

# Lake County Library System Adult Literacy Program Literacy Volunteer Handbook

*Revised November 2012*



***Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens  
can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.***

***~ Author Margaret Mead***

## **Mission Statement**

The Lake County Library System Adult Literacy Program is designed to promote information literacy skills and access to high quality resources. The program provides a framework for instruction dedicated to improving adult literacy, technology and job skills throughout Lake County.

**This handbook is dedicated to the amazing Lake County Library System (LCLS) volunteer team. We hope that this will make your experience much more successful.**

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# **[Welcome]**

Becoming an adult literacy volunteer is a wonderful rewarding experience. Many times a tutor will tell me that they feel guilty as they feel they are getting more than they are giving in the tutor/learner relationship!

LCLS adult literacy program realizes that literacy volunteers need to be trained and supported to be successful and find the experience rewarding. Therefore, we are continually reviewing, refining, and updating the training, transition, and ongoing support to ensure that we are offering a dynamic, effective literacy program.

Your initial tutor training introduced you to the techniques used in tutoring an adult and covered topics ranging from core materials used in tutoring to designing a lesson plan. The training also offered you the opportunity to meet fellow tutors and program staff and understand how you fit into the county-wide program and what will be expected of you. But training doesn't stop there because we never stop learning!

The LCLS Adult Literacy Program, recognizing that volunteers have a wide range of interests, skills, and time constraints, offers many opportunities for professional growth that reflects these various needs. In addition to professional development we are also excited to be able to offer you support from your peers—in the form of Tutor Mentors, Literacy Contacts, and the Literacy Coordinator. As you transition to your tutor location of choice don't be afraid to ask for help. There is still much to learn and you are not alone!

We hope that your experience as an Adult Literacy Volunteer will be everything that you had hoped for!

*Erika L. Greene*

Lake County Library System  
Literacy Coordinator

## Contact Information

### Literacy Coordinator:

Lake County Library System—Headquarters

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### Literacy Contacts:

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Lady Lake Public Library

Lori Sadler

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Leesburg Public Library

Roberta Rowold

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W.T. Bland Public Library

Greg Phillips

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Minneola Schoolhouse Library

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Helen Lehmann Memorial Library

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Paisley County Library

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City of Tavares Public Library

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## **Literacy Volunteer Role- Job Description**

**Literacy Volunteers** make it possible for the Lake County Library System Adult Literacy Program to assist English-speaking and non-English-speaking adults improve their English literacy skills. There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available for you to choose from - you select what you want to do. Opportunities include: tutor, tutor mentor, learner orientation, computer and learning lab assistant, and program assistant.

### Volunteer qualifications:

You must be at least 18 years old; agree to background screening policy; be dependable and prompt; be able to relate well to a variety of people; be willing to maintain the confidentiality of the learners; have good listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills; have basic computer skills; and be flexible and patient.

### General responsibilities:

Notify the literacy contact or literacy coordinator of any change in schedule, volunteer location, and/or concerns or requests; successful completion of initial training; a minimum of one professional development training per calendar year; commit to at least 1 year to the Literacy Program, and be available for blocks of time no less than 3 consecutive months. In any volunteer role, you will relay concerns, issues, questions, and comments as appropriate (so resolutions, information, or answers can be provided) to the literacy contact and/or the literacy coordinator.

### Specific responsibilities:

#### **Tutor**

Encourage and support the adult learners by helping them develop confidence and a positive attitude about learning; respecting them and involving them in decisions about the learning process; selecting materials and approaches that are suitable for the adult learners' ability and needs; supporting them and praising them for their efforts rather than criticizing them; guiding them in adopting behaviors appropriate to this culture; *and meeting regularly and punctually.* In addition, you are responsible to track learner progress through regular assessments and submit monthly reports. *Please refer to Literacy Volunteer Handbook for additional guidance.*

