

LINCOLN TRAIL LIBRARIES SYSTEM PERSONNEL POLICY

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Revised November 1987
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I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Extent of Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to provide clear statements to guide and assist Lincoln Trail Libraries System employees in performing their employment and to provide a uniform basis for the employer/employee relationship.

This Policy supersedes any previous personnel policies and handbooks. Lincoln Trail Libraries System (hereinafter referred to as LTLS or the System) adheres to the policy of employment-at-will, which permits an employee or LTLS to terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason. The System does not offer contracts of employment, express or implied, and LTLS reserves management rights to revise, interpret, or discontinue policy or procedures.

LTLS Board of Directors, Executive Director, System Staff

Legal responsibility for LTLS is vested in an elected Board of Directors. The Board determines policy, develops a Plan of Service, and is responsible for the appointment of an Executive Director, who is the administrative officer of the System. The Executive Director is responsible for the hiring and termination of all employees and the establishment and administration of procedures related to implementation of the Board's Personnel Policy.

II. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Equal Employment Opportunity

Lincoln Trail Libraries System is committed to a policy of equal opportunity in recruitment, hiring, retention, opportunities for advancement, compensation, and termination. LTLS will not discriminate on any unlawful basis including, but not limited to, race, color, creed, sex, national origin, religion, citizenship, military status, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, and other protected classifications as required by federal, state, and/or local law.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Executive Director shall designate an ADA officer for the System who will monitor compliance and address any ADA questions or complaints addressed to him/her. As required by law, LTLS will make reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship on LTLS.

Discrimination and Harassment

Lincoln Trail Libraries System is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free of unlawful discrimination and harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's race, color, creed, sex, national origin, religion, citizenship, military status, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, or other legally protected characteristics will not be tolerated. (See Appendix 1 for LTLS Sexual Harassment Policy.)

III. EMPLOYMENT DEFINITIONS

- A. All employees fall within one of the following categories which are relevant to determining eligibility for benefits:

Full-time employee -- Employee who is regularly scheduled to work a 37.5 hour work week. Full-time employees are eligible for all benefits provided by the System.

Part-time employee with partial benefits -- Employee who is regularly scheduled to work less than a 37.5 hour work week. Employee is paid on an hourly rate basis, is required to participate in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) if working in a position normally requiring 600 or more hours per year, and is entitled to pro-rated holiday, vacation, and sick leave benefits. Employees who work more than 30 hours per week on a regular basis are eligible to receive medical, dental, and life insurance.

Substitute employee -- Employee who is scheduled to substitute for a full or part-time employee, for no more than 400 hours in any twelve month period. Employee is paid on an hourly rate basis. A Substitute employee does not qualify for holiday, vacation, sick leave, health, dental, retirement or other benefits.

- B. In addition to the above, all employees -- whether full-time or part-time -- also fall within one of the following classifications under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act in regard to determining whether employees are entitled to overtime compensation:

Exempt employee -- Employee (full or part-time) in executive, administrative, or professional positions as defined by the Department of Labor and are exempt from overtime requirements and paid on a salaried basis.

Non-exempt employee -- Employee (full or part-time) who is paid on an hourly basis and is covered by the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

- C. In addition, all employee job positions are classified in one of three categories below:

Professional level positions -- Those positions requiring a graduate degree in library science, computer science, adult education, or other area of specialty.

Manager level positions -- Those administrative positions in an exempt category involving administration which do not require a graduate degree for employment.

Support level positions -- Those non-exempt positions not contingent on a 4-year college degree.

IV. EMPLOYMENT AND CONDITIONS OF WORK

Position Classification/Compensation

The Executive Director approves all position descriptions and maintains final authority in employee salary matters within the parameters of the Board-approved salary pay grade schedule and the LTLS Salary Administration Policy.

Recruitment, Application, and Hiring

Vacancies will be publicized internally, as well as locally, regionally, or nationally, depending upon the position. Staff members should indicate in writing if they are interested in being considered for a position.

A written application form shall precede employment of all employees; falsification of information on an application or resume will be considered cause for discharge. Employment applications from those not hired will be kept on file in accordance with legal requirements.

Skill tests may be included in the application screening process for some positions.

Prospective employees will be interviewed and their references contacted by staff designated by the Executive Director. Employment appointment authority rests with the Executive Director, made in accordance with the position descriptions and salary schedule adopted by the Board of Directors. It is the policy of LTLS to confirm in writing all offers and acceptance of offers of employment. It should be understood by all employees that employment offers are not intended to create any contract for employment.

