

LIBRARY TRUSTEE 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 in their conduct and decisions. The following principals are to be used as a guide to achieve this goal.

- Sustain the core freedoms of our democracy by providing equal access to a broad diversity of viewpoints, beliefs, information, and the various forms of media.
- 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 that 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 self, family, or friends.
- Keep confidential information confidential.
- Function as a whole unit; individual trustees cannot assume sole authority for comment or actions unless delegated to do so by the Board.
- Remain objective when dealing with staff or patrons and use Board established channels of communications to ensure consistent, rational resolution of library matters.
- Abide by Board established public information policies and refer requests to the library director when appropriate.
- Adhere to all Board established library policies, rules, and procedures.
- Promote a positive atmosphere of service and achievement 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 library personnel policies.
- 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 library or cause dissension within the library.
- Study all laws pertaining to libraries; prepare for board and committee meetings; take training to maintain current knowledge in order to effectively serve the library.
- Attend meetings regularly or resign so that a more active member can be appointed.