#### **Tutor Mentor**

Improve communication between tutors, literacy contacts, and the literacy coordinator by supporting new tutors as they transition from training to actual tutoring. It may include telephone support; email support; and/or face to face meetings to provide information about the program, materials, resources, library 'rules' and processes. *Please refer to Literacy Volunteer Handbook for additional guidance.*

#### **Learner Orientation**

To more effectively engage new learners you will meet with the learner to complete or review the learner information form; review the learner agreement; conduct an assessment appropriate for their goals/needs (basic, ELL, Pre-GED, or other); provide them with an orientation to the program; and disseminate

information regarding the Adult New Reader (ANR) collection, web-based learning opportunities, self-study options, mini-courses and conversation groups. You will be responsible for contacting the learner to schedule the orientation appointment and complete and submit an orientation summary packet. *Please refer to Literacy Volunteer Handbook for additional guidance.*

**Computer and Learning Lab Assistant**

Support learners as they navigate the internet and use learning materials by helping them develop confidence and a positive attitude about learning; respecting them and involving them in decisions about the learning process; and by being well prepared and knowledgeable of resources that meet the needs and interests of the learners. You will be responsible for submitting a monthly attendance sheet. *Please refer to Literacy Volunteer Handbook for additional guidance.*

**Program Assistant**

You will support the literacy coordinator or literacy contact by managing data entry; completing office duties as requested to include, for example, copying and labeling; contacting volunteer tutors, adult learners, and/or literacy staff; managing room reservations; and other administrative duties. *Please refer to Literacy Volunteer Handbook for additional guidance.*

I agree to abide by the policies of Lake County Library System Adult Literacy Program and Volunteer Services, and will fulfill my volunteer tutor responsibilities to the best of my ability. I understand that I am becoming part of a team that will support me, answer my questions, and provide assistance with my tutoring experience. I also understand that my responsibility to the team is to ask questions and maintain open communication. If for any reason I find I am unable to maintain my responsibilities, I will notify the literacy coordinator of Lake County Library System Adult Literacy Program.

**APPROVAL SECTION**

Volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Services Specialist, Volunteer Services: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Adult Literacy Role-policy**

- Maintain confidentiality. Any discussion pertaining to a learner should be held in private and only with the Literacy staff.
- Home tutoring is **NOT** permitted under any circumstances.
- All adult literacy volunteers must have a Lake County Library System library card. Most of the supportive resources and materials are located in the Adult New Reader collection and you will not have access to them if you do not have a library card. All collection materials must be checked out if you want to take them off site. Literacy Staff can override the 'reference' code on these items for adult literacy volunteers only.
- Adult literacy volunteers will be provided with an identification badge. This badge **must** be worn while you are tutoring.
- Monthly reports are due no later than the **10th of each month** for the previous month. Submission of reports is required for all tutor-learner pairings and includes a monthly report form, attendance sheet (for classes or groups), and learner information forms (for new learners not already enrolled in the program). The process may be completed through the online management system.
- Participation in at least two (2) professional development opportunities per year is required. They can be in the form of training workshops; roundtable meetings; tutor mentor meetings; support meetings; online learning communities; conferences; and/or telephone support.
- For the success of the program open communication is mandatory. It is essential that you notify Literacy Staff (*Literacy Coordinator and Literacy Contacts*) of late arrivals; breaks from tutoring; relocation of meeting space, day and/or time; as well as sharing concerns, needs, and program feedback. In addition, Literacy Staff will do all that is possible to follow-up with your questions and concerns but on the occasion that they do not get back to you, please contact them again!
- Completion of ongoing assessments is required and should be shared with the learner and Literacy Staff on a regular basis. Learners should be engaged in the process and prepared to transition to new learning experiences if necessary and as appropriate. Transition options could include: another tutor specializing in targeted goal-related skills; special groups or classes—i.e. citizenship, conversation; GED preparation classes; community college; online learning; or self-paced learning opportunities.
- Tutoring is **FREE**. Tutors and volunteers should **NOT** accept any gifts from the adult learners. If a situation arises where you do not feel comfortable, immediately contact the Literacy Contact or Literacy Coordinator.



