

## Managing work

VT Public Library HR minute 26 MARCH 2020



Dear Library friends,

One new operational procedure that you've had to deal with during these exceptional times is *managing work* in telework or under a "this library is physically closed" capacity. Managing work to the best of your ability is especially important if you are a Director, supervisor, or Chair of the Trustees. I offer a few short thoughts and resources to consider.

- Make sure that you are confident that every payroll dollar is earned. Even though COVID19 chaos swirls around us, labor law is labor law, and **payroll has to be** compliant with regulation. It must be **accurate**. Every time you, your Chair, or treasurer sign off on payroll, you (they) are certifying that the hours worked are true.
- I would suggest that daily tasks be broadly codified – that is, **write down what you do**; ask your employees to do the same. This will keep you on track, provide a sense of accomplishment, and will serve as a record if you have to refer back about "how did we spend those hours?" in these exceptional times. It will also help keep you on the rails from a labor law perspective.
- Be mindful about **overtime requirements** for non-exempt (see VLCT link) employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act. For instance, employees cannot "volunteer" time for the library without pay! I would further recommend that **prior approval be given for any overtime**. These are times when you may need the time, but we also have a financial obligation to fulfill.
- On the other side of the coin, many of us are **facing loss of opportunity to fill hours** for some employees. A heart-breaking situation that many of our neighbors are facing in hospitality and other industries. Let this be a guide:

**FROM VLCT HR FAQs (see link, right)** "Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), employers do not have to pay covered (non-exempt) employees

when they perform no work. Exempt employees (i.e. those not covered by the FLSA), with a few exceptions, generally must be paid their full weekly salary if they perform at least some work during a work week. However, you should carefully review relevant personnel policies, collective bargaining agreements, and other contracts, and the financial, morale, and wellness effects on those employees who would lose pay if they don't work. Elected officials are not covered by the FLSA."

- Finally, **job descriptions** are to be used, not shelved. Although some responsibilities may have shifted during this time, a good job description will help you focus and guide work and monitor performance.

Law of Public Libraries – page 9 of 16, **Who's in charge?**

[https://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/PublIcLibraries/Trustees/law\\_of\\_public\\_libraries.pdf](https://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/PublIcLibraries/Trustees/law_of_public_libraries.pdf)

FROM VT League of Cities and Towns; **HR FAQs** with COVID19 – just updated, especially useful for municipal, libraries:

<https://www.vlct.org/resource/human-resources-and-covid-19-faqs>

- **And, as always, the source of updates and expert guidance; VT Department of Libraries:**

<https://libraries.vermont.gov/covid19/departmentsposts>

If you have any budget or general HR management questions, please feel free to contact me!

Best regards,  
Gary

Gary Deziel, MBA, SHRM-CP | Extension Assistant Professor

[University of Vermont Extension](https://www.uvm.edu/~gdeziel/) | 278 South Main Street, Suite 2 | Saint Albans, Vermont 05478-1866 | 802 524-6501 ext. 444 | [gdeziel@uvm.edu](mailto:gdeziel@uvm.edu)

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