Section 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.01 Purpose

The general purpose of these policies and regulations is to establish and communicate a method for operation of an effective and fair personnel system and to provide a defensible position in relation to complaints and personnel-related lawsuits.

All personnel-related activity should be executed without regard to age, race, creed, sex, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, or political affiliation.

1.02 Applicability

The Southwest Georgia Regional Library System includes the System Office in Bainbridge and the affiliated libraries in Colquitt and Donalsonville. These policies, approved by the Regional Board of Trustees, shall apply to all personnel in the System. Any exceptions adopted by the local county board of trustees will be reviewed for approval by the Regional Board of Trustees and included in the Appendix of this document.

Section II. CLASSIFICATION PLAN

2.01 Purpose- Classification Plan

The classification plan provides a complete inventory of all positions in the regional system and an accurate description of and specifications for each position. The plan standardizes titles, each of which is indicative of a broad range of duties and responsibilities and has the same meaning throughout the regional system.

2.02 Composition of the Classification Plan

The classification plan shall consist of:

A. A grouping of classes of positions which are approximately equal in difficulty and responsibility which call for the same general qualifications, and which can be equitably compensated within the same range of pay.

B. Position titles, descriptive of each position.

C. Written specification for each position.
2.03 Classification by education

A. Professional: requires a Master’s Degree in Library Science from an American Library Association accredited program; or certification by the Georgia Board of Library Certification. Librarians shall abide by Code of Ethics (Appendix 4).

B. Para-professional: requires a four-year undergraduate degree from an accredited school.

C. Skilled technician: requires a high school diploma from an accredited high school plus a working knowledge of a technical specialty, i.e. bookkeeping, automation.

D. Clerical: requires a high school diploma from an accredited high school.

Section III. EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

3.01 Objective

The Director shall prepare a job related system for evaluating the work performance of all employees in the personnel system. The purpose of the employee performance evaluation should be primarily to inform employees how well they are performing their work and how they can improve their work performance. The performance evaluation may also be used in determining a salary change; as a factor in determining order of reduction in force; as a basis for training, promotion, demotion, or dismissal; and for such purposes as set forth in these personnel policies.

The job related system for evaluating the work performance of all employees shall be included in the Appendix.

3.02 Evaluation – Probationary period

The first year of service shall constitute a probationary period. The library is not obligated to retain a probationer throughout his/her probationary period if his/her performance is below par and there is little evidence that further training would rectify the situation.

In such instances, a professional employee receives one month’s notice and a non-professional two-week’s notice.

3.03 Access to Performance Evaluation

Although library records are by law available to public review, the Board shall make every effort to protect the privacy of the performance evaluations by making them available only to (a) the employee evaluated; (b) his/her supervisor or department head; (c) the Director; (d)
the Library Board; (e) specific court orders; and/or (f) individuals with employee’s written permission for such access.

Section IV. REMUNERATION

4.01 General

A. Hourly employees are paid on a bi-monthly basis. Salaried employees are paid on a monthly basis.

B. The regular work week is 40 hours or 5 days.

C. Staff members whose work schedules necessitate longer than an 8 hour day may have other work day schedules adjusted to come within the 40 hour per week schedule. The supervising librarian shall be responsible for arrangement of this schedule.

D. Overtime pay or compensatory leave for overtime work shall be approved in advance by the Director.

Section V. APPOINTMENTS AND CERTIFICATION

5.01 Certification

Professional employees must be certified by the Georgia Board for the Certification of Librarians.

5.02 Method of Filling Vacant Positions

A. Position vacancies may be filled by re-employment, promotional appointment, original appointment, transfer, or demotion.

B. Vacancies may be filled through public competition or promotional competition.

C. All vacancies will be announced by a written notice to each branch manager and posted on the bulletin board of the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System.

D. Vacancies to be filled by open public competition will be advertised by any combination of direct mail, newspapers, Department of Labor Job Bank, bulletin boards, professional journals, and appropriate institutions.

E. Every attempt shall be made to see that vacancies are filled by the most competent persons available regardless of age, race, creed, sex, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.
F. Appointments shall be confirmed in writing, stating conditions of employment, such as salary, work week, vacations, and sick leave.

**Section VI. PROMOTION**

6.01

Vacancies shall be filled as far as practical by the promotion of the employees in the SWGRL system.

**Section VII. TRANSFERS**

7.01

There will be no automatic transfers. If an opening exists and if the employee wishes to be considered, the employee must apply.

**Section VIII. SEPARATION**

8.01 Separation Defined

Separation is the termination of an employee from system service. Separation may be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary separation may be through (1) employee submitting written notice that he/she wishes to resign; or (2) the failure of the employee to report to duty for a period of one or more days without permission. This failure to report to duty is considered abandonment of position. Involuntary separation results from dismissal as outlined in Section VIX.

8.02 Resignation in Good Standing

To allow for proper planning, an employee who wishes to resign in good standing should give his/her supervisor proper written notice stating the date resignation is submitted, effective date of resignation, and the reason for resignation. Proper notice for a non-exempt employee is two weeks; proper notice for an exempt employee is four weeks. The Director or Board may agree to a shorter notice period in unusual circumstances.

8.03 Resignation without Notice

An employee who does not submit his resignation in compliance with the provisions of these personnel policies shall be considered as having resigned without notice. An employee who is absent from work without notifying his supervisor or other designated individual of the reasons for his absence and receiving permission to remain away from work shall be considered as having abandoned his/her position, provided the failure to contact his supervisor was not caused by avoidable circumstances. The same policies shall apply when an employee fails to return to work following the expiration of authorized leave.
8.04 Penalty for Abandonment of Position

An employee who leaves the regional service without notice shall have the fact entered into his/her record. In such cases, the employee may be deprived of the opportunity to be considered eligible for re-employment.

8.05 Resignation Form and Procedure

An employee who is resigning shall submit his resignation in writing as prescribed by Section VIII, Paragraph 8.02. The resignation notice shall include the date the resignation is submitted, the effective date of the resignation, and the reason for the resignation.

8.06 Exit Interview

An exit interview with the Director is recommended on leaving employment. A copy of this interview will be furnished to the employee upon request.

Section VIX. DISMISSAL

9.01 Dismissal Defined

Dismissal is the involuntary removal of an employee from the regional service.

9.02 Employees Subject to Dismissal

An employee may be dismissed when alternative personnel action (i.e., suspension, demotion, fine, etc.) would not be deemed sufficient, appropriate or in the best interest of the regional service and its good repute. In no case may an employee be removed on the basis of age, race, creed, sex, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.