Pre-Employment Requirements/Conditions

For all positions, a home telephone contact number is required.

For some positions, offers of employment will be contingent upon acceptable results of pre-employment physicals, drug screenings, and/or criminal conviction record searches, all conducted at LTLS expense.

Staff Development

The System recognizes that individual contributions of well-trained staff of LTLS are essential to quality service and that all employees have something to contribute to the vision and mission of the System. To assist staff, LTLS provides new employee orientation to the organization and to all LTLS services. In addition, staff will be

provided opportunities to attend in-house training and off-site continuing education offerings as appropriate.

Performance Evaluation

It is LTLS policy to conduct periodic formal performance reviews with all employees. However, effective staff development is dependent upon continuous feedback on performance between supervisor and employee as part of an ongoing training and evaluation process. Periodic performance reviews also provide an opportunity for employees to provide input for improvement of System services.

New employees will meet with supervisors several times during an orientation period of at least six months. In addition to receiving ongoing informal feedback throughout the year, all other employees will receive formal written and oral performance evaluations at least once a year as described in the Salary Administration Policy.

Performance reviews are retained as part of the permanent personnel records of each employee. Reviews may be used as one of several factors taken into consideration regarding matters including, but not limited to, merit increases, promotions, and retention of employees.

Hours of Work

Schedules

Full-time employees are scheduled to work 37.5 hours per week, with the work week measured from Saturday through the following Friday. Length of work day, work shifts, schedules, and hours of work are approved by the Executive Director and are subject to revision to meet System service needs.

Part-time employee schedules are approved by the Executive Director and are subject to revision to meet System service needs.

Overtime

Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime compensation if they work more than 37.5 approved hours during the Saturday-Friday work week. Non-exempt employees working 37.5 - 40 hours during the work week will be compensated at the employee's hourly rate. Non-exempt employees working more than 40 hours during the work week will be compensated at a rate 1 1/2 times the employee's hourly rate. Compensated overtime must receive prior approval.

Breaks

Employees are required to take an uncompensated lunch break during any day that they are scheduled to work seven and one-half or more consecutive hours. In addition, employees will be allowed one 15-minute relief break for every four hours of consecutive work. Lunch and relief breaks will be scheduled to ensure LTLS service coverage, are not to be used at the beginning or the end of the work day, and are not cumulative.

Deviations from Assigned Schedule

Employees must notify their supervisor or administration (if unable to contact direct supervisor) at least 30 minutes in advance of scheduled starting time if they will be absent or late for work.

In extreme weather situations, the Executive Director or designee may decide to close the System for the safety of employees. Employees will be paid according to regular work schedules in such instances.

V. BENEFITS

Eligibility

All employees are eligible for benefits required by law, including workers' compensation and Social Security (FICA).

All employees who work in positions normally requiring 600 or more hours per year are required to participate in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF).

Employees who work more than 30 hours per week on a regular basis are eligible to receive medical, dental, and life insurance.

Full-time employees are eligible to receive vacation, holidays, and leaves as outlined below.

Part-time employees are eligible to receive pro-rated vacation, holidays, and leaves as outlined below.

Statutory Benefits

The System provides FICA (Social Security), workers' compensation, and unemployment coverage for all employees. The System contributes to Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) coverage for all eligible employees.

Insurance

Insurance benefits for employees who work more than 30 hours per week on a regular basis are based upon the provisions contained in the applicable insurance plans and/or contracts which control in all cases. LTLS may amend, modify, change, or terminate these plans or insurance contracts at any time. This may result in a termination or change in coverage, insurance carriers, premiums, or employee co-payments.

Health/Medical

LTLS provides group health (major medical) insurance coverage as required by law, up to a maximum premium amount to be determined annually by the Board of Directors.

Dental

LTLS provides group dental insurance coverage for employees who work more than 30 hours per week on a regular basis, up to a maximum premium amount to be determined annually by the Board of Directors.

Term Life Insurance

LTLS provides term life insurance coverage for employees who work more than 30 hours per week on a regular basis, providing a death benefit of a minimum of \$10,000. The amount of life insurance benefit may be adjusted as part of the Board's annual budget.

Insurance Continuation (COBRA)

The System complies with the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA). The Act offers employees who are covered by insurance the opportunity for a temporary extension of health insurance coverage at group rates and at employee expense in instances where coverage under LTLS plans would otherwise end.

