

GOV-5: Trustee Conduct Policy

Adopted: 5/15/2014; Last Revised: 9/19/2024

Policy Statement

To protect public trust, the library discourages trustees from engaging in any activity, practice, or conduct which conflicts with, or appears to conflict with, the interests of the library.

Regulations

1. The function of the Library Board of Trustees is to set broad policy direction, monitor adherence to policy, and not to interfere with the day to day operations of the library. Trustees will sign a *Commitment* form annually at the November board meeting.
2. Trustees are charged to advocate the position of the library, the Michigan Library Association, and the American Library Association to the public and to government agencies.
3. Trustees must distinguish clearly between their personal attitudes and philosophies and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally disagree. After a policy or rule is adopted by a majority of the library board, individual trustees should publicly support those decisions. As individuals, board members have no authority to speak on behalf of the board, except for that specifically delegated by the board. Nothing in this policy prevents library board members from speaking in public as individual citizens, as is their right, so long as they do not state that they are speaking on behalf of the board.
4. The board should conduct its business in such a way as to minimize risks of liability and call upon the advice of professionals (legal, financial, architectural, or insurance, etc.) as appropriate.
5. Trustees are obligated to be prepared for library business by reading and/or researching materials as appropriate.
6. The library may cover expenses for library board trustees to attend events and library related conferences subject to approval by the library board. Rotation of opportunity among library board trustees will be determined by the library board.
7. Neither members of the Library Board of Trustees nor their family members are eligible for consideration as a prospective employee during the term of office as a member of the Board of Trustees.
8. Trustees should not engage in a business transaction in which they or a family member would profit or benefit financially because of confidential information obtained by reason of library position or authority.
9. Trustees shall disclose any material interest they or their immediate family have in any firm that does business with the library or that might affect his/her judgment in carrying out library business. Trustees should abstain from any vote on matters which involve a conflict. Trustees shall submit or revise a *Conflict of Interest Disclosure* statement annually at the November board meeting.
10. Trustees should complete the "Trustee Commitment" form on an annual basis which is a reminder of their duties and commitment to the library as a Trustee.
11. A patron may contest a library policy or any portion of a library policy by following the procedures as outlined in MGT-15: Appeals Process Policy.