreseeable medical treatment.

Every employee is obligated to make a reasonable effort to schedule medical treatment so as not to unduly interrupt Library operations. Any employee who needs an intermittent or reduced schedule leave shall submit an application for such leave on a form supplied by OKRLS at the time described above. The employee shall also, within the time limits set forth, furnish OKRLS with the proper medical certification on Form WH-380-E, which will be supplied by OKRLS, regarding the need for such intermittent or reduced schedule leave. As in the case for other FMLA leaves, OKRLS may require a second or third medical certification. Prior to the commencement of any intermittent or reduced schedule leave, the employee requesting intermittent or reduced schedule leave must advise OKRLS of the reasons why the intermittent/reduced schedule leave is necessary and of the schedule for treatment, if applicable. The employee and OKRLS shall attempt to work out a schedule for such leave that meets the employee's needs without disrupting Library operations.

E. Employee Notice Requirement:

Employees are required to provide OKRLS with sufficient information to make it aware that the employee needs FMLA-qualifying leave and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include the following: that the employee is unable to perform his or her job functions; that the employee's family member is unable to perform his or her daily activities; that the employee or his or her family member must be hospitalized or undergo continuing treatment; and the circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. When an employee seeks leave due to a FMLA-qualifying reason for which OKRLS has previously provided FMLA-protected leave, the employee must specifically reference the qualifying reason for the leave and the need for "FMLA" leave.

If the need for leave is foreseeable, the employee is required to provide such notice to the Human Resources and Business Manager at least 30 days before the commencement of the leave, unless it is impracticable to do so under the circumstances, in which case notice must be given as soon as possible, generally the same or the next business day. The employee also must follow any OKRLS policy requiring advance notice, reasons for leave and anticipated start, and duration of the leave. Failure to provide advance notice or follow the OKRLS policy when the need for leave is foreseeable may result in delay or denial of FMLA leave. If the leave is not foreseeable, the employee must provide notice to OKRLS of need for leave as soon as practicable and must follow OKRLS's normal call-in procedures, as set forth in Manual. Failure to follow OKRLS's call-in procedures, absent unusual circumstances, will result in delay or denial of the leave. In case of planned medical treatment for a serious health condition, the employee is required to make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to disrupt the operations of the Library. Employees are required to give additional notice as soon as practicable whenever there is a change in the dates of scheduled leave. OKRLS requires that the employee's health care provider complete a fitness-for-duty certification that specifically addresses whether the employee is able to perform the essential functions of his or her job before the employee can return to work. If OKRLS has a "reasonable safety concern," it may also require periodic fitness-for-duty certifications prior to the

employee's return from intermittent FMLA leave, up to once every 30 days. A "reasonable safety concern" means a reasonable belief of significant risk of harm to the individual employee or others. Upon receiving sufficient notice of an employee's need for FMLA-qualifying leave, OKRLS will notify the employee of his or her eligibility to take FMLA leave within five business days of the request, absent extenuating circumstances. At this time, OKRLS will also provide the employee written notice of the employee's rights and obligations with respect to the leave (as well as providing copies of the required certification form).

F. Application and Medical Certification:

A leave to care for the employee's own serious health condition, or the serious health condition of a covered family member, must be supported by a medical certification completed by the health care provider for the employee or the covered family member. A qualifying exigency leave or a leave to care for a Covered Service member with a serious injury or illness must also be supported by a certification.

OKRLS will provide the proper certification to the employee for his or her respective leave within five business days of the employee's request for leave. The employee must return a complete and sufficient copy of the appropriate certification to OKRLS within 15 calendar days of receiving the certification, unless it is not practicable. If the employee returns an incomplete or insufficient certification, OKRLS shall advise the employee in writing what additional information is necessary to make the certification complete and sufficient. In order to cure the deficiency, the employee must then return a complete and sufficient certification to OKRLS within seven calendar days. If the employee fails to cure a deficiency in a certification, or fails to return a certification, within the prescribed time period, OKRLS may deny the taking of leave.

An OKRLS representative (other than the employee's direct supervisor) may contact the employee's health care provider to clarify or authenticate the medical certification submitted for leave for the employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member. If OKRLS has reason to doubt the validity of a medical certification, the employee will be required to obtain a second or third opinion at OKRLS's expense. Failure to comply with these certification requirements will result in the delay, denial, or termination of leave. An employee who will be on FMLA leave for more than one week is required to call the Human Resources and Business Manager weekly to report when and if the employee expects to return to work. OKRLS may request recertification at any time during the course of the leave for the employee's own serious health condition, if: (1) the employee requests an extension of leave; (2) the circumstances of the employee's condition as described in the previous certification have changed significantly, or (3) if OKRLS has reason to suspect that an employee on FMLA leave has fraudulently obtained the FMLA leave. If desired by OKRLS a second or third certification in the manner provided above may be required. If the employee's leave to care for his or her own serious health condition or that of a family member is expected to last more than 30 days, the OKRLS will require a new certification from the employee's health care provider when leave is scheduled to expire, or every six months, whichever occurs earlier. When OKRLS learns of an FMLA reason for leave after a leave has commenced under another of OKRLS's policies, OKRLS will designate the leave as FMLA-qualifying from the commencement of the leave. Employees are required to cooperate in providing OKRLS with information needed to make this determination.

G. Continuation of Group Health Benefits:

OKRLS will maintain the employee's coverage under a group health plan during the period of FMLA leave under the same terms and conditions as though the employee were actively working. During the leave, the employee will be required to continue to make all premium payments that he or she otherwise would have had to make if actively employed. Where feasible, OKRLS will advise the employee concerning the necessary arrangements for such payments prior to the commencement of the leave.