9.03 Guidelines for Dismissal

Any one of the following may be deemed sufficient guidelines for dismissal, though dismissal may be for other than the reasons enumerated.

A. That the employee has been incompetent for inattentive, negligent, or inefficient to such an extent that his/her performance is unsatisfactory as is substantiated by performance evaluation and/or other documentation. This includes idleness, spending excessive amount of time away from work station, engaging in non-productive activities, missing deadlines, or conducting personal business while on paid library time.

B. That the employee has willfully violated any of the provisions of the
regional service or personnel policies; or has attempted to, or does commit any act or acts intended to nullify or mitigate any of the provisions thereof.

C. That the employee has been convicted and sentenced in any court of competent jurisdiction for a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude under the laws of this State, or any other state or of the United States, provided that such conviction is deemed to be detrimental to the effective performance of the duties and responsibilities of the position.

D. That the employee has been offensive, threatening, or brutal in his/her treatment of public charges, fellow employees, or other persons, and that conduct adversely affects the employee’s ability to perform his/her job, which adversely affects the library’s ability to carry out its mission, or which reflects unfavorably upon the work unit for the library. Employees shall be courteous and polite in the conducting of library business.

E. That employee has some permanent or chronic physical or mental ailment or defect that incapacitates him/her for the proper performance of his/her duties and the library can find no other duties, even after making efforts to find and use assistive devices, that the employee can perform satisfactorily.

F. That the employee has taken for personal use a fee, gift, or other valuable things in the course of his/her work or in connection with it when such a fee, gift, or other valuable thing is given him by any person in the hope or expectation of receiving a favor or better treatment than that afforded other persons.

G. That the employee has intentionally falsified time reports; or given false information on his/her application for employment.

H. That the employee has been habitually tardy or absent from duty without sufficient cause. This includes reporting late at the beginning of the work schedule or returning late from lunch or rest breaks without approval from director.

I. That the employee has misrepresented, falsified, or omitted information or facts, written or verbal, in such records as attendance, leave, employment status, employment application, travel vouchers, work logs, or work products.

J. That the employee neglected or willfully disregarded established procedures, written or traditional; rules; regulations directives or interpretations.

K. That the employee has failed to follow established safety practices whether written or traditional. This includes but is not limited to lifting improperly, failure to wear proper shoes, use protective equipment or perform acts safely.

L. That the employee has deliberately refused to obey a reasonable order or
specific instruction which relates to an employee’s job function. This includes an unwillingness to submit to authority, an expressed refusal to obey an order, a failure to carry out an order, or refusal to follow specific instruction, or an expressed or demonstration of lack of respect for supervisory authority.

M. That the employee has released privileged or confidential information due to failure to follow proper procedures, releasing information to unauthorized persons, or the improper handling of sensitive or privileged information. No employee shall use unauthorized IDs to enter the computer, or to use any information other than that authorized to him/her by the library director.

N. That the employee has not protected and safeguarded property, equipment or materials of the library system and employees. No employee shall be in unauthorized possession of any property of the library system, its employees or clients, regardless of value. No employee shall attempt to remove library property or property of others without prior authorization from the director.

O. That the employee has reported to work under the influence of alcoholic beverages, or narcotic or hallucinogenic drugs. Trading or trafficking in drugs is prohibited.

P. That the employee has shown discrimination or harassment in any employment activity in regard to race, sex, age, color, religion, creed, national origin, political opinion or affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. This also includes arbitrary and capricious discrimination or harassment.

9.04 Dismissal Recommendation to Director

When it is determined that such action is necessary, appropriate, and in the best interest of the regional library service, a supervisor shall recommend to the Director that an employee be dismissed after adequate coaching and counseling have been conducted and documented through an oral and written reprimand. The supervisor’s recommendation shall be in writing and shall contain the reasons for the recommended action.

Section X. SUSPENSION

10.01 Suspension Defined

Suspension is the temporary removal of an employee from the regional library service for either a specified or indefinite period. A suspended employee may be suspended with or without pay at the discretion of the appointing authority. Those employees suspended without pay shall not accrue nor use annual or sick leave while on suspension.
10.02 Suspension for Disciplinary Reasons

An employee who does not continue to perform the duties and responsibilities of his/her position, who is insubordinate or uncooperative, who acts in a manner tending to lower discipline or morale within the regional library system, or who acts in a manner deemed not in the best interest of the regional library system or its good repute, may be suspended for a reasonable period of time; not to exceed thirty days, when alternative personnel actions (demotion, dismissal, fine, etc.) may not be warranted, appropriate or deemed in the best interest of the regional library service.

10.03 Suspension Pending a Court Decision

An employee may be suspended for an indefinite period when the appointing authority determines such action is necessary and in the best interest of the regional library service in cases where an employee is charged with and awaiting total for a criminal offense which would prevent the competent discharge of his/her duties and responsibilities. In these cases, the appointing authority may take such other action which may deem necessary under the circumstances. After a final judgment has been entered the Appointing Authority shall then make a determination as to whether the employee shall be reinstated, dismissed, or subjected to whatever disciplinary action that may be considered necessary and appropriate.

10.04 Suspension During Investigation

When an employee has acted or is alleged to have acted in a manner which would subject him/her to dismissal from the regional library service, he/she may be suspended by the appointing authority while the appointing authority is investigating charges before making a final determination as to whether the employee should be dismissed from the regional library service. An employee who is exonerated of charges following such investigation shall be reinstated without loss of pay, privileges, benefits, or status retroactive to date of suspension.

10.05 Procedure for Suspension

The suspension shall be in writing, addressed to the employee, specify the effective date, the maximum length of the initial suspension, and shall contain the reasons for the suspension.

Section XI. REPRIMANDS

11.01 Reprimand Defined

Reprimand is an oral or written notice of policy violation, mistakes, inefficiency, or other factors which may adversely influence an employee's ability to efficiently carry out his/her duties and responsibilities. Any superior may reprimand a subordinate at any time.
11.02 Oral Reprimand

Oral reprimand will be considered the normal means of correcting the actions of a subordinate. Such reprimands will not affect employee’s privileges or status. When oral reprimands are issued, the employee shall be specifically notified that it is an oral reprimand. Informal records shall be maintained by supervisors to include date and subject of reprimand. Repeated offenses will require written reprimand(s).

