



Trustee & Employee Ethics

Last modified **OCTOBER 18 2023**

The Rowan County Public Library (“the Library”) depends upon the trust of our community to successfully achieve its mission. Therefore, it is crucial that all members of the Library Board of Trustees and all Library employees conduct business on behalf of the Library with the highest level of integrity and avoid any appearance of impropriety.

This policy shall not be subservient to any ethics policy approved or exercised by Rowan County, in that it may be stronger or more stringent than a County policy, but may not be weaker.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Board members and staff shall uphold the integrity of the Library and shall perform their duties impartially and diligently, according to the following:

- Neither Board members nor employees shall engage in discrimination of any kind, including that based upon race, color, age, gender, religion, national origin, sexuality, disability, or any other similar protected class.
- Board members and staff shall protect and uphold library users’ right to privacy as regards their engagement with the Library’s resources.
- Board members shall immediately disclose to the Board any conflict of interest they may possess or perceive with regard to any official action and/or business before the Board, as described in the Library’s conflict of interest policy.
- Likewise, Board members shall abstain and/or recuse themselves from any involvement in or decision-making regarding any issue in which they possess such a conflict of interest.
- Again likewise, Board members shall abstain and/or recuse themselves from any official action in which their personal interest(s) could reasonably be perceived as compromising their ability to act in a fair, impartial, and objective manner.
- Board members and employees shall avoid situations in which there is a reasonable likelihood that their personal interests may appear to be in conflict with the best interests of the Library.



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- Neither Board members nor staff shall act in any way which may reasonably create an impression that they are engaged in conduct that violates their responsibilities as Board members or employees.
- Neither Board members nor staff shall use or attempt to use their position with the Library to obtain personal privileges and/or advantages for themselves, their friends, or their immediate families. Immediate family is defined as: Spouse, child, parent, spouse's parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or person residing within the household.
- Neither Board members nor employees shall be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure, or fear of criticism in the execution of their duties.
- Board members and staff shall strive to reinforce the positive public perception of the Library and shall be respectful to their fellow Board members and/or employees in public settings.

Therefore, to preserve and uphold the Library's reputation as an organization of unimpeachable integrity, each Board and staff member shall sign a statement acknowledging receipt and understanding of the Library's conflict of interest policy and of this policy at the commencement of their service and at the beginning of each calendar year during their tenure with the Library. Where appropriate, such statements will become a part of any associated personnel file(s).

COMPLIANCE

If any Board member or the Executive Director should be or appear to be in conflict with the principles outlined in this policy, they shall meet with the Board, as a whole, to discuss the conflict. The Board will make a recommendation to the Board member and/or Executive Director as to how they may rectify the conflict. Failure to rectify the conflict to the satisfaction of the Board and/or applicable law(s) may result in a Board recommendation for the removal of the offending Board member or termination of the Executive Director.

Library employees who are or appear to be in conflict with the principles outlined in this policy shall meet with the Executive Director, who will make a determination regarding any potential disciplinary action and/or termination based upon their findings.



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STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT REGARDING LIBRARY ETHICS

The following statement shall be completed and signed annually by each member of the Library Board of Trustees. This requirement does not absolve any Board member(s) of their independent obligation to disclose any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest as it arises, on an ongoing basis.

Completed forms shall be reviewed by the Library's attorney(s) and retained as a part of the Library's financial records.

I, _____, hereby acknowledge my review, receipt, and understanding of the Rowan County Public Library's ethics policy. As a part of my commitment to the transparent administration of the Library's business and finances, I affirm as follows:

- 1) That I have no affiliations to business, political, or other interests which might influence the decisions that I make regarding the Library's business and finance.
- 2) That I disclose the following affiliation(s) which might influence my decisions or that shall be a consideration when actions are taken by the Board:

Signature: _____

Date: _____