If the employee fails to return to work following the expiration of FMLA leave for a reason other than a serious health condition or circumstances beyond the employee's control, OKRLS will be entitled to the repayment by the employee of any premiums paid by OKRLS during the leave. Failure to make timely premium payments may result in the termination of coverage.

An employee on FMLA leave should deliver payment of the employee's portion of such premium to the Human Resources and Business Manager prior to the first work day of each month. Failure to make prompt payment of the employee's portion of such premium may result in the loss of medical insurance coverage for the duration of the FMLA leave, but upon the employee's return to work, the medical insurance will be restored as of the date that the employee returns. If the employee does not return

from FMLA leave or returns to work, but does not remain an active employee for at least 30 days, OKRLS may seek to recover the amount paid for such insurance premiums from the employee. An employee on FMLA leave shall be responsible for the payment of the full premium for all other insurance, pensions and other benefits. Failure of the employee to pay the entire premium for such items shall result in their lapse for the duration of the FMLA leave. If the employee returns from FMLA leave, all such insurance, pension and other benefits shall be restored without any break in service. An employee shall not accrue any credit toward vacation or other benefits based upon time worked for the time that he or she is on FMLA leave.

H. Return to Work / Fitness-for-Duty Certification:

Consistent with OKRLS's practice, before returning to work following a medical leave due to the employee's serious health condition, the employee will be required to present a fitness-for-duty certification from his or her health care provider that the employee is medically able to resume work and to perform the essential functions of his or her job. If the date on which an employee is scheduled to return to work from an FMLA leave changes, the employee is required to give notice of the change, if foreseeable, to OKRLS within two business days of the change. Subject to the limitations below, an employee returning from FMLA leave will be restored to the position of employment held when the leave commenced or to an equivalent position. Job restoration may be denied if conditions unrelated to the FMLA leave have resulted in the elimination of the employee's position or if the employee qualifies as a "key employee" (generally the highest paid 10% of the workforce). Key employees may be denied job restoration if it would cause substantial and grievous economic injury to OKRLS, in which case the key employee will be notified of this decision. In summary, upon expiration of a FMLA leave, an employee who returns to work shall be restored to the same or an equivalent job, if the employee shall have:

1. Called the Human Resources and Business Manager in accordance with terms above;
2. Furnished the Human Resources and Business Manager with proper certifications and re-certifications in accordance with terms above;
3. Submitted to any second or third examination by a health care provider upon request of OKRLS;
4. Furnished the Human Resources and Business Manager with a medical certification of the employee's ability to return to work and to perform the essential functions of the job; and
5. Returned to work immediately upon expiration of the FMLA leave.

Failure to call the Human Resources and Business Manager weekly to provide the required medical recertification or to return to work immediately upon expiration of a FMLA leave may result in termination of the employee. Failure to furnish a fitness-for-duty certification of the employee's ability to return to work and to perform the essential functions of the job may result in the delay of job restoration or the termination of the employee.

I. Questions:

Questions about this policy or eligibility for FMLA leave should be directed to the Human Resources and Business Manager.

TIMEKEEPING

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every nonexempt employee. Federal wage and hour laws require OKRLS to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Employees should accurately record the time they begin and end their work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. They should also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons.

Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

It is the employee's responsibility to certify the accuracy of all time recorded. The supervisor will review and then approve the time record before submitting it for payroll processing.

OVERTIME

OKRLS expects that staff will be able to perform required work within a 40-hour workweek. However, when employees who are not exempt from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act work overtime, compensatory time will be awarded at a rate of 1.5 comp hours for every hour worked beyond 40 in the course of a workweek. OKRLS does not pay for overtime in the form of cash. All overtime work must be approved in advance by the Director. Failure to receive preapproval can result in disciplinary action including termination.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

All OKRLS employees will receive periodic performance reviews conducted by their immediate supervisor. The first performance evaluation will occur after completion of the employee's probationary period. After that review, performance evaluations will be conducted at least annually. The frequency of performance evaluations may vary depending upon length of service, job position, past performance, changes in job duties, or recurring performance problems.

An employee's performance evaluation will include factors such as the quality and quantity of work, attendance record, knowledge of the job, initiative, work attitude, and attitude towards others. The performance evaluation should help an employee to become aware of progress, areas of needed improvement, and objectives or goals recommended for future work performance. Positive performance evaluations do not guarantee increases in compensation. After the performance review with a supervisor, the employee will be asked to sign the evaluation report simply to acknowledge that it has been presented to them and discussed with them by their supervisor and that they are aware of its contents.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Employees are encouraged to communicate directly with one another in order to assure prompt discontinuation of any behavior found to be offensive. OKRLS supports the rights of each employee to communicate directly with other employees in requesting that offensive conduct be discontinued. However, informal redress of complaints is not required, and the complaining employee may proceed to file a formal complaint in any situation in which informal redress is not feasible or desirable.

No employee or applicant is required to endure workplace harassment. An employee who is unable to resolve the problem or who does not wish to discuss the issue with the offending party should report unwelcome harassing conduct immediately to his or her immediate supervisor, the Human Resources and Business Manager, or the Director. If the immediate supervisor is the alleged source of the harassment, the employee should skip that level of management and report the conduct to the next level supervisor. The complaint will be immediately investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken.

If an employee claims the Director is the source of the harassment, the employee should report the conduct to his or her immediate supervisor, the Human Resources and Business Manager, or to the Chair of the employee's Library Board of Trustees. The Chair will take immediate steps to investigate the complaint, independent from the Director, and recommend as necessary to the Regional Board of Trustees the appropriate corrective action to be considered. The Regional Board of Trustees will take prompt action to address the issue.