11.03 Written Reprimand

Written reprimand will be reserved for repeated offenses or those of a serious nature. When in writing, they are required to be shown to the employee who will acknowledge receipt over his/her signature. If the employee feels the written reprimand is unjust, he/she will state in writing his/her reasons. A copy of the written reprimand, together with any employee rebuttal will be placed in the individual's personnel file. In the event the employee refuses to sign acknowledging receipt of written reprimand, it will be necessary to have a witness sign the document specifying that it was shown or read to the employee and that the employee refused to sign.

Section XII. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

12.01 Complaint Defined

It is the policy of the Regional Library Board to foster employee satisfaction and to give careful consideration and attention to any complaint. For the purpose of these policies, a complaint shall be considered to be any matter concerning an employee’s status or conditions of employment for which review is not provided in these personnel policies.

12.02 Informal Complaint Procedure

An employee who has a problem or complaint should first try to resolve it through discussion with his/her immediate supervisor without delay. If after discussion he/she does not believe the problem has been satisfactorily resolved, he/she shall have the opportunity to discuss it privately with his/her supervisor’s superior. Every effort should be made to find an acceptable solution by informal means at the lowest possible level of supervision. If the employee is not in agreement with the decision reached by discussion, he/she then has the opportunity to file a formal complaint as outlined below.

12.03 Formal Complaint Procedure

A. First Level of Review. A complaint shall be presented in writing to the employee’s immediate supervisor, who shall render his/her decision and work comments in writing and return them to the employee within five work days after receiving the complaint.
B. If the employee does not agree with his/her supervisor’s decision, or if the immediate supervisor fails to provide resolution of the complaint as outlined above, the employee may present the complaint in writing to the Regional Library Director. The Regional Library Director will meet with and discuss the complaint with the employee. The Director will follow the meeting with a written decision on the complaint. Failure of the employee to take further action within five work days after receipt of the written decision of the Director, or within ten work days if no decision is rendered, will constitute a withdrawal of the complaint.

C. If the employee does not agree with the decision reached by the Director or if the Director fails to provide resolution of the complaint as outlined above, the employee may present his/her complaint in writing to the Regional Library Board.

D. The Regional Library Board, upon receiving the complaint, may discuss the complaint with the employee, his/her representative, if any, and with other appropriate persons. The Regional Library Board shall render its decision and comments in writing and return them to the employee within five workdays after receiving the complaint. Decision of the Committee shall be final.

Section XIII. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

13.01 General Policy

A. The following types of leave are officially established: holidays, annual leave, sick leave, military leave, leave of absence (without pay), jury duty, court leave, maternity leave, voting, family medical leave, professional leave, special leave and compensatory leave. All leave may be granted by the Director in conformance with policies established for each type of leave. All leave shall be requested on appropriate forms to the Administrative Office for approval by Director and supervisor prior to use.

B. Employees will not be granted the use of annual leave prior to the actual accumulation except for the period of time in which the absence occurred. Example: Employee has requested 5 days annual leave and at the time of the request has accumulated 4.5 days. With the accumulation of 4.6 hours in the current pay period there will be enough accumulated time to cover the time request.

13.02 Holiday Leave

A. The number of holidays authorized by the Regional Library Board is thirteen days. The officially recognized days with pay are:
New Year’s Day  
Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday  
Memorial Day  
Juneteenth  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Three days at Christmas  
Staggered staff holidays for Presidents’ Day, Columbus Day* and Veteran’s Day.

*Effective April 18, 2007, the library will be closed to the public on the Columbus Day holiday and it will be designated a mandatory public services staff training day. Staff will take their Columbus Day holiday off during the year and designate it as such.

Part-time permanent employees working 20 hours or more per week earn holidays on a prorated basis.

13.03 Annual Leave (Vacation)

All full-time non-professional employees shall receive 15 work days (1⅓ days or 10 hours per month) for annual leave. Professional staff members shall receive one month (22 work days) annual leave. Part-time employees who work at least 20 hours per week shall be allowed annual leave in ratio to the days employed. Annual leave may be accumulated but terminal pay for leave may not exceed 30 days for professional full-time employees and 22 days for non-professional full-time employees and prorated for permanent part-time employees. Any unused annual leave beyond 30 days may be added to the employee’s sick leave balance at fiscal year end (June 30) by formal request in writing from the employee submitted by June 1st of each year.

A. The basic purpose of annual leave is to allow an employee a vacation period away from the Job. It may also be used for such purposes as conducting personal business that cannot be taken care of during off-duty hours, or caring for sick family members. Annual leave must be approved by the supervisor, and must be scheduled far enough in advance to permit the supervisor to schedule work priorities. Leave request forms must be approved and on file prior to use.

B. Annual leave may not be taken during the first full month of work for a new employee, unless negotiated otherwise at hiring.

C. Annual leave may be denied if it will jeopardize the routine operation of the library. Ordinarily requests for annual leave will not be accepted more than six months before the desired time of absence. All requests must be turned in to the employee’s immediate supervisor for approval prior to use. The Director
may deny annual leave for the time requested if such absence would adversely affect the operation of the branch.

The library director shall be responsible for the scheduling of leaves in order that they may interfere as little as possible with the service of the library.

Leave must be requested and approved by immediate supervisor and director prior to use. Notification of absences due to illness, injury, or other reasons must be reported to supervisor by the employee or employee’s designee as soon as possible at the beginning of the workday.

13.04 Sick Leave

A. Sick leave is paid leave which may be granted to eligible employees who through sickness or injury become incapacitated to a degree that makes it impossible for them to perform the duties of their position; or to eligible employees who are quarantined by a physician because of exposure to a contagious disease; or for medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment. Sick leave may also be granted when the illness of an immediate member of the employee’s family requires the employee’s personal care and attention as well as the result of the death of an immediate family member requiring the employee to be part of funeral planning or attendance.

B. Sick leave is not to be considered a right which an employee may use at his/her discretion, but a privilege not to be abused. If the Director has reason to believe that an employee is abusing sick leave privilege, the employee may be required to furnish a doctor’s certificate for each period of absence regardless of other relevant provisions in these policies. A certificate normally will be required when sick leave exceeds three consecutive days. Certificates should specify the nature of the illness and an approximate date when the employee may return to work. Notification of absence due to illness, injury, or other reasons must be reported to supervisor by employee or employee’s designee as soon as possible at the beginning of the workday.

