AVON
FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Professional Development Policy

Purpose:

The mission of the Avon Free Public Library (the "Library") is to provide an array of outstanding resources and services to our community. Crucial to achieving that are skilled, confident people–staff, management, Directors–who engage in on-going professional development that enhances their knowledge and performance.

Driven by a desire to recruit, develop and retain a highly trained staff, and build team and organizational capabilities, this policy establishes guidelines for the participation in professional development activities and reimbursement of expenses related to those activities.

Key Definitions:

Professional development is the process of improving and increasing capabilities of Library staff and Directors through access and participation in educational and training opportunities in the workplace, through outside organizations, or through coaching, mentoring and observing others perform the job. Examples include in-person training classes and workshops, webinars, membership and participation in professional associations, and attendance at conferences, in person or virtually.

Professional staff includes librarians, managers, and the library director. Para-professional staff includes library specialists, library technical assistants, and library technicians. Support staff includes library assistants, library pages, and the library secretary. Core staff is defined as those working 15 hours or more per week on a regular basis.

Scope:

This policy applies to all Library employees and members of the Library's Board of Directors (the "Board"). Targeted minimum thresholds of professional development activities apply to core staff only.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Library Director is responsible for guiding the development planning process for the Library and for securing and managing adequate funding for professional development activities.

In general individuals, with input from their manager or supervisor, are responsible for identifying appropriate professional development opportunities. They are responsible for obtaining prior approval to participate if they occur during work time or if reimbursement for costs is expected.

While not mandated by personnel rules or dictated by job description, the Library has established targeted minimum standards of participation in professional development activities for each class of core employees.

1. Full-time professional and para-professional staff: 15 - 30 hours per year.
2. Full-time support staff, and part-time professional and para-professional staff: 7 - 15 hours per year.
3. Part-time support staff: 3 - 7 hours per year.

Managers are responsible for documenting the time spent and the professional development activities participated in by their staff each year.

Before participation in a professional development activity is approved, managers or supervisors are responsible for ensuring that such participation will not have an adverse impact on Library service, and that the activity relates directly or indirectly to the employee's role at the Library.

Staff members are responsible for keeping accurate records of professional development-related expenditures and mileage, and for submitting timely requests for reimbursement.

Occasionally, a manager or supervisor may suggest or assign a specific professional development activity to an employee to correct a deficiency or develop or enhance a job-related skill.

The Board of Directors, with input from the Library Director, is responsible for identifying appropriate enrichment and development opportunities for its members.

Procedures:

1. **Schedule Approval**: Time away from the library or away from normally assigned tasks must be approved in advance by a supervisor before committing to any professional development opportunities.
2. **Expense Reimbursement**: In addition to registration costs, the Library will reimburse employee travel, meal, and lodging expenses incurred in connection with pre-approved travel, on behalf of the Library in accordance with this policy. Employees are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses for official business as a prudent person would in spending personal funds. This policy is applicable to travel paid for by the Board. Travel paid for by the Town of Avon is subject to the Town's policy. "Travel" means any expenditure directly incident to official travel by employees of the Library involving reimbursement to travelers or direct payment to private agencies providing transportation or related services.
    a. **Authorized Types of Official Business:** Eligible travel, meal and lodging expenses will be reimbursed for employees of the Library only for purposes of official business conducted on behalf of the Library. These include, but are not limited to, offsite or out-of-town meetings related to official business and pre-approved seminars, conferences and other educational events related to the employee's official duties. If you are unsure whether an expense is reimbursable, please contact the Library Director.
    b. Categories of Expenses:
        i. Airfare/Train – Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available air or train fare that reasonably meets business travel

needs. Travelers are encouraged to book flights or train trips in advance if possible. Only coach or economy tickets will be paid or reimbursed. If the traveler selects a fare other than coach or economy, the traveler will pay for the difference between higher priced tickets with their personal funds.

ii. Personal Automobiles – When attending a training event or other off-site official business directly from an employee's residence, no reimbursement will be made if the distance is less than the mileage of a normal commute to the workplace. An employee will be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS mileage rate.

iii. Automobile Rentals – Travelers will be reimbursed for the cost of renting an automobile including gasoline expense only as provided in this section. Compact or mid– size cars are required for two or fewer employees traveling together and a full– size vehicle may be used for three or more travelers. The traveler must refuel the vehicle before returning it to the rental company.

iv. Other Transportation – The traveler should utilize hotel shuttle service or other shuttle services, if available. If none are offered, the use of the most economic transportation is encouraged.

v. Lodging – The traveler will be reimbursed for a standard single-room at locations convenient to the business activity and should take advantage of any conference room rates made available. In the event of a change in plans or a cancellation, the traveler must cancel the hotel/motel reservation so as not to incur cancellation charges.

vi. Meals - Meal reimbursement is reimbursed up to the following: Breakfast - $20, Lunch - $25, Dinner - $35. Detailed receipts will be required for reimbursement. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

vii. Vacation in Conjunction with Business Travel – In cases where vacation time is added to a business trip, any cost variance in airfare, car rental, lodging and/or any other expenses must be clearly identified and paid by the traveler.

viii. Accompanied Travel – When a traveler is accompanied by others not on official business, any lodging, transportation, meals or other expenses above those incurred for the authorized traveler will not be reimbursed by the Library.

ix. Parking – Parking fees at a hotel/motel, conference center, airport, or other site will be reimbursed only with a receipt.

3. **Membership Fees**: Membership fees for state and national-level professional organizations for full-time professional and para-professional staff will be paid for or reimbursed by the Library. For part-time staff, generally only state membership fees will be paid for or reimbursed.

Location:

This policy is housed on the Avon Free Public Library website:
https://www.avonctlibrary.info/policies/

A copy is maintained in the Administration Office.

Adopted: October 20, 2020
Revised: January 21, 2025