In the course of the investigation, the complainant will be requested to submit a written statement describing in detail the alleged harassment and the identity of any individuals that may have relevant information concerning the complaint. A prompt investigation, however, is not contingent on the submitting employee's written statement. In determining whether the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile work environment, OKRLS will evaluate the behavior from the objective standpoint of a "reasonable person." OKRLS will consider the context in which the alleged harassment took place and examine the behavior using the perspective of a reasonable person's reaction to a similar environment under similar circumstances.

Corrective action will reflect the severity of the conduct. In all circumstances, the complainant will be informed of the results of any investigation and the action taken.

DISCIPLINE

The Regional Library Board of Trustees has adopted a progressive discipline policy to address employee and employment related problems. This policy applies to all employee conduct that OKRLS, in its sole discretion, determines must be addressed through disciplinary procedures. Of course, no discipline policy can be expected to address each and every situation requiring corrective action that may arise in the workplace. Therefore, OKRLS takes a comprehensive approach regarding discipline and will attempt to consider all relevant factors before making decisions regarding discipline.

Most often, employee conduct that warrants discipline results from unacceptable behavior, poor performance, or violation of OKRLS's policies, practices or procedures. However, discipline may be issued for conduct that falls outside of those identified areas. Equally important, OKRLS need not resort to progressive discipline but may take whatever action it deems necessary to address the issue at hand. This may mean that more or less severe discipline is imposed in a given situation. Likewise, some OKRLS policies, like sexual harassment and attendance, contain specific discipline procedures.

Progressive discipline may be issued upon employees even when the conduct that leads to more serious discipline differs from the prior conduct that resulted in less severe discipline. That is, violations of different rules shall be considered the same as repeated violations of the same rule for purposes of progressive action.

Probationary employees are held to the highest standards for behavior and job performance. Progressive discipline is the exception rather than the rule for probationary employees.

OKRLS will normally adhere to the following progressive disciplinary process, however OKRLS is not bound to follow this process; the appropriate disciplinary action remains in the sole discretion of the Director (or designee).

1. **Verbal Caution:** As the first step in the progressive discipline policy, a verbal caution is meant to alert the employee that a problem may exist or that one has been identified, which must be addressed. Verbal warnings will be documented and maintained by the employee's supervisor. A verbal caution remains in effect for three (3) months.
2. **Verbal Warning:** A verbal warning is more serious than a verbal caution. Verbal warnings are documented and placed in the employee's personnel file and will remain in effect for six (6) months.
3. **Written Warning:** A written warning is more serious than a verbal warning. Written warnings are maintained in an employee's personnel file and remain in effect for nine (9) months.
4. **Suspension:** A suspension without pay is more serious than a written warning. An employee's suspension will be documented and, regardless of the length of the suspension issued, will remain in effect for one (1) year.
5. **Termination:** Involuntary separation from employment is the most serious form of discipline.

Again, although OKRLS will generally take disciplinary action in a progressive manner, it may, in its sole discretion, decide whether and what disciplinary action will be taken in any given situation. This progressive discipline policy does not alter the at-will employment status of OKRLS employees.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Hourly employees who resign to accept employment with another business or to leave the workforce must give written notice two (2) weeks prior to the last work day in order to leave in good standing. Salaried employees who resign to accept employment with another business or to leave the workforce must give written notice one (1) month prior to the last work day in order to leave in good standing. Employees who leave in good standing will be paid for unused vacation, not to exceed the maximum accrual allowable, on their final paycheck and will be eligible for rehire in the future. An exit interview will be scheduled with the Human Resources and Business Manager on or before the last day of employment. All OKRLS property, including keys and identification cards, must be returned before issuance of the final paycheck.

Employees may be terminated for substandard work without notice during the probationary period. After the probationary period, employees will receive oral and written counseling to improve substandard work before termination if work does not improve. Serious offenses, such as theft, use of drugs or alcohol while at work, and physical assault, may result in immediate termination without counseling.

If budget cuts necessitate a reduction in staffing levels, the Director will determine which positions can be cut to create the least overall negative effect on library services. The Director's plan will be submitted to the Regional Library Board of Trustees for approval before implementation. Maintaining expected levels of library service will be a primary factor in retaining staff, and whenever possible, staff will be moved into vacant positions for which they are qualified. Employees who are laid off will be paid for all unused vacation leave.

Appeals Procedure

Employees who are terminated may appeal the decision with the Regional Library Board of Trustees. A grievance appeal must be made in writing and sent to the Human Resources and Business Manager; the written appeal must be received by the OKRLS Regional Office within seven (7) calendar days of termination.

Procedure:

1. The Human Resources and Business Manager will notify the Director, the Chairperson of the Regional Library Board of Trustees, and the Chairperson of the appealing employee's Library Board of Trustees.
2. The Regional Chairperson will schedule a time and place to conduct a hearing within ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal. The hearing may be held at the Library Board's next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special meeting called specifically for that purpose.
3. The Human Resources and Business Manager shall send the appellant a written notification via certified mail of the time and place of the hearing and notify the appellant's supervisor and the Director of the time and place of the hearing.
4. The Regional Chairperson (or designee) will notify all Regional and branch Library Board members of the time and place for the hearing.
5. During the hearing:
 - a. The appellant's supervisor will present the case for the appellant's termination and the Director and/or the Human Resources and Business Manager will verify the validity of the disciplinary action taken as requested by the Board and/or the appellant's supervisor;
 - b. The appellant will have the opportunity to present his or her case for wrongful termination;
 - c. The Board members present will have the opportunity to question both the appellant and the OKRLS staff involved with the termination;
 - d. The Board will deliberate (in compliance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act, hearings before the Board of Trustees during which evidence is heard shall be open to the public; however, that portion of a hearing during which the Board deliberates on the appeal may be closed to the public as allowed by law); and
 - e. The Board of Trustees will make a ruling; if the Board rules in favor of the employee, the Board shall determine what corrective action will be taken (within limits of applicable laws, regulatory guidelines, or benefit plan requirements).