C. For purposes of granting sick leave, immediate family shall be identified as: father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, child, grandchild, or one living in the household of the employee.

D. All regular permanent employees working 20 hours or more hours per week are eligible to earn and accrue sick leave.

E. All full-time (40 hours per week) regular employees shall earn sick leave at the rate of 10 hours per pay period and part-time permanent employees shall earn sick leave on a pro-rated basis. Sick leave shall be cumulative up to 45 days (360 hours) for full-time permanent employees and pro-rated for part-time permanent employees. Employees participating in the Teachers Retirement
System of Georgia may continue to accrue sick leave beyond the 45 day limit. Teachers Retirement System of Georgia rules allow one month’s service credit for each 20 days of accrued sick leave at retirement (60 days accrued sick leave minimum is required for benefit).

F. Each employee may accrue up to 360 hours or 45 days of sick leave. No terminal pay shall be paid for accrued sick leave.

13.05 Maternity Leave

Maternity leave is granted to regular employees upon presentation of a doctor’s certificate. Maternity leave is for a period of not more than 45 consecutive days (360 hours). Accrued sick leave will be used. Any portion of the 45 days not covered by accrued sick leave will be charged to accrued annual leave. If accrued sick and annual leave do not cover the 45 day leave, the employee will be granted leave of absence without pay. If, due to unusual circumstances, additional maternity leave is required, it may be granted upon presentation of another doctor’s certificate and upon the Director’s approval. The above stated procedures of charging for maternity leave also apply for additional maternity leave. For the portion of maternity leave taken without pay, a temporary appointment may be made, but the position will be held for the employee. If for any reason, the employee fails to report on the appointed date following such leave, the position will be declared vacant and filled in the usual manner.

13.06 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (added back 7/21/21)

The FMLA is a federal law that entitles eligible employees, including OPS employees, to 12 workweeks of job-protected leave in a 12-month period for certain specified family and medical reasons. The department’s 12-month period is measured forward from the date the employee’s first FMLA leave begins.

Eligibility – Employees must have been employed by any state agency for at least 12 months (does not need to be consecutive months) and worked for at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave.

Reasons for Leave – Eligible employees will be granted leave consisting of appropriate accrued paid leave or unpaid leave, for a period of up to 12 weeks during a 12-month period, for the following reasons:

A. The birth of the employee’s child and to care for the newborn child;

B. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly place child;

C. To care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; and

D. An employee’s own serious health condition that makes him or her unable to perform the essential functions of the job.
**Serious Health Condition** – An illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves: inpatient care; absence of more that three days involving continuing treatment; pregnancy or prenatal care; chronic serious health condition (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.); permanent or long-term condition which treatment may not be effective (e.g., stroke); or any absence to receive multiple treatments, recovery there from or (e.g., chemotherapy, physical therapy, dialysis, etc.).

**Procedures** – FMLA places the primary responsibility on the employer, its supervisors and managers, for notifying employees of their rights under this law. Family medical leave may consist of the employee’s appropriate accrued paid leave or leave without pay.

**Requesting Leave** - The employee should make a written request for leave, including the reason(s) for the leave, the anticipated duration of the leave, and the anticipated starting and ending dates of the requested leave. An employee intending to take leave because of an expected birth, placement of a child, or because of a planned medical treatment, should submit a request for leave at least 30 days before the leave is to begin. If leave is to begin within 30 days, the employee must give notice to his or her supervisor as soon as the necessity for the leave arises. When planning medical treatment, employees must consult with their supervisor and make a reasonable effort to schedule leave so as not to unduly disrupt the department’s operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider.

**Written Notification to Employees** – The supervisor will provide written notification to eligible employees that their FMLA leave is approved contingent upon their furnishing the required medical certification (if not received with employee’s written request). Additionally, the notice should provide specified information to the employees of their rights and benefits under FMLA. Contact your servicing human resource office for notification letter.

**Medical Certification** – The employee’s FMLA leave is approved contingent upon the receipt of a completed medical certification form. The employee’s health care provider must certify the employee qualifies for FMLA. The certification must relate only to the serious health condition for which the current need for leave exists. Additionally, the certification must indicate which part of a “serious health condition,” if any applies to the patient’s condition, the medical facts that support the certification, the approximate date on which the serious health condition commenced and its probable duration.

**Return to Work** – If employee’s FMLA leave was occasioned by their own serious health condition that made them unable to perform their job, they may be required to provide a fitness-for-duty medical certification prior to being returned to work, provided that this policy is uniformly applied. The employee will be returned to the same or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. Employees, however, have no greater right to reinstatement or to other terms and conditions of employment than if they had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period.

**Benefits During Leave** – During the approved period of FMLA leave, employees will be continued in their current health plan, if applicable, under the same conditions that applied
before the leave commenced. To maintain health care coverage, employees must make the appropriate premium payments. Employees should contact their servicing human resource office for additional information regarding their insurance coverage.

13.07 Leave for Jury Duty

Regular employees who are summoned for jury duty will be given time to fulfill their obligation without loss of pay or benefits. A personnel leave request form with jury summons attached must be submitted.

13.08 Court Leave

A regular employee shall be entitled to leave of absence from duties, without loss of pay or benefits, on all days during which he/she shall be subpoenaed by any court federal, state, or political subdivision thereof, to serve as a witness. A personnel leave request form with subpoena attached must be submitted.

13.09 Special Leave

Special leaves for travel, educational, and sabbatical leave shall be given consideration by the library board when requested by an employee.

13.10 Compensatory Time

All leave earned must be approved in writing by the director prior to earning any time over 40 hours per week. Professional librarians are eligible for compensatory leave.

13.11 Voting Time

Employees are encouraged to vote in all elections. This should be done on the staff member’s time, but, if additional time is needed, up to one hour may be granted by the Director.

13.12 Professional Leave

Employees attending job-related conferences and meetings in the course of the regular work day either on site or away from the library must request professional leave on the leave request form.

13.13 Military Leave

A regular employee who is a member of the military or naval forces of the State or of the Nation shall be entitled to leave of absence from his/her duties, without loss of pay or time and without effect on his/her service rating, on all days during which he/she shall be ordered to duty with troops or at field exercises or for instruction for periods no to exceed thirty days in any one calendar year. An employee shall be required to submit an order or statement from the appropriate military officer as evidence of active duty for which leave is taken.
Section XIV. WELFARE AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

14.01 Social Security

All employees are covered by Social Security. The employee and the Library Board each pay a part of the cost.

