

05.00 Ethics Policy

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**05.01 Ethics**

The Galway Public Library is dependent on the trust of its community to successfully achieve its mission. Therefore, it is crucial that all Board members and employees conduct business on behalf of the Galway Public Library with the highest level of integrity avoiding any impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

**Guiding Principles:**

Board members and employees;

- I. Should uphold the integrity of the Galway Public Library and should perform their duties impartially and diligently.
- II. Should not engage in discrimination of any kind including that based on race, class, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or belief system.
- III. Should protect and uphold library patrons’ right to privacy in their use of the library’s resources.
- IV. Should avoid situations in which their personal interests, activities or financial affairs are, or are likely to be perceived as being in conflict with the best interests of the Galway Public Library.
- V. Should avoid having interests that may reasonably bring into question their ability to act in a fair, impartial and objective manner.
- VI. Should not knowingly act in any way that would reasonably be expected to create an impression among the public that they are engaged in conduct that violates their trust as Board members or employees.
- VII. Should not use or attempt to use their position with the Galway Public Library to obtain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others.

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- VIII. Should not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure, or fear of criticism.
- IX. Should not denigrate the organization or fellow Board members or employees or volunteers in any public arena.

**05.02 Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest is defined as an actual or perceived interest by a staff or Board member in an action that results in, or has the appearance of resulting in, personal, organizational, or professional gain. Staff are obligated to always act in the best interest of the organization. This obligation requires that any officer or member, in the performance of organization duties, seek only the furtherance of the library's mission. At all times, officers and board members are prohibited from using their job title or the organization's name or property, for private profit or benefit.

- A. The staff of the library should neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors/vendors. This is not intended to preclude library fund raising-activities.
- B. No officer or staff member of the library shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a purchase or contract with a vendor where, to his/her knowledge, any of the following has a financial interest in the purchase of contract:
  - 1. The officer or staff member;
  - 2. Any member of their immediate family;
  - 3. Their business partner;
  - 4. An organization in which any of the above is an officer, director or employee;
  - 5. A person or organization with whom any of the above individuals is negotiating or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment.
- C. Disclosure -- Any possible conflict of interest shall be disclosed by the person or persons concerned.
- D. Board Action -- When a conflict of interest is relevant to a matter requiring action by the Board, the interested person(s) shall call it to the attention of the Board and said person(s) shall not vote on the matter. In addition, the person(s) shall not participate in the final decision or related deliberation

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regarding the matter under consideration. When there is a doubt as to whether a conflict exists, the matter shall be resolved by vote of the Board, excluding the person(s) concerning whose situation the doubt has arisen.

- E. Record of Conflict -- The official minutes of the Board shall reflect that the conflict of interest was disclosed and the interested person(s) did not participate in the final discussion or vote and did not vote on the matter.

**Therefore:**

To preserve and uphold the Galway Public Library’s reputation as an organization of unimpeachable integrity, each Board member and employee will sign the “Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy” declaration at the beginning of each fiscal year (and at the commencement of his/her service) during their tenure with the Galway Public Library.

**Compliance:**

If any Board member, the Director, or employee appears to be in conflict with this section above, he or she will be asked to meet with the Board to discuss the issue and a determination as to discipline or termination based on his or her actions will be decided.

**05.03 Anti-Nepotism**

A. Purpose

1. The purpose of this policy is to address favoritism, bias, conflict of interest, and liability from harassment situations and inappropriate conduct caused by a family or close personal relationship between a Director or employees with oversight authority of a subordinate employee.
2. All employees have the right to expect fair and impartial treatment from a Director or employees with oversight authority. A familial, close personal, or financial relationship between a Director or oversight authority employee with an employee over whom they have direct influence exposes them to possible charges of conflict of interest, favoritism, bias, and inappropriate conduct that may adversely impact the performance of business functions or the working environment.
3. In the public sector, it is essential to avoid situations, which may lead to any favoritism, bias, conflict of interest or inappropriate conduct or the

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appearance thereof. Library employees have been entrusted with carrying out the public interest and performing their work in a manner consistent with the highest professional and ethical standards.

B. Definitions

For purposes of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

1. Nepotism – favoritism or bias shown by those acting in the capacity of a Director or by persons with oversight authority to family members or someone with whom they have a close personal or financial relationship.
2. Family member - wife, husband, domestic partner, son, daughter, mother, father, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, stepparent, or stepchild, grandparent, grandchild, including in loco parentis relationships.
3. In loco parentis - relationships that involve the day-to-day responsibilities to care for, house or provide financial support to a child. A biological or legal relationship is not necessary. The continuing relationship between the parties after the child reaches the age of majority constitutes an in loco parentis relationship.
4. Close Personal Relationship - relationships between persons who reside in the same household or have a romantic relationship or a relationship that has the effect of influencing judgment or employment actions of either party to the relationship.
5. Financial Relationship – any financial relationship that could influence preferential treatment in the work place.
6. Supervisory or oversight authority - when one employee has direct influence on decisions concerning selection and hiring, which includes making recommendations for hiring, assignment or review of work, disciplinary action, providing input on employee performance evaluations, transfer, promotion, or other terms and conditions of employment over another employee. This includes senior staff, directors and member of the Board of Trustees.

C. Policy

1. All employees shall avoid being in a position where they are subject to supervisory or oversight authority by a family member or a person with whom they have a close personal or financial relationship. Employees who become family members or establish a close personal or financial relationship with other employees may continue employment as long as the relationship does not result in potential nepotism due to supervisory or oversight authority between the two positions.

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2. Provided no potential nepotism exists, nothing in this policy is intended to prevent family members or individuals in close personal or financial relationships from being employed by Galway Public Library.
- D. Guidelines & Procedures
1. Whenever possible, nepotistic situations shall be prevented from occurring at the time of appointment, transfer, promotion, evaluation or grievance review.
  2. When potential nepotistic situations arise as a result of organizational restructure, marriage or development of a close personal or financial relationship, the employees involved have an obligation to immediately inform the Director.
  3. In a self-reported nepotistic situation, the employees and the Library will jointly make a good faith effort to find an alternative assignment for one of the two employees. Depending on business need, this may include, but is not limited to restructuring duties, assignment to another position, assignment to another shift, or change in supervision. Scheduling will defer to the senior employee.
  4. If no alternative assignment is available within 60 days, it will be necessary for one of the employees to resign. In the event that neither employee is willing to resign, the less senior employee will be subject to loss of hours. If an employee is impacted, in so far as they will see reduced hours, the less senior employee is expected to be scheduled the reduced hours. The senior employee will remain as regularly scheduled.
  5. Policy violations, including but not limited to failure to disclose potential nepotistic relationships, will be investigated by the Director or Personnel Committee in consultation with the Board. Policy violations may result in progressive discipline of employees up to and including termination of employment. Director and lead workers may be disciplined for taking employment actions based upon nepotistic relationships. An alternative assignment for one of the two employees may also be required.

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