

LIBRARY TRUSTEE'S CODE OF ETHICS

As elected or appointed public officials, trustees of New Hampshire public libraries have an obligation to meet the highest legal, moral, and ethical standards. Use this as a guide to your conduct and decisions.

As a member of this board, I will:

- Sustain the core freedoms of our democracy by providing a broad diversity of viewpoints, beliefs, information, and literature and equal access to everyone.
- Abide by all state and federal laws that apply to New Hampshire public libraries.
- Observe the provisions of the Right-to-Know Law (RSA 91-A) by ensuring: all meetings are open to the public except as provided within the law; records of all meetings (including discussion and support materials) are available for public review; the subject matter of e-mails and phone calls to a quorum of the board do not take the place of public meetings.
- Avoid real or perceived conflict of interest when making decisions for or about the library that may involve issues of personal gain for yourself, your family, or friends.
- Keep confidential information confidential.
- Remember that the Board acts as a whole and never assume sole authority for comment or actions unless you are delegated to do so by the Board.
- Remain objective in dealing with staff and patron concerns, and use proper Board-established communications channels to ensure consistent, rational resolution of library matters.
- Observe publicity and information policies of the Board and library; refer requests to the library director when appropriate.
- Adhere to all Board established library policies, rules, procedures, and bylaws.
- Act to create a positive atmosphere of service throughout the library.
- Respect the director as the professional administrator of day-to-day operations and procedures; do not undermine the authority of the director's supervision of staff; administer regular performance reviews of the director according to clear, consistent library personnel policies; include the director as a valued member of the Board team.
- Have the moral courage to protect the integrity and purpose of the library as a community institution; challenge proposals or actions that are illegal or contrary to the mission; challenge any Board member whose actions betray the public trust, violate the law, jeopardize the integrity of the institution, or cause dissension within the library.
- Study all laws pertaining to libraries; prepare for board and committee meetings; take available training in order to serve my library in the most effective manner possible.
- Attend meetings regularly or resign so that a more active member can be appointed.