The decision of the OKRLS Library Board of Trustees shall be final. Further details on appeal hearing procedures are available from the Human Resources and Business Manager.

USE OF VOLUNTEERS

OKRLS welcomes and encourages members of the community to volunteer their time and talents to enrich and expand library services. Volunteers are expected to conform to all practices of OKRLS and the rules outlined in the Volunteer Policy.¹¹ They are selected and retained for as long as OKRLS needs their services. Volunteers may be used for special events, projects, and

¹¹ Appendix I: Volunteer Policy

activities, or on a regular basis to assist staff. Services provided by volunteers will supplement, but not replace, regular services, and volunteers will not be used in place of hiring full- or part-time staff. Volunteers may apply for paid positions under the same conditions as other outside applicants. In accordance with labor laws, paid staff may not volunteer their services to OKRLS when those services are within the staff member's job description.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

The types of documents that will be maintained in employee personnel files include the following:

1. Application for Employment;
2. Resume or Curriculum Vitae;
3. Policy and Procedure Acknowledgements;
4. Training Acknowledgements;
5. Payroll Authorization Records, including direct deposit;
6. Vacation Records;
7. Performance Evaluations;
8. Corrective Action Records;
9. Termination Notices (including DOL 800 for Georgia employees);
10. Internal Complaints/Grievances and additional documentation;
11. Appropriate insurance, retirement, and other benefits information;
12. Diplomas, certificates, training records, and related personal accomplishment documentation;
13. Tax forms (federal and state), compensation records, pay increases, overtime, employee loans/advances, garnishment notifications, etc.; and
14. Benefits Information/Elections.

Periodically, OKRLS may receive requests from employees or others not employed by OKRLS requesting information from an employee's personnel file. Personal information maintained about an employee shall be made available for inspection only at the employee's request, except for information requested through other lawful means (i.e., Georgia Open Records Act). Employees may contact the Human Resources and Business Manager to arrange for an inspection of their own personnel records. Personnel records shall be made available for inspection by an employee only in the presence of the Human Resources and Business Manager (or designee).

The Human Resources and Business Manager and the Director shall decide when employee personnel records will be released in accordance with the Georgia Open Records Act. As a general rule, most documents that may be found in personnel files must be disclosed, but there are exceptions. The Open Records Act protects the following types of information that may be found in employee personnel files and that should be redacted:

1. Social Security number;
2. Financial data or information;
3. Mother's birth name;
4. Bank account information;
5. Month and day of birth;
6. Credit card information;
7. Insurance and medical information;
8. Debit card information;
9. Home address and telephone number.

In addition to the redactions listed above, the following information is exempt from release:

1. Individual employee benefits selections and payroll deductions;
2. Birth certificates;
3. Military discharge forms;
4. Financial records (i.e., bank account numbers);
5. Health insurance records;
6. Medical records.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS

An employee injured on the job has certain rights, benefits, and responsibilities. OKRLS, as an employer, also has obligations and responsibilities regarding all its employees. It is the goal of OKRLS to assist job-related injured workers in receiving immediate and quality medical care, to administer workers' compensation claims from the initial injury until the closing of the claim, and to safely return lost-time employees to productive employment.

State Board of Workers' Compensation: Bill of Rights for the Injured Worker

As required by law, O.C.G.A. § 34-9-81.1, this is a summary of your rights and responsibilities. The Workers' Compensation Law provides you, as a worker in the State of Georgia, with certain rights and responsibilities should you be injured on the job. The Workers' Compensation Law provides you coverage for a work-related injury even if an injury occurs on the first day on the job. In addition to rights, you also have certain responsibilities. Your rights and responsibilities are described below

Employee's Rights:

1. If you are injured on the job, you may receive medical, rehabilitation and income benefits. These benefits are provided to help you return to work. Your dependents may also receive benefits if you die as a result of a job-related injury.
2. Your employer is required to post a list of at least six doctors or the name of the certified WC/MCO which provides medical care. You may choose a doctor from the list and make one change to another doctor on the list without the permission of your employer. However, in an emergency, you may get temporary medical care from any doctor until the emergency is over; then you must get treatment from a doctor on the posted list.
3. Your authorized doctor bills, hospital bills, rehabilitation in some cases, physical therapy, prescriptions and necessary travel expenses will be paid if injury was caused by an accident on the job.
4. You are entitled to weekly income benefits if you have more than seven days of lost time due to an injury. Your first check should be mailed to you within 21 days after the first day you missed work. If you are out more than 21 consecutive days due to your injury, you will be paid for the first week.
5. Accidents are classified as being either catastrophic or non-catastrophic. Catastrophic injuries are those involving amputations, severe paralysis, severe head injuries, severe burns, blindness, or of a nature and severity that prevents the employee from being able to perform his or her prior work and any work available in substantial numbers within the national economy. In catastrophic cases, you are entitled to receive two-thirds of your average weekly wage up to the maximum allowed under the law for a job-related injury for as long as you are unable to return to work. You are also entitled to receive medical and vocational rehabilitation benefits to help in recovering from your injury. If you need help in this area, call the State Board of Workers' Compensation at (404) 656-3875 or toll-free at (800) 533-0682. Your employer will advise you of the amount of your weekly benefit.
6. In all other cases (non-catastrophic), you are entitled to receive two-thirds of your average weekly wage but not more than the maximum allowed under the law for a job-related injury. You will receive these weekly benefits as long as you are totally disabled, but no longer than 400 weeks. If you are not working and it is determined that you have been capable of performing work with restrictions for 52 consecutive weeks or 78 aggregate weeks, your weekly income benefits will be reduced to two-thirds of your average weekly wage, but no more than the maximum allowed under the law, not to exceed 350 weeks.
7. When you are able to return to work but can only get a lower paying job as a result of your injury, you are entitled to a weekly benefit of not more than the maximum allowed under the law for no longer than 350 weeks.
8. Your dependent(s), in the event you die as a result of an on-the-job accident, will receive burial expenses up to the maximum allowed under the law and two-thirds of your average weekly wage, but not more than the maximum allowed under the law. A widowed spouse with no children will be paid a maximum allowed by law at the time of injury. Benefits continue until he/she remarries or openly cohabits with a person of the opposite sex.
9. If you do not receive benefits when due, the insurance carrier/employer must pay a penalty which will be added to your payments.