Employee-Paid Insurance Options

Full-time employees may elect, at their own expense and through payroll deduction, purchase of dependent health insurance, dependent dental insurance, and/or additional personal or dependent life insurance.

Voluntary Deferred Compensation Options

The Executive Director is authorized to administer employee voluntary deferred compensation plans and/or pre-tax employee contribution plans.

University of Illinois Allied Organization Benefits

The University of Illinois has approved LTLS as an allied organization. LTLS employees are eligible to receive University allied status identification cards and to receive benefits associated with this status. Such benefits include membership in the University of Illinois Employees Credit Union and access to library and university facilities and services on the same basis as university faculty and staff. Allied organization status and associated benefits to LTLS staff are subject to regulations and limitations set by the University of Illinois.

Other Benefits Available

The LTLS Board and administration may provide other benefits as reviewed and determined annually as part of the annual program and budget planning process.

Holidays

Closed Holidays

The System observes 11 closed paid holidays during the year, as set annually by the Board:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
President's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

If closed holidays fall on a weekend, the holiday is observed on a Friday or a Monday. It is occasionally necessary, with Executive Director approval, to schedule staff on holidays when the System is closed. Holiday pay compensation for non-exempt employees is equal to 1 1/2 times the employee's hourly rate.

Part-time employees receive pro-rated pay for holidays, based on the percentage of time they are regularly scheduled to work in a week.

Religious Holidays

Employees may use personal leave or vacation leave to observe religious holidays.

Leaves

Vacation

Full-time professional level employees earn 20 days (150 hours) annual vacation leave.

Full-time manager level employees earn 15 days (112.5 hours) annual vacation leave during the first year of employment, with one additional day (7.5 hours) earned per additional year of employment, until a maximum of 20 days (150 hours) is reached.

Full-time support level employees earn 10 days (75 hours) annual vacation leave during the first year of employment, with one additional day (7.5 hours) earned per additional year of employment, until a maximum of 20 days (150 hours) is reached.

Part-time employees earn vacation on a pro-rated basis.

Vacation leave is accrued monthly, reported to the employee at least quarterly, and may be used after six-months' employment.

Vacation is allowed to accumulate up to 1 1/2 times the annual vacation leave rate for the employee's present position. The System has the right to schedule vacations according to System needs. An employee who resigns, retires, or is otherwise separated from service with the System shall receive payment for all allowable accrued vacation leave at the date of resignation. Date of resignation shall not be extended by vacation leave.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Lincoln Trail Libraries System complies with the minimum guidelines of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and provides approved leave options beyond these minimum requirements as well, as outlined in other parts of Section V of this policy. The System will document approved and credited use of leaves which fall under the FMLA guidelines. The FMLA provides for qualified employees who use a total of personal, sick, and family responsibility leave (paid or unpaid) of up to twelve weeks in any twelve-month period to be entitled to be reinstated to their former or equivalent position.

Personal Leave

The purpose of personal leave is to allow time for employees to meet personal business obligations that may arise during the calendar year.

Full-time employees are credited with 7.5 hours of personal leave per semiannual calendar period (July 1-December 31 and January 1-June 30). New full-time employees are credited with 7.5 hours of personal leave if hired during the first two months of any semiannual calendar period or 4 hours if hired later in the period. Part-time employees are credited on a pro-rated basis.

Personal leave does not accumulate beyond the current six-month period and should not be used in conjunction with a holiday or to extend vacation without Executive Director approval. Employees are not compensated for unused personal leave upon resignation or separation from service.

Sick Leave

Sick leave is accrued monthly, reported to the employee at least quarterly.

Sick leave for full-time employees is accrued at the rate of 12 days (90 hours) per year. Part-time employees accrue sick leave at the same ratio as their working hours are to full-time employee working hours.

Sick leave may be used when employees are incapacitated by illness or injury, when they need to be absent for medical, dental, or optical examination and treatment which cannot be scheduled during non-working hours, or when they are required to care for a spouse, parent, or child who is ill. Sick leave may also be used to meet family responsibilities or to attend funerals of non-family members.

In some cases, employees may be required to provide medical certification of illness and/or fitness to return to work.

When accumulated sick leave has been used, vacation credits may be taken with Executive Director approval.

Employees who use no sick leave in a particular six-month period (January-June or July-December) will be credited with 7.5 hours (or prorated for part-time employees) additional personal leave to be used during the following six-month period.