14.02 Health Insurance

Health insurance is provided by the Library Board to all permanent employees who work more than 30 hours per week and who have been employed at least one month. The employee and the Library Board each pay a part of the cost. Details of the insurance program may be secured from the Library Administrative Office.

14.03 Retirement

Employees who work 20 hours or more per week are required to belong to the Teacher’s Retirement System of Georgia. Contributions to Teacher’s Retirement are deducted from members’ paychecks; additional contributions are made by the Library Board and the State. Employees participating in the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia may continue to accrue sick leave beyond the 45 day limit (see 13.04, E.). Teachers Retirement of Georgia rules allow one month’s service credit for each 20 days of accrued sick leave at retirement (60 days accrued sick leave minimum is required for benefit). Details on the retirement program are provided at the time of employment or may be obtained from the Library Administration Office.

14.04 Accidents and Injuries in the Line of Duty/Workers’ Compensation/Liability Insurance

Employees

All permanent, temporary, SWGRLS employees are covered by workers’ compensation insurance. This provides for medical care as well as compensation of disability resulting from on-the-job injury. Compensation is dependent upon the nature of the injury. Report on-duty accidents to your supervisor immediately.

Any employee having an accident while working will file a report to his/her supervisor immediately. The supervisor is responsible for reporting to the Director the same working day.

If an employee goes home after an accident or after leaving the emergency room, personal sick leave must be used to cover the rest of that workday. Disability leave, if authorized, does not begin until the following day.

Patron/Volunteer
If a patron or volunteer has an accident or needs medical attention, notify the supervisor in charge or administrative office immediately.

14.05 Meal Hours

One hour will be permitted for lunch. As scheduling permits, all staff members earning benefits shall take a minimum of a 30 minute lunch.

14.06 Rest Period

One rest period of 15 minutes daily shall be allowed the staff. This is agency time and is a privilege. It may not be used to compensate for late arrival or early departure from duty or to extend the lunch period.

14.07 Problem Patrons

A. Problem Patron Defined
A problem patron is an adult or child who exhibits unusually obnoxious, abusive, or dangerous behavior; behavior that you feel is offensive or intolerable to you personally or to other staff members or patrons.

B. Example of a Problem Patron

A patron who is either:
1. verbally abusive;
2. dangerous;
3. loud and obnoxious;
4. sexually offensive; or
5. intoxicated

C. Suggested Procedures

If a patron exhibits behavior which falls into the above definition, the following steps should be taken:

1. Warn the patron about the behavior and give him/her a copy of patron conduct policy.
2. Report the situation to the Director/Deputy Director in charge.
3. Call Police Department if the Director or his/her designee is not available. Report the situation.

14.08 Fire Evacuation Procedures

Everyone (including visitors and patrons) must leave the building immediately during a fire drill. When the alarm is sounded, take your purse and coat, exit the building in an orderly manner following the fire warden’s instructions. If you are in an area of the building other than your normal workplace, exit the building according to the Fire Warden’s instructions for that
area. Remain with your group so everyone can be accounted for. Wait for instructions from your fire warden before returning to the building.

Section XV. TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

15.01 Attendance at Professional or Allied Conferences and Meetings

The board’s policy shall be to encourage the attendance at these meetings and to pay travel expense, whenever feasible.

Section XVI. STAFF REGULATIONS AND RULES OF CONDUCT

16.01 Dress Code

The matter of dress is a very personal thing and ordinarily should not be interfered with. However, the library belongs to the public in both service and support, and its staff members in this area are expected to dress and be groomed in a dignified, and business-like manner.

16.02 Physical Surroundings

This physical surroundings are important both to the staff of an organization and to the public. It is important that desks, file cabinets, and other equipment be maintained in an efficient and neat manner. Therefore, all employees shall be alert to unnecessary clutter on or about desks and filing cabinets, and each person shall take the responsibility for clearing desks or work areas before leaving work.

16.03 Personal Possessions

The Library is not responsible for its employees’ personal possessions. Therefore, employees should use discretion with regard to personal property. To avoid loss, pocketbooks and other personal items should be kept out of sight.

16.04 Staff Conversations

Judgment should be used to ensure that staff conversations are not distracting to other employees or to patrons. Public areas are not places for employee’s personal conversations.

16.05 Eating and Drinking

Eating and drinking are prohibited in public areas. Eating and drinking in the staff lounge is a privilege, and care and cleaning of appliances and equipment is a responsibility of each employee using them. Surfaces such as microwave, refrigerator, and tables should be wiped clean after each employee’s use.

16.06 Confidentiality of Records or Documents
It is incumbent upon each employee through his/her supervisor to determine which records are open, privileged or confidential; and what information may be communicated. Employees are prohibited from transmitting or releasing information without authorization from the supervisor and director.

16.07 Tobacco

Library building and grounds are tobacco free.

16.08 Children of Staff at Work

Staff is encouraged to use good judgment and bring children to work in emergency situations only. Children should be kept from public work areas and should not interfere with the execution of job responsibilities for any staff member.

16.09 Travel

All travel to be reimbursed must be requested prior to traveling stating date, time, estimated amount, and reason for trip. Travel forms for reimbursement should be completed within ten (10) days after return from travel status.

Trip reports shall be submitted to your supervisor within fifteen (15) workdays of return from authorized travel.

16.10 Conduct

Employees shall at all times conduct themselves in an acceptable and/or professional manner and be courteous and polite to patrons and co-workers.

16.11 Work Procedures

Work procedures and processes are established to enhance the work effort, safeguard the interest of taxpayers, patrons, the library system, and facilitate employee safety. Employees shall adhere to or follow all written or established rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices.

16.12 Overlapping of Duties

Each person on the staff has definite outlined duties to perform. But in an organization this small, it is often necessary to fill in and assist even in the most menial tasks. This would be in times of absence or in case of temporary overload of duty. The person who is originally responsible for the duty must be informed, and must be satisfied with the method of assistance he or she is given.

16.13 Personal Business
Staff should not conduct any personal business during the hours employed by the library. This includes but is not limited to writing personal letters, personal telephone calls, reading, sewing, crocheting, visitations and conversations with staff members or others.

No employee shall use equipment, materials, supplies, and/or property for personal reasons.

16.14 Equipment

Use of any library equipment after hours or for personal use must be approved by the Director before use.