Employee's Responsibilities:

1. You should follow written rules of safety and other reasonable policies and procedures of the employer.
2. You must report any accident immediately, but not later than 30 days after the accident, to your employer, your employer's representative, your foreman or immediate supervisor. Failure to do so may result in the loss of the benefits.
3. You must accept reasonable medical treatment and rehabilitation services when ordered by the State Board of Workers' Compensation or the Board may suspend your benefits.
4. No compensation shall be allowed for an injury or death due to the employee's willful misconduct.
5. You must notify the insurance carrier/employer of your address when you move to a new location. You should notify the insurance carrier/employer when you are able to return to full-time or part-time work, and report the amount of your weekly earnings because you may be entitled to some income benefits even though you have returned to work.
6. A dependent spouse of a deceased employee shall notify the insurance carrier/employer upon change of address or remarriage.
7. You must attempt a job approved by the authorized treating physician even if the pay is lower than the job you had when you were injured. If you do not attempt the job, your benefits may be suspended.
8. If you believe you are due benefits and your insurance carrier/employer denies these benefits, you must file a claim within one year after the date of last authorized medical treatment or within two years of your last payment of weekly benefits or you will lose your right to these benefits.
9. If your dependent(s) do not receive allowable benefit payments, the dependent(s) must file a claim with the State Board of Workers' Compensation within one year after your death or lose the right to these benefits.
10. Any request for reimbursement to you for mileage or other expenses related to medical care must be submitted to the insurance carrier/employer within one year of the date the expense was incurred.
11. If an employee unjustifiably refuses to submit to a drug test following an on-the-job injury, there shall be a presumption that the accident and injury were caused by alcohol or drugs. If the presumption is not overcome by other evidence, any claim for workers' compensation benefits would be denied.
12. You shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment up to 12 months, or both for making false or misleading statements when claiming benefits. Also, any false statements or false evidence given under oath during the course of any administrative or appellate division hearing is perjury.

The State Board of Workers' Compensation will provide you with information regarding how to file a claim and will answer any other questions regarding your rights under the law. If you are calling in the Atlanta area, the telephone number is (404) 656-3875. Outside the metro Atlanta area, call 1-800-533-0682 or write the State Board of Workers' Compensation at: 270 Peachtree Street, NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30303-1299. A lawyer is not needed to file a claim with the Board; however, if you think you need a lawyer and do not have your own personal lawyer, you may contact the Lawyer Referral Service at (404) 521-0777 or 1-800-334-6865.

Willfully making a false statement for the purpose of obtaining or denying benefits is a crime subject to penalties of up to \$10,000 per violation (O.C.G.A. § 34-9-18 and 34-9-19).

MISCELLANEOUS

CHAIN OF COMMAND

For questions about personnel policies, suggestions, unresolved evaluation disagreements, and any other concerns the employee may have, the employee should use the following Chain of Command:

- First – Immediate Supervisor
- Second – Human Resources and Business Manager
- Third – Library Director

In the event an issue involves a superior in an employee's direct Chain of Command, the employee should skip to the next level in the Chain. If an issue remains unresolved after following this Chain of Command, the employee may contact the Chairperson of their branch's Board of Trustees or the Chairperson of the Regional Board of Trustees.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Under Georgia law, any person employed by or volunteering at an organization, public or private, that provides care, treatment, education, training, supervision, coaching, counseling, recreational programs, or shelter to children is a mandatory reporter of child neglect or abuse. O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5. Failure to do so could result in fines or imprisonment.

Because OKRLS provides services to children, its employees are obligated under the mandatory reporting requirements of this law. In the event that an employee suspects that a child is in immediate danger, that employee should notify the police. In all other cases where abuse or neglect is suspected, the employee must notify their supervisor, who will in turn report the abuse to the Director and the corresponding county's Department of Family and Children Services ("DFCS"). If the employee's supervisor is inaccessible, the employee should contact the Director. If for some reason the employee is unable to communicate with the Director in a timely manner, the employee should make the report directly to their county's DFCS.

NOTIFICATION OF OPEN RECORDS APPLICATION

OKRLS employees should be aware that Georgia law provides for public records to be available for inspection by any person, subject to certain exceptions. Employees routinely create records, such as incident reports, emails, voicemails that may be subject to inspection according to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-18-70 to 50-18-77.

