

Conflict of Interest Policy



1. Conflict of interest policy

Fontana Regional Library trustees and staff are expected to conscientiously discharge their duties and to conduct themselves in a manner on and off the job that reflects favorably upon the library. Additionally:

- A. Trustees and staff shall refrain from any use of their position that is motivated by the desire for private gain for themselves or other persons. They must conduct themselves in such a manner to provide no suggestion of private advantage from their relationship with the library.
- B. Trustees and staff shall exercise discretion in their care of personal financial activities to avoid any legal liabilities that would reflect unfavorably upon the library.
- C. Trustees and staff shall not use their positions in any way to coerce, or give the appearance of coercing, another person to provide any financial benefit to themselves or to other persons.
- D. Trustees and staff shall avoid any action that might result in giving preferential treatment to any organization or person; losing their independence or impartiality of action; or affecting adversely the confidence of the public in the integrity of the library.
- E. Employees who witness another employee engaging in an unlawful act on the job shall report that employee to their supervisor.

2. Outside employment

The work of the library takes priority over other employment interests of staff. All outside employment must be reported to the employee's supervisor before such work is to begin and documentation placed in the employee's personnel file. The supervisor will determine whether the outside work would create a conflict of interest or otherwise be incompatible with the library service. The assumption of outside employment without prior approval by the supervisor may be deemed improper conduct, and may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

3. Gifts and favors

Trustees and staff shall not accept any gift or gratuity, whether in the form of service, loan, thing of value, or promise from any person, business concern, or organization that is directly or indirectly interested in business with the Fontana Regional Library. These limitations are not intended to prohibit the acceptance of articles of nominal value, which are distributed generally, or to prohibit trustees and staff from obtaining personal loans from regular lending institutions.

Trustees and staff shall not grant in the discharge of their official duties any improper favor, service, or thing of value.

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4. Selling and soliciting

Solicitation of funds by or of Fontana Regional Library employees on the job without the approval of the Library Manager or Regional Director is prohibited. Solicitation includes, but is not limited to charitable or personal profit activities such as selling products of any kind, raffle tickets, religious donations, admissions to events and donations to assist persons experiencing a personal crisis.

5. Political activity

- A. Any trustee or employee may join or affiliate with civic organizations of a partisan or political nature, may attend political meetings, and may advocate and support the principles or policies of civic or political organizations in accordance with the constitution and laws of the state of North Carolina and the constitution and laws of the United States of America. However, while on duty, no trustee or employee of Fontana Regional Library shall:
1. engage in any political or partisan activity;
 2. use official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office;
 3. be required as a duty of employment or as a condition of employment, promotion, or tenure of office to contribute funds for political or partisan purposes;
 4. coerce or compel contributions for political or partisan purposes by another trustee or employee of the Library or use funds, supplies, or equipment of the Library for political or partisan purposes.
- B. 1. Trustees and staff subject to the Federal Hatch Political Activities Act **may--**
- be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections; register and vote as they choose
 - express opinions about candidates and issues
 - contribute money to political organizations
 - attend political fundraising functions
 - attend and be active at political rallies and meetings
 - join and be an active member of a political party or club
 - sign nominating petitions
 - campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, municipal ordinances
 - campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections
 - make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections
 - distribute campaign literature in partisan elections.
2. Trustees and staff subject to the Federal Hatch Political Activities Act **may not—**

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- use official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the results of an election or nomination
 - solicit or discourage political activity of anyone with business before their agency
 - solicit or receive political contributions (may be done in certain limited situations by federal labor or other employee organizations)
 - be candidates for public office in partisan elections
 - engage in political activity while: on duty; in a government office; wearing an official uniform; using a government vehicle
 - wear partisan political buttons on duty
 - directly or indirectly coerce contributions from subordinates in support of a political party or candidate.
- C. Any violation of this section may subject the trustee or employee to dismissal or other disciplinary action.

6. Duty to disclose

In connection with any actual or possible conflicts of interest, trustees or employees must disclose the existence of their conflicts of interest and must be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Director or members of Board.

7. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

- A. If the Director or Board has reasonable cause to believe that a trustee or employee has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest they shall inform the trustee or employee of the basis for such belief and afford them an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- B. If, after hearing the response and making such further investigation as may be warranted in the circumstances, the Board or Director determines that the trustee or employee has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, they shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.
- C. Sanctions for violation of this policy may range from reprimands to dismissal.