Photocopies and Computer Printers

When it is necessary to use bond, letterhead, or colored paper in the photocopier or computer printer, please remove it from the machine and replace it with regular photocopy paper before leaving the room.

Circulation assistants are responsible for turning on the photocopier machines at the beginning of the day and turning off at the end of the day.

Do not remove staples, paper clips, etc., over the photocopier machines as they may become lodged in the machine and cause a breakdown.

Each staff member is responsible for keeping the photocopy area clean and neat and well-supplied with paper, toner, etc.

Employees shall exercise proper care and consideration in their treatment of library property, buildings, and grounds. The misuse, destruction, or defacing of library grounds, buildings, property, or equipment is prohibited.

16.15 Telephone

Telephone calls to the Library should be answered with “Public Library” or “Regional Library”. This is done by anyone answering an outside call as well as identifying themselves and saying “May I help you?”

All calls shall be answered promptly. Employees shall take messages for staff members who are unable to accept calls. If you are going to be away from your work area, please let the front desk know where you may be reached.

Personal Calls

Any personal use of the telephones shall be rare and brief to keep the lines free for business. The staff is expected to ask friends and family to call at work only when it is absolutely necessary. Outgoing personal calls should not be made in the public service areas.
Personnel in public service areas should use the phone in the staff lounge for necessary personal calls.

**Obscene, Annoying, or Threatening Calls**

If you receive obscene or threatening calls:

A. hang up;
B. give no information until the caller has been identified;
C. keep a record of time and date calls take place and notify AT&T at att.com/acb and call police.

16.16 Job Announcements

Job announcements are posted on the staff bulletin board.

16.17 (This section deleted by the board on 7/15/15).

16.18 Central Files

Central files are the primary central files for all SWGRL correspondence. Duplicate copies of correspondence may be kept in other offices. The Secretary is responsible for adding file folders annually and maintaining the files.

16.19 Lost and Found

Information on lost and found items should be given to Administrative Assistant. A note may be placed on the bulletin board.

16.20 Correspondence and Publicity

Staff members must clear all correspondence, publicity (oral and written) flyers, TV, radio, and any other communication with the library director. In the absence of the director, it should be held until she/he is contacted. A copy of all correspondence and publicity shall be kept in the central files of the library.

16.21 Purchases

All purchases must be approved in advance by the director.

16.22 Scheduling

All staff members whose service requires advance commitments with patrons, such as interlibrary loan, programs, equipment or group service must clearly write out who the patron is and what the service is to be given before taking a day off or more extended leave. This
written memo should be left at the checkout desk or with the director. Any deviation from approved staff scheduling should be cleared with the director. This includes Saturday, holidays, sick leave, and annual leave. Annual leave should be taken at the time it will least interfere with the regular library operations. No staff member has the authority to change scheduling unless it has been delegated to a person in charge when the director is absent. All leave must be approved in advance by the Director.

16.23 Policies

All current policies and practices in all areas of library service, whether check out desk, A-V, bookmobile, or wherever are not to be changed or modified without discussion with the director and other employees involved.

REVISIONS

1. Approved by Decatur-Seminole Regional Library Board at a called meeting on September 2, 1953.
2. Revised July 1, 1986.
5. Revised July 10, 1991 and approved at SWGRL Board Meeting.
8. Revised July 18, 2001 and approved at SWGRRLS Board Meeting.
9. Revised October 16, 2002 and approved at SWGRRLS Board Meeting.
12. Revised October 15, 2003 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting.
13. Revised April 20, 2005 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting.
15. Revised April 19, 2006 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting (page 11, section 13.03)

16. Revised April 18, 2007 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting (pages 11 and 12 section 13.02)

17. Revised January 16, 2013 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting (Appendix 7.)

18. Revised July 16, 2014 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting (Section 14.02)

19. Revised July 15, 2015 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting (Sections 5.01E, 9.02, 9.03 M & P, 13.02, 13.06, 14.05, 16.07, 16.15, 16.17, and appendix 7)

20. Reviewed and approved without changes at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting 7/18/18.

21. Revised July 21, 2021 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting (added Juneteenth as a holiday, added back FMLA)

22. Revised January 19, 2022 at the SWGRRLS Board Meeting (page 3 – hourly employees paid bi-monthly, salaried monthly; page 10 – twelve holidays changed to thirteen; page 20 – are changed to area)

APPENDICES

1. Annual Benefits Update

2. Drug Policy

3. Performance Evaluation

4. Code of Ethics

5. Sexual Harassment

6. Grievance Procedures for Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment
2022 Active Member Rates

(Includes Approved Leave Without Pay for Military, FMLA, and Disability)
January 1 - December 31, 2022

These rates apply to:

- Active Members through their employment in a benefits eligible position with a State Agency, Public School or similarly situated SHBP Employing Entity;

- Members of the General Assembly;

- Former Members of the General Assembly who were eligible to retire at the time of leaving office except for the attainment of retirement age, from a State Retirement System which the General Assembly appropriates funds; and

- Certain correctional officers injured by inmate violence;

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<th>You + Child(ren)</th>
<th>You + Spouse</th>
<th>You + Family</th>
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Teacher Retirement FY23
Membership in the State of Georgia Department of Education’s Teacher Retirement is a deduction or savings rate of 6%. This deduction amount is not taxable under federal income tax. The library contributes a matching amount into your retirement fund at a rate of 19.98%.
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The Southwest Georgia Regional Library Board is concerned with the well-being of all employees in the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System. The board recognizes that a drug-free workplace encourages employee productivity and promotes the accomplishment of the system’s missions and goals. In accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the Southwest Georgia Regional Library Board hereby declares that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace for all Southwest Georgia Regional Library employees.

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply. A controlled substance is defined as those drugs or substances listed in schedule I through V of the Federal Controlled Substances Act, including but not limited to, marijuana, alcohol, phencyclidine, cocaine, opiates and amphetamines. Not included are substances used in accordance with a valid prescription. The workplace is defined as a geographic location at which an employee performs work pursuant to his or her employment with the Southwest Georgia Regional Library, including any travel while in travel status. Conviction means a finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendere) or imposition of sentence or both by any judicial body charged with the responsibility to determine violations of the federal or state criminal drug statutes. A criminal drug statute is defined as a federal or non-federal criminal statute involving the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, use or possession of any controlled substance.