REFERENCES TO PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS

It is OKRLS's policy to disclose, in response to a prospective employer's request for an employment reference, only the following information about current or former employees:

- The dates of employment, description of the duties performed, and salary information. All requests for employment references shall be forwarded to the Human Resources and Business Manager; if the Human Resources and Business Manager is unavailable, the request may be forwarded to the Director. The Human Resources and Business Manager and the Director are the only staff members authorized to respond to the request. Responses to employment reference requests will only be given to the appropriate person asking for the information and only after the Human Resources and Business Manager has verified the identity of the requestor. Prior to responding to the request, the Human Resources and Business Manager shall also verify that the former or current employee is aware of and does not object to OKRLS's responding to the reference request.

OUTSIDE OR DUAL EMPLOYMENT

Employees are allowed to hold outside employment as long as it does not interfere with their OKRLS responsibilities. Employees are prohibited from engaging in outside employment activities while on the job or using OKRLS time, supplies, or equipment in the outside employment activities. The Director may request employees to restrict outside employment if the quality of Library work diminishes. Any employee who holds an interest in, or is employed by, any business doing business with the Library must submit a written notice of these outside interests to the Director.

EMPLOYEE CONTINUING EDUCATION

It is the policy of OKRLS to encourage employees to improve their knowledge and skills in areas that directly relate to the work of the Library. Therefore, within budgetary limitations, OKRLS will reimburse all or some of the educational expenses for classes, workshops, and seminars incurred by employees as recommended by the employee's supervisor and approved by the Director. Additionally, OKRLS may provide staff development opportunities in-house. Documentation of successful attendance and completion of courses will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Hands-Free Georgia Act

*From <http://www.headsupgeorgia.com/handsfree-law/>

House Bill 673 also known as the “Hands Free Law” was passed by the Georgia General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal. The Hands Free Law will take effect on July 1, 2018. The following is a brief description what the law states and some frequently asked questions. A link to the complete law can be found at www.gahighwaysafety.org.

- A driver cannot have a phone in their hand or use any part of their body to support their phone. Drivers can only use their phones to make or receive phone calls by using speakerphone, earpiece, wireless headphone, phone is connected to vehicle or an electronic watch. GPS navigation devices are allowed.
- Headsets and earpieces can only be worn for communication purposes and not for listening to music or other entertainment.
- A driver may not send or read any text-based communication unless using voice-based communication that automatically converts message to a written text or is being used for navigation or GPS.
- A driver may not write, send or read any text messages, e-mails, social media or internet data content.
- A driver may not watch a video unless it is for navigation.
- A driver may not record a video (continuously running dash cams are exempt).
- Music streaming apps can be used provided the driver activates and programs them when they are parked. Drivers cannot touch their phones to do anything to their music apps when they are on the road. Music streaming apps that include video also are not allowed since drivers cannot watch videos when on the road. Drivers can listen to and program music streaming apps that are connected to and controlled through their vehicle’s radio.
- The hands-free law does NOT apply to the following electronic communication devices and the following devices can be used by the driver when on the road: radio, citizens band radio, citizens band radio hybrid, commercial two-way radio communication device or its functional equivalent, subscription-based emergency communication device, prescribed medical device, amateur or ham radio device, or in-vehicle security, navigation, or remote diagnostics system.

Exceptions to the Law are as Follows:

1. Reporting a traffic crash, medical emergency, fire, criminal activity or hazardous road conditions.
2. An employee or contractor of a utility service provider acting within the scope of their employment while responding to a utility emergency.
3. A first responder (law enforcement, fire, EMS) during the performance of their official duties.
4. When in a lawfully parked vehicle—this DOES NOT include vehicles stopped for traffic signals and stop signs on the public roadway.

Enforcement:

When the Hands-Free law takes effect July 1, the Georgia Department of Public Safety and local law enforcement have the option to issue warnings for violations as part of the effort to educate and to help motorists adapt to the new law. However, citations can and will be issued starting July 1 for any violation of the Hands-Free Law, including those where the violation involves a traffic crash. There is not a 90-day grace period provision in the Hands-Free Law.



INCIDENT REPORT

Name of Person filing Report: _____

Address (if Patron): _____

Phone Number: _____

.....
DATE AND TIME OF THE INCIDENT: _____

Describe the incident which you experienced. Please be as specific as possible.

**Continue on back of form if needed.*

Could this incident have been avoided?

Yes

No

If so, how? **Continue on back of form if needed.*

Signature: _____ Date: _____

.....
Received by: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Appendix C: Employee Guidance for Participating in Social Networking

OKRLS understands that social networking and Internet services have become a common form of communication in the workplace and among stakeholders and citizens. Social networks are online communities of people or organizations that share interests and/or activities and use a wide variety of Internet technology to make the interaction a rich and robust experience.

Employees that choose to participate in social networks as an OKRLS employee should adhere to the following guidelines.

1. Such conduct that would not be permissible in the workplace is not permissible between or among employees and/or patrons online, even if done during non-work hours and away from the workplace on personal devices or home computers.
2. OKRLS policies, rules, regulations, and standards of conduct apply to employees that engage in social networking activities while conducting OKRLS business. Use of your OKRLS e-mail address and communicating in your official capacity will constitute conducting OKRLS business.
3. OKRLS employees shall notify their supervisor and the IT department if they intend to create a social networking site or service to conduct OKRLS business.
4. Branches have the option of allowing employees to participate in existing social networking sites as part of their job duties. Branch Managers may allow or disallow employee participation in any social networking activities in their departments.
5. Protect your privacy, the privacy of citizens, and the sensitive information the Library holds. Follow all privacy protection laws, i.e., HIPAA, and protect sensitive and confidential Library information.
6. Follow all copyright laws, public records laws, retention laws, fair use and financial disclosure laws and any other laws that might apply to OKRLS or your functional area.
7. Do not cite vendors, suppliers, clients, citizens, co-workers, or other stakeholders without their approval.
8. Make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of OKRLS. If you publish content on any website outside of OKRLS and it has something to do with the work you do or subjects associated with the Library, use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent the Okefenokee Regional Library System's positions or opinions."
9. Do not use ethnic slurs, profanity, personal insults, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the OKRLS's workplace. Avoid comments or topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.
10. If you identify yourself as an OKRLS employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself and the Library to colleagues, citizens, and other stakeholders.
11. Correct your mistakes, and don't alter previous posts without indicating that you have done so. Frame any comments or opposing views in a positive manner.
12. Add value to the Library through your interaction. Provide worthwhile information and perspective.