**policy  
continued**

- If your learner has personal issues or needs a referral for other services, please work with the Literacy Staff to assist the learner. You are not responsible for issues other than English skills development.
- Visitors are **NOT** allowed to sit in or audit tutoring sessions. Do not bring children or other guests (unless otherwise agreed to by learner **AND** Literacy Staff) to tutoring sessions. Learners are also informed that tutoring is for adults only.
- LCLS Adult Literacy Program does not endorse any religion or political group. Therefore, proselytizing or endorsing a political candidate or issue is prohibited.

**Dismissal Policy**

Please refer to the Volunteer Services Volunteer Application, *specifically*:

“All of the services and assistance, which I may render, are strictly and entirely on a volunteer basis. I understand that I have the right to terminate my volunteer service at any time with or without cause, and that the County has the same right.”

## **Program Policy**

### **Calendar**

As the Adult Literacy Program provides tutoring in branch, member, and satellite locations, each location will have their own schedule for general operation, holiday, and other closures. Please connect with the literacy contact **at your location** for their calendar.

### **Non-Discrimination**

Lake County Library System Adult Literacy Program does not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, race, color, national origin, disability, age, political beliefs, marital or familial status. Individuals with disabilities will be accommodated to the fullest extent as outlined in the ADA guidelines.

Due to limitations of the volunteer-based program, Lake County Library System Adult Literacy Program may be unable to serve some individuals who are cognitively or developmentally disabled. Recognizing this policy, there may be individuals who, however willing, are not able to benefit from LCLS tutoring. If in the opinion of the tutor or Literacy Staff such a situation exists, the learner will be advised that tutoring or further tutoring is not recommended. If possible, the individual will be referred to another appropriate agency better able to meet his or her needs.

### **Photocopying**

Please remember that the materials used in the Adult Literacy Program are copyrighted and should not be photocopied except as noted:

- Permissible use according to Fair Use Guidelines includes photocopies of the following:
  1. One chapter of a book
  2. One article from a periodical or newspaper
  3. One short story, short essay, or short poem whether or not from a collective work
  4. One chart, graph, diagram, cartoon, or picture from a book, periodical, or newspaper
  5. Materials that Lake County Library System owns that includes a license or subscription with replication authorization (check with Literacy staff)
  
- Generally does NOT constitute Fair Use, i.e. Permission is needed:
  1. More than one chapter or article from a book or more than one selection from a collection of essays or poems
  2. "Consumable" works, such as standardized tests, exercises, or internet resources
  3. Anthologies created by photocopying copyrighted materials

# Procedures

## **Tutor-Learner Guidelines**

- After the successful completion of tutor training and background clearance, new tutors will be assigned to their location(s) of choice. The Literacy Contact at that location will schedule an orientation meeting that will include a tour of the facility– meeting space, location of the ANR collection & consumable materials, communication center, special areas that they will have access to (offices, copy machines, tutoring supplies), and expectations/procedures specific to that location. You will also have the opportunity to meet with a Tutor Mentor who can provide you with additional support as you transition to your new role as ‘volunteer tutor!’
- Literacy Staff, in collaboration with the tutor, will assign a learner or group of learners to the tutor and arrange the first meeting.
- All new learners must be enrolled in the program, using the Learner Information Form, before they can be paired with a tutor or class. The Adult Literacy Program is not a ‘walk-in’ program with the exception of conversation groups and some special classes.
- Where available, new learners will meet with a Learner Orientation team member for their initial assessment. This may not be available at all locations, therefore the tutor will be responsible for completing the learner orientation with their new learner(s).
- Assist adult learners obtain a library card.
- Encourage your learner to borrow ANR materials as well as participate in special groups, workshops, online learning, and other adult literacy programming.
- Conduct assessments no less than once every 2 months or 6 face-to-face meetings and develop lesson plans that reflect the learners short and long-term goals. Don't forget to revisit goals as they may have changed! And, make sure you share this information with both the learner and Literacy Staff. Learners want and need to see their progress. Need a certificate of completion? Ask the Literacy Staff.
- Share successes, challenges, struggles, conflicts, concerns, and program-related needs with the Literacy Staff. Materials, resources, support, information, and conflict resolution are always available!