At retirement, LTLS will pay for one-half of the employee's accumulated sick leave, up to a maximum of 60 working days (450 hours).

Bereavement Leave

The purpose of bereavement leave is to allow employees to attend and to make arrangements for the funeral and related matters upon the death of someone in the employee's immediate and step-family (including spouse, children and spouses of children, siblings or parents of employee, grandparents, grandchildren, in-laws, and persons residing in employee's household).

The amount of paid leave is at the discretion of the Executive Director, taking into consideration the relationship of the employee to the deceased, family responsibilities, and travel distance involved.

Sick leave, vacation, and personal leave may be used to attend funerals of less immediate family and friends.

Military Leave

Leaves of absence for military or reserve duty are granted to employees in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

Court Appearance Leave

Any employee who is called to jury duty or as a witness in court pursuant to a duly served subpoena shall be allowed time away from work with pay for such purposes. Any compensation received for such an appearance shall be paid to the System, excluding verified parking expenses, mileage allowance, and compensation above regular salary.

School Visitation Leave

LTLS complies with the requirements of the federal school visitation leave legislation act.

Educational Leave

A. Extended Leave

Extended leave without pay of up to one year may be granted at the Executive Director's discretion for an employee's career development. In reviewing such a request the Executive Director will consider the System's administrative needs and the planned career development program. Leave may be taken without loss of employment status.

B. Short-term Leave

Educational leave of up to three hours per week may be granted by the Executive Director to an employee wishing to take a job-related course. Leave may be paid or unpaid, at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Leave Without Pay

Requests for leave without pay for up to one year may be approved at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Benefits are not accrued during leave without pay. For unpaid leaves longer than two months, the employee will not be covered by health, life, or dental insurance unless the employee elects to pay the premiums. Re-application for insurance is governed by the terms of the insurance carriers.

VI. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES AND STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

Behavior Toward Others

Each employee is under obligation to perform his/her duties honestly, efficiently, and courteously. Each employee will be responsible and held accountable for adhering to all LTLS policies and procedures. All staff are expected to treat others with respect and courtesy in all regards.

Conflict of Interest

LTLS prohibits the hiring of immediate relatives of LTLS Board of Directors, the Executive Director, or other exempt staff. System employees related to each other shall not be assigned to work within the same unit of the organization.

Employees will not seek or accept any personal advantage which might reasonably be interpreted as an attempt to influence them in the conduct of their duties. Situations should be avoided in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of LTLS, its members, or cooperating agencies.

Employees will not engage in activities outside LTLS which might conflict with their ability to perform either physically or mentally their LTLS obligations and responsibilities.

Financial Obligations

Employees are expected to satisfy all personal financial obligations to LTLS in a timely manner. Upon separation from employment, any outstanding financial obligations to LTLS will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

Workplace Security and Safety

Medical Release

LTLS reserves the authority and discretion to require an employee to undergo a medical examination by a doctor chosen by LTLS whenever there is a question of an employee's fitness to work or when there is reason to believe that a worker's condition might pose safety or health hazards to him/herself or to other employees.

Drug Free Workplace

The System is committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace for its employees and members. (Refer to Appendix 2.)

Smoke-Free Environment

LTLS is committed to maintaining a smoke-free environment in accordance with state and federal law governing public facilities.

Searches

Offices, desks, and other storage areas may be provided for the convenience of employees, but remain the sole property of LTLS. The System reserves the right to inspect or cause to be inspected all LTLS property.

Use of System Facilities, Equipment, Services, and Information Technology

Lincoln Trail's telephone system, fax, e-mail, Internet, and other modes of communication are utilized for the purpose of carrying out the organization's mission. All electronic and telephone communication systems and all communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of LTLS and as such are to be used for job-related purposes. LTLS reserves the right to monitor the phone system, fax, e-mail, Internet, and other modes of communication to prevent abuse and ensure that our communication with members and the public are of the highest quality of service and not in conflict with our mission. Administrative procedures will be implemented to assure appropriate use of, access to, and monitoring of use of means of communications. With regard to e-mail and Internet systems, employees are advised that passwords, varying levels of message protection, and other security measures should not mislead employees into believing that messages are secure because complete security is technically difficult to achieve.

Lincoln Trail Libraries System staff are expected to support and protect the confidentiality of contacts with member libraries and of library patron and circulation information in accordance with American Library Association policies and with the Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act and the LTLS Library Records Confidentiality Policy.