Appendix D: Blog Standards

Comments submitted by members of the public must be directly related to the content of the articles. Submission of comments by members of the public constitutes participation in a limited public forum. OKRLS blog moderators shall allow comments that are topically related to the particular article being commented and thus within the purpose of the limited public forum, with the exception of the prohibited content listed in the Social Media Policy.

Author and Commenter Identification

1. All OKRLS blog authors and public commentators shall be clearly identified. Anonymous blog postings shall not be allowed.

Ownership and Moderation

1. The content of each OKRLS blog shall be owned by and the responsibility of the department producing and using the blog.
2. Documents and articles submitted to an OKRLS blog shall be moderated by an authorized and trained blog moderator.

Blog Comments & Responses

1. All blog articles and comments shall be reviewed and approved by an authorized blog moderator before posting on an OKRLS blog.
2. All blog articles and comments submitted for posting with attached content shall be scanned using antivirus technology prior to posting.
3. The linked content of embedded hyperlinks within any OKRLS blog articles or blog comments submitted for posting shall be evaluated prior to posting. Any posted hyperlinks shall be accompanied by a disclaimer stating that OKRLS guarantees neither the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness nor security of the link, web site or content linked thereto.



Public Information Distribution, Display, and Exhibits Policy

Approved by Regional Library Board of Trustees on August 1, 2022

**Replaces the Policy for Limited Public Display of Posters and Fliers of Not-For-Profit Organizations in OKRLS Branches*

The Okefenokee Regional Library Board of Trustees establishes policy for use of bulletin boards, brochure racks, galleries, cases and all other display spaces in the Okefenokee Regional Library System (OKRLS) headquarters and branch libraries. This policy covers all areas of library property, including parking lots and grounds.

Handouts & Bulletin Board Postings

In the spirit of community partnerships, OKRLS may provide a designated space on a public bulletin board for announcements and notices of local community events. OKRLS may also provide literature display racks for distribution of free materials which may be of local interest. Both of these services are in keeping with OKRLS's mission of providing access to a wide range of information sources.

Space is designated in order of priority to:

1. OKRLS headquarters and branch libraries and Friends of the Library materials
2. Appling, Bacon, Clinch, Pierce, and Ware County government materials
3. Other government materials of local interest
4. Appling, Bacon, Clinch, Pierce, and Ware County public educational institution materials
5. Appling, Bacon, Clinch, Pierce, and Ware County non-profit organization materials of local interest

The OKRLS Director or designee reserves the right to review all requests for use of public display areas and retains the right to reject any materials which they deem either inappropriate or unsuitable due to size, content, appearance, space, or similar limitations.

- All items must identify the organization, including: name, address, and phone number.
- OKRLS assumes no responsibility for the preservation or protection of non-library display materials.
- Materials will be considered on an equitable basis, subject to available space, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of the individuals or groups represented.

Forms of materials unacceptable for OKRLS display include:

- Materials that violate the OKRLS Library Patron Conduct Policy.
- Items devoted solely to the sale, advertising, solicitation, or promotion of products/services
- Materials whose primary purpose serves as political campaign literature and/or religious literature
- Event announcements that charge attendees and/or require a donation and/or that are not open to the general public
- Personal notices or handouts (lessons, child care, roommates, free pets, yard sales, etc.)
- Requests for contributions from non-OKRLS or Friends of the Library campaigns or events.

Posting of a notice or placement of materials in a display rack does not imply endorsement by OKRLS, library staff, or Board of Trustees.



Child and Dependent Person Safety Policy

Approved by Regional Library Board of Trustees on May 4, 2009, revised February 2, 2015; revised May 7, 2018

The Okefenokee Regional Library System is committed to providing an environment conducive to the most effective use of Library facilities for all patrons. Part of this commitment is a concern for the safety and welfare of everyone who visits the library. Library facilities are public buildings, and as such, have special security concerns. Children or dependent persons left unattended may be at risk.

Children are defined as any person under the legal age of 18 (eighteen). Dependent persons may include, for example, persons incapacitated due to physical and/or mental disabilities or other conditions who are dependent on others for their safety and well-being

Responsibility for the safety, care, and behavior of minor children and dependent persons in the Library rests solely with the parent, guardian, and/or caregiver. Library staff will not be expected to provide care and/or supervision for children and dependent persons.

For the protection of children and dependent persons who visit the Library, the following policy has been instituted:

- Children under the age of nine (9) years of age and dependent persons must be accompanied by a responsible person who is thirteen (13) years of age or older while in the Library.
- Parents, legal guardians, and caregivers are responsible for the safety, care, and behavior of all juveniles and dependent persons while on Library grounds.
- All patrons, including children and dependent adults, are subject to the Library's Code of Conduct set forth in the *Library Patron Conduct Policy*.
- If necessary at any time, staff will contact the appropriate authorities to assume responsibility for the welfare of a child or dependent person in need of attention.