## **Recognition (*budget permitting*)**

- On a bi-annual basis a countywide celebration will be held to recognize all literacy volunteers and learners enrolled in the Adult Literacy Program;
- Literacy volunteer hours are submitted to Volunteer Services by the Literacy Coordinator on a monthly basis. Volunteer Services hosts an annual recognition for all county volunteers

## Resources & Support

### Materials

Tutoring is free. Learners do not pay for the materials used to assist them with their literacy goals, unless the item is specifically targeted for their use only and then they may bring in their own books or other realia (*items or resources from their lives that relate to their goals*).

Tutors will be provided with teacher manuals for their student's core texts. Tutors are asked to return teacher manuals for series that they are no longer using.

Due to budget constraints the Adult Literacy Program may not be able to provide every learner with a personal copy of a workbook, student book, or supplemental resource. We ask that tutors be aware of their learner's goals, compliance with homework assignments, and personal desire to have their own book. Limited copies can be made for most materials and when this is not an option, whiteboards, chalkboards, and transparencies can be provided.

In our continued effort to provide the tutor teams with a variety of materials and resources, the Adult New Reader (ANR) collection has been created which offers circulating and reference items. The teacher guides, learner books, cd-roms, dvds, supplemental tools, and multi-media kits are located throughout the county. If you do not see a title at your location, connect with Literacy Staff and they can assist you in requesting what you need.

### Professional Development

We are pleased to offer an assortment of training options on a variety of topics:

- One-day In-Service meetings
- Tutor round table meetings
- Adult New Reader (ANR) collection containing training materials/resources/guides
- On-line training links (located in online management system)
- On-line Materials and Resources (located in online management system)
- On-line Chat Room (located in online management system)
- Webinars
- New tutor training – *sometimes it is good to refresh your skills!*

### **Miscellaneous Resources**

- Tutor Talk publication
  - Quarterly 'newsletter' sent to all active tutors containing general information, lesson planning ideas, professional development information, and more.
- "Did you know? Featured Materials and Trainings"
  - This is a bi-monthly email message highlighting ANR collection materials/resources/games/kits and training information.
- Online management system—materials & resources area and ALP webpages
  - Provides links to websites and downloadable forms. Topics include lesson planning; learning activities; online learning; vocabulary, spelling, grammar, pronunciation; and much more.
- Email messaging and mailings
  - Random information relating to special events, trainings, resources, and general points of interest.

### **Literacy Volunteer Support & Supervision**

- Literacy Staff
  - Literacy Coordinator
  - Literacy Contacts located at each library
- Special program components
  - Tutor Mentor program—see 'welcome' letter and procedures
  - Learner Mentor program
    - Designed to develop learner leadership skills and enhance our ability to more effectively communicate with our English Language Learners. The learner mentors will be available to answer questions, offer support, make changes, and anything else that will help the adult learners achieve their literacy goals.
  - Learner Orientation—see procedures
- Monthly reports—see job description and tutor policy
- Just-In-Time (JIT) Meeting
  - No longer than 4—6 weeks after pairing a new tutor with their first learner(s) Literacy Staff will schedule a meeting to review learner progress, materials, challenges, struggles, additional training needs, and other concerns.
  - Tutors may request JIT meetings at any time during their tutoring
  - Tutors may be asked to complete a self-assessment to assist in identifying strengths & weaknesses of the tutor, learner, and Adult Literacy Program
- Program surveys for both learners and tutors