Each employee shall be given a copy of this policy. As a condition of employment, employees will abide by the terms of this policy and shall notify the library director of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace not later than five days after such conviction. The library director shall notify the appropriate state agency within 10 days after receiving notice of the conviction from the employee or otherwise after receiving the actual notice of such conviction.

Within 30 days of notification by the employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction, the library board shall, with respect to any employee so convicted:

1. Take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or

2. Require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.

The library director shall develop a drug-free awareness program to inform employees of the following:

- The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace.
- Board policy on Drug-Free Workplace and any accompanying department administrative procedures concerning the maintenance of a drug-free workplace.

- Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs.

- Any penalties to be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.

The library director will conduct a biennial review to determine program effectiveness and ensure that disciplinary sanctions are consistently enforced.

Entities contracting with the Southwest Georgia Regional Library Board shall, as a condition of the contract, assure a drug-free workplace. For contracts, a drug-free workplace means a geographic location at which individuals are directly engaged in the performance of work pursuant to a contract with the Southwest Georgia Regional Library.

21-U.S.C. 812

This is to certify that I have received a copy of and read Southwest Georgia Regional Library Board policy Drug-Free Workplace. As a condition of employment, I will abide by the terms of this policy and shall notify the library director of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace not later than five days after such conviction.

__________________________________________
Print Name

__________________________________________  ____________________________
Signature                                      Date

Approved at the Southwest Georgia Regional Library Board meeting on July 8, 1992.
SOUTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM
EMPLOYEE EVALUATION

Employee's Name: ___________________________ Date: ______________________

Position: ___________________________ Period Covered __________ to __________

Type Evaluation: Probationary ___________ Annual ___________ Special ___________

Rating Code:

0 - Unsatisfactory
1 – Needs improvement
2 – Satisfactory
3 – Above satisfactory
4 – Outstanding

Overall Rating: _______________________

1. Demonstrates accurate knowledge of relevant policies, rules, regulations and/or technical skills within his/her profession.
   0 1 2 3 4

2. Consistently produces high quality work in a timely and professional manner and with appropriate attention shown to details.
   0 1 2 3 4

3. Produces a volume of work consistent with the position’s level of responsibility and requirements and informs/discusses with supervisor any problems that may result in a missed deadline at least 2 working days in advance of agreed upon deadline.
   0 1 2 3 4

4. Adjusts to and performs well in new situations and follows priorities of job as directed by or discussed with supervisor.
   0 1 2 3 4

5. Demonstrates effective written and oral communication skills.
   0 1 2 3 4

6. Demonstrates dependability and reliability by being in attendance and on time for meetings, work, and appointments by meeting appropriate work deadlines and by being independent in working.
   0 1 2 3 4

7. Cooperates with subordinates, peers, and superiors to help create and maintain good working relationships and good morale within the Region.
   0 1 2 3 4

8. Demonstrates initiative and interest in accomplishing both the department’s and the library system’s objectives.
   0 1 2 3 4

9. Accepts responsibility for the duties and actions within his/her position and if applicable, for the duties and actions of those under his/her supervision.
   0 1 2 3 4

10. Shows initiative by using “down-time” effectively, e.g. to assist others, to learn other areas, to start new projects, etc.
    0 1 2 3 4

11. Is resourceful in finding answers to questions, solving problems, and when appropriate, initiating action.
    0 1 2 3 4

12. Takes advantage of professional self-improvement and keeps current on methods, techniques and skills required in areas of responsibility.
    0 1 2 3 4
1. List of Employee’s Major Strengths: Key Areas Noted for Improvements:

2. GOALS FOR THE NEXT REVIEW PERIOD (Employee’s input should be considered in completing the Goals for the next review period.)

3. WHAT WAS YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT THIS REVIEW PERIOD?

4. SUGGESTIONS FOR RESOURCES, TRAINING, EFFICIENCY/EFFECTIVENESS IN YOUR AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY:

SUPERVISOR’S CERTIFICATION – THIS EVALUATION IS BASED ON MY OBSERVATION OF THIS EMPLOYEE FOR THE TIME PERIOD INDICATED AND REPRESENTS MY BEST JUDGMENT OF THIS EMPLOYEE’S PERFORMANCE.

Evaluator’s Signature___________________________________ Title:________________________ Date:____________________

Supervisor’s Signature________________________________ Title:________________________ Date:____________________

Comments:__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

Regional Director’s Signature:_________________________________________ Date:____________________

EMPLOYEE’S CERTIFICATION -I HAVE READ AND DISCUSSED THIS EVALUATION WITH MY SUPERVISOR AND RECEIVED A COPY OF THIS PERFORMANCE EVALUATION.

Employee’s Signature:_________________________________________________________ Date:____________________

Employee Comments:________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

word/adm/employee evaluation revised 06/15/16
As a member of the Southwest Georgia Regional Library Board, I will…

- listen carefully to my teammates, and those served by the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System.
- respect the opinion of other board members.
- respect and support the majority decisions of the board.
- recognize that all authority is vested in the board when it meets in legal session and not with individual board members.
- keep well-informed of developments that are relevant to issues that may come before the board.
- participate actively in board meetings and actions.
- call to the attention of the board any issues that I believe will have an adverse effect on the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System or those we serve.
- attempt to interpret the needs of constituents to Southwest Georgia Regional Library System and interpret the action of Southwest Georgia Regional Library System to its constituents.
- refer constituents or staff complaints to the proper level on the chain of command.
- recognize that the board member’s job is to ensure that Southwest Georgia Regional Library System is well managed, not to manage Southwest Georgia Regional Library System.
- vote to hire the best possible person to manage Southwest Georgia Regional Library System.
- represent all constituents of Southwest Georgia Regional Library System and not a particular geographic area or special interest group.
- consider myself a “trustee” of Southwest Georgia Regional Library System and do my best to ensure that Southwest Georgia Regional Library System is well maintained, financially secure, growing and always operating in the best interests of constituents.
- always work to learn more about the board member’s job and how to do it better.
- declare any conflict of interests between my personal life and my position on the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System Board, and avoid voting on issues that appear to be a conflict of interests.

As a member of the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System Board I will not…

- be critical, in or outside of the board meeting, of other board members or their opinions.
- use Southwest Georgia Regional Library System or any part of Southwest Georgia Regional Library System for my personal advantage or the personal advantage of my friends or relatives.
- discuss the confidential proceedings of the board outside the board meeting.
- promise prior to a meeting how I will vote on any issue in the meeting.
- interfere with duties of the executive or undermine the executive’s authority.