When Library staff recognize that a child or dependent person has been left unattended in the library or on its premises, they will:

- Attempt to locate parent, guardian or caregiver by searching the library building and/or grounds;
- Ensure that at least two (2) staff members remain with the unattended child or dependent person until either the responsible party is located or the appropriate authorities assume responsibility;
- When the responsible party is located, they will explain the Child and Dependent Person Policy and provide a copy;
- If the responsible party cannot be located, staff will contact the appropriate authorities;
- Staff will complete an incident report, including the contact information for all related parties.

Under no circumstances will library staff members provide transportation to unattended minors or dependent persons, or leave them alone in the building or on the library premises.

Appendix G: Personnel Classification Plan

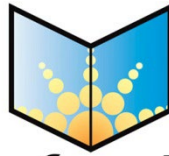
Salaried / State-Reimbursed Positions

Position	Minimum Yearly Salary	Maximum Yearly Salary
Director (Regional)	\$70,000	\$100,000
Assistant Director (Regional)	\$60,000	\$85,000
Adult Services Librarian (Regional)	\$50,000	\$75,000
Systems Manager (Regional)	\$40,000	\$70,000
Technical Services Manager (Regional)	\$35,568	\$60,000
Business Services & HR Manager (Regional)	\$35,568	\$60,000

Hourly Positions

Position	Minimum Hourly Salary	Maximum Hourly Salary
Technical Services Clerk (Regional)	\$10.00	\$15.00
Branch Manager	\$14.00	\$18.00
Branch Clerk	\$10.00	\$14.00
Student Clerk / Tech Assistants	\$9.00	\$10.00
Custodian	\$10.00	\$13.00

**All state-reimbursed positions must adhere to minimum qualifications as set by Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS). Minimum and maximum salaries for all positions are subject to revision based on available funding, guidelines from GPLS, and approval by the Regional Board of Trustees.*



Okefenokee
Regional Library System

2023 System Holiday Schedule

Approved by the Okefenokee Regional Library Board of Trustees, November 7, 2022

NEW YEAR'S DAY.....	Monday, January 2, 2023 <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, January 1, 2023</i>
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY.....	Monday, January 16, 2023 <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, January 14, 2023</i>
MEMORIAL DAY.....	Monday, May 29, 2023 <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, May 27, 2023</i>
JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY.....	Monday, June 19, 2023 <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, June 17, 2023</i>
INDEPENDENCE DAY.....	Tuesday, July 4, 2023
LABOR DAY.....	Monday, September 4, 2023 <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, September 2, 2023</i>
VETERANS DAY.....	Friday, November 10, 2023 <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, November 11, 2023</i>
THANKSGIVING.....	Thursday, November 23, 2023 Friday, November 24, 2023 <i>*in lieu of Presidents Day</i> <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, November 25, 2023</i>
CHRISTMAS.....	Monday, December 25, 2023 Friday, December 22, 2023 <i>*in lieu of Columbus Day</i> <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, December 23, 2023</i>
NEW YEAR'S EVE.....	Friday, December 29, 2023* <i>*Holiday granted by the OKRLS Board</i> <i>Library will be closed on Saturday, December 30, 2023</i>

From the Personnel Policy Manual Paid and Unpaid Time Off; Leave | Paid Holiday Leave (pgs. 21-22):

The OKRLS Regional Library Board of Trustees will approve a holiday schedule at the Fall Board meeting for the coming year to celebrate the eleven (11) Federal holidays (New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth National Independence Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day) plus one (1) additional holidays for a total of twelve (12) holidays, with pay for eligible employees. The Regional Library Board of Trustees may add to or alter this schedule each year as they see fit.

Full-time employees will be credited with an eight (8) hour work day and part-time employees who work 17.5 hours or more each week will be credited with a four (4) hour work day.

In the event a holiday falls upon a Sunday, the following Monday shall be deemed to be the paid holiday. In the event the legal holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be deemed to be the paid holiday. When a holiday falls within a period of paid leave, the holiday shall not be counted as a leave day in computing the amount of leave debited. An employee who is absent without leave on the day immediately preceding or following a holiday shall lose the holiday as well as pay for that day.

In the event a holiday falls on a Friday, the library will be closed the following Saturday. In the event a holiday falls on a Sunday or Monday, the library will be closed the preceding Saturday. Saturday closures are not considered paid holidays. Affected staff will need to work those hours during the normal work week (Monday-Friday).



Volunteer Policy

Approved by Regional Board of Trustees on November 2, 2009; revised on November 7, 2016

A volunteer is someone who performs tasks for the library without wages, benefits or compensation (including travel expenses) of any kind.

- Volunteers donate their time and skills to assist paid library staff when and where their assistance contributes to the library's program of service.
- Volunteers will not be used to displace paid employees from their positions.
- Adult volunteers include anyone **18 and older**.
- Teen volunteers include anyone **14-17 years old**.
- Volunteers will receive specific on-the-job training to provide them with the knowledge and skills to necessary to perform their duties.
- Prior to being assigned to a volunteer position, all volunteers may be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for, interest in and ability to undertake the position.
- Volunteers will not be accepted if there is no suitable job match when skills, interests and schedule are considered.
- Volunteers will maintain a timesheet. To track volunteer hours for annual report purposes, supervisors will keep the timesheets on file.
- Volunteers may work at any branch shelving library materials and assisting with library programs as needed.
- Volunteers must adhere to the Volunteers' Code of Conduct and sign a copy of the Code of Conduct **BEFORE** they begin volunteering at the library.

Due to privacy laws regarding patron information, volunteers may not work behind the circulation desk or use the circulation computers.