Employees are prohibited from copying, duplicating, or removing from LTLS premises any software, data, documents, files, records, correspondence, notes, procedures or training manuals, financial records, or other materials relating to System business, except as required in the course of the employee's employment. In the case of the latter, such copies are to be used with administrative approval and returned to the System immediately after use or upon administrative request and/or upon termination of the employee's employment unless written consent otherwise is obtained from the Executive Director.

Employees will exercise care in the use of property, equipment, information data, and funds in their trust. System time, facilities, equipment, software, and other property and resources are to be used for the purpose of implementing the System's mission and activities. Equipment or materials should not be removed from System premises unless for use to carry out approved System business and in accordance with administrative approval procedures. Use of System resources for the personal financial gain of an employee is prohibited.

Employees shall use System vehicles for System business whenever possible. In cases when employees must use personal vehicles to conduct System business, permission from the Executive Director for mileage reimbursement is required.

VII. GRIEVANCES

A grievance occurs when an employee has a dispute with LTLS concerning the terms and conditions of his/her employment. Grievances should be initiated within two to three working days. Insofar as possible, supervisors have the primary responsibility for bringing about satisfactory resolutions of complaints. Board-adopted policies are not subject to the grievance procedure; but, rather, grounds for complaints include claims by

an employee that the written policies and procedures have been misinterpreted or misapplied through action or inaction regarding that employee.

Once an employee has decided to pursue the grievance procedure, the following steps apply:

- Step 1: The employee will first meet with his/her immediate supervisor to discuss the problem.
- Step 2: If the employee is not satisfied with the oral decision of the immediate supervisor, the employee may submit the problem in writing, which may include a proposed solution, to the Program Manager within ten working days. A copy of the submission should be sent to the supervisor.
- Step 3: If after ten working days the Program Manager does not resolve the problem to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may appeal the matter to the Executive Director in writing within the next ten working days. The Executive Director will give a decision within ten working days. The Executive Director's decision is binding.

VIII. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Resignation

For business planning purposes and to ensure the maintenance of proper staffing levels, LTLS requests that employees provide their supervisor with advance written notice of intent to resign (two weeks notice for non-exempt staff and four weeks for exempt staff). The System reserves the right to accept an employee's notice of resignation and to accelerate such notice as it deems appropriate.

Upon separation, the employee is paid for accrued vacation.

Retirement

Employment beyond age 70 is subject to the discretion of the Executive Director.

Upon retirement, employees will be paid for accrued vacation and for one-half of the employee's accumulated sick leave, up to a maximum of 60 working days.

Changes in Job Assignments/Reduction in Force/Discontinuance of an Activity

In the event that a reduction in force or discontinuation of a program or service becomes necessary, consideration will be given to the seniority of each employee, the needs of LTLS, the qualifications of the employee, and the quality of the employee's past performance.

Upon separation, the employee is paid for accrued vacation. Out-placement services may be provided at the discretion of the Executive Director.

IX. PERSONNEL RECORDS

Employees are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date information regarding name, home address, home telephone number, beneficiary information, persons to be notified in case of emergency, and state and federal withholding information.

Individual personnel files also include information relating to the employee's hiring (application and notice of employment), documentation on changes in status, job performance documentation, records of disciplinary action, benefits information, and documentation of termination.

Medical information on individual employees (such as information related to pre-employment physicals, worker's compensation, workplace safety medical certification, or disability information) is treated confidentially and filed separately.

Personnel records are the property of LTLS and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, without written consent from the employee, only supervisors who have a legitimate business reason to review information in the file and the Executive Director are allowed to do so. Personnel files are also subject to regulatory review by federal and state regulatory agencies.

An employee may examine his/her personnel file upon written request to and under the supervision of the Executive Director or designee.

Records of former employees are normally retained for six years following separation.

It is the general policy of LTLS that the Executive Director or designee are empowered to confirm only dates of employment and position held by current and former employees for purposes of job application reference requests, unless the employee has requested that LTLS provide a reference.

X. POLICY REVIEW/EXCEPTIONS

The Personnel Policy will be reviewed at least every three years by the Board of Directors and administration.

Any exceptions to the Policy or procedures established to implement the Policy must be approved in writing by the Executive Director.

Appendix 1 LTLS Sexual Harassment Policy

Appendix 2 Statement to LTLS Employees Regarding the Provision of a Drug Free Workplace