Approved at the SWGRL Board Meeting on 7/21/99
STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS
CODE OF ETHICS OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
FOR LIBRARIANS

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states that values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
III. We protect each library user’s right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Reaffirmed
ALA/1981/SWGRL 1992*
Updated ALA January 22, 2008.
I. THE POLICY

A. It is the policy of the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System to maintain for our patrons and employees a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment.

B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the staff to harass another staff member or patron through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined in Section II. It shall also be a violation of this policy for patrons to harass other patrons or staff members through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined in Section II while on the library premises.

II. DEFINITION

Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by any member of the library staff to a patron or to another staff member. Such conduct shall be considered to be a sexual harassment when:

A. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment, or when:

B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decision affecting that individual, or when:

C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for use of library services.

III. FILING

Complaints of sexual harassment should be made to the director at 301 S. Monroe Street, 229/248-2665. Each complaint will be addressed as outlined in the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System sexual harassment grievance procedure located in Bainbridge, Georgia.
The following grievance procedure may be used to provide prompt and equitable resolution of patron and employee complaints of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, and handicap/disability. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require that systems adopt grievance procedures and designate compliance coordinators. It is a frequent and acceptable practice for one person to coordinate both the Title IX/Section 504/ADA and be referred to as the Title IX/Section 504/ADA coordinator.

In smaller agencies it may work well for one person to coordinate compliance activities of Title IX (gender), Section 504/ADA (handicap/disability), and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, and national origin). For the purpose of this grievance procedure, the persons or a person who coordinates compliance of several rights laws is referred to as the Equity Coordinator. In larger system, it may be more effective for one person to be assigned responsibility for coordinating compliance for only one civil rights law. In writing a grievance procedure, use the term(s) which most appropriately applies to your library system.

I. DEFINITIONS

A. **Discrimination Complaint:** A written or oral complaint alleging any policy, procedure, or practice which discriminates on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicapping/disabling condition.

B. **Harassment Complaint:** A written or oral complaint related to comments or conduct of supervisors, co-workers, or patrons which interferes with an employee’s performance or threatens an employee’s or patron’s sense of well-being in the work or educational environment.

C. **Patron Grievance:** A library user of the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System who submits a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, or handicapping/disabling condition.

D. **Employee Grievance:** An employee of the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System who submits a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, or handicapping/disabling condition.

E. **Title IX Coordinator:** The person(s) designated to coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (legislation mandating non-discrimination based on gender). The Title IX coordinator is responsible for processing complaints and serves as moderator and recorder during hearings.
F. **Section 504/ADA Coordinator:** The person(s) designated to coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ADA, etc. (legislation mandating nondiscrimination based on handicap/disability). The Section 504/ADA coordinator is responsible for processing complaints and serves as moderator and recorder during hearings.

G. **Equity Coordinator:** The person(s) designated to coordinate compliance activities of several civil rights laws including Title IX, Section 504/ADA, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

H. **Respondent:** The person alleged to be responsible for the violation described in a complaint. The term may be used to designate persons with responsibility for procedures and policies in those areas covered in the complaint.

I. **Day:** Day means a working day. The calculation of days in complaint processing shall exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

II. **PRE-FILING PROCEDURES**

Prior to the filing of a written complaint, the patron or employee is encouraged to visit with Susan Whittle (SWGRLS Director) and to make a reasonable effort to resolve the problem or complaint.

III. **FILING AND PROCESSING DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS**

A. **Grievant:** Submits written complaint to Title IX, Section 504/ADA or Equity Coordinator stating the grievant’s name, nature and date of alleged violation, names of persons responsible (where known), and requested action. Complaint must be submitted within 30 days of alleged violation. The complaint should be signed by the grievant or his or her designee.

B. **Title IX, Section 504/ADA or Equity Coordinator:** Contacts respondent within 10 days and asks respondent to:

1. confirm or deny facts;
2. indicate acceptance or rejection of patron’s or employee’s requested action; or
3. outline alternatives.

C. **Respondent:** Submits answer within 10 days to Title IX, Section 504/ADA, or Equity Coordinator.

D. **Title IX, Section 504/ADA or Equity Coordinator:** Within 10 days after receiving respondent’s answer, refers the written complaint and respondent’s answer to the supervisor (1st level Agency Manager). The Title IX, Section 504/ADA, or Equity Coordinator also schedules a hearing with the grievant or the respondent, and SWGRLS Director (manager/agency head or other designee).
E. Manager/Agency Head, Grievant, Respondent, and Title IX, Section 504/ADA
   Equity Coordinator: Hearing is conducted.

F. Manager/Agency Head: Within 10 days after the hearing, issues a written
decision to the patron or employee, respondent and Title IX, Section 504/ADA,
or Equity Coordinator.

G. Grievant or Respondent: If the grievant or respondent is not satisfied with
the manager’s/agency head’s decision, he/she must notify the Title IX,
Section 504/ADA or Equity Coordinator within 10 days and request a hearing
with the director/agency head.

H. Title IX, Section 504/ADA or Equity Coordinator: Within 10 days of request,
schedules a hearing with the grievant, respondent, and director/agency head.

I. Director/Agency Head, Grievant, Respondent, and Title IX, Section 504/ADA or
   Equity Coordinator: Hearing is conducted.

J. Director/Agency Head: Issues a decision within 10 days following the hearing.

K. Grievant: If the grievant or respondent is not satisfied with the
director’s/agency head’s decision, he/she must notify the Title IX, Section
504/ADA or Equity Coordinator within 10 days and request a hearing with the
governing board.

L. Governing Board or Hearing Panel established by the Board, Grievant, and
   Title IX, Section 504/ADA or Equity Coordinator:
   Hearing is conducted.

M. Governing Board: Issues a final written decision within 10 days after the
   hearing regarding the validity of the grievances and any action to be taken.

IV. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. Extension of Time: Any time limits set by these procedures may be extended
   by mutual consent of the parties involved. The total number of days from the
date that the complaint is filed until the complaint is resolved shall be no
more than 80.

B. Access to Regulations: The Southwest Georgia Regional Library System
   shall provide copies of all regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis
   of race, color, national origin, sex, age, handicapping/disabling condition upon
   request.

C. Confidentiality of Records: Complaint records will remain confidential unless
   permission is given by the parties involved to release such information. No
   complaint record shall be entered in the personnel file. Complaint records
   shall be maintained on file for three years after complaint resolution.