



Conflict of Interest Policy
Mendon Public Library Board of Trustees

Purpose:

The Board of Trustees of the Mendon Public Library recognizes that there are rules of ethical conduct for officers and employees which must be observed if a high degree of moral conduct is to be obtained and if public confidence is to be maintained with our organization. This policy shall serve as a guide for official conduct to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and board members. The standard of behavior of the Board of Trustees of the Mendon Public Library is that all staff, volunteers, and board members scrupulously avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the Mendon Public Library on one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as perceptions of conflicts of interest. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Definitions:

1. Interested Person

1. Any staff, volunteer or Board Member, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest.

2. Financial Interest

1. A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through family, business or professional associates:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity which the Mendon Public Library has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with the Mendon Public Library or with any entity or individual with which the Mendon Public Library has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Mendon Public Library is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Mendon Public Library governing board decide that a conflict of interest exists.

Standards of Conduct:

Every staff, volunteer and Board member of the Mendon Public Library shall be subject to and abide by the following standards of conduct: (a) Gifts. No staff, volunteer or Board member shall directly or indirectly solicit or receive any money, whether in the form of cash, check, loan, credit, or any other form in any amount, or solicit any gifts, or accept or receive any individual annual gift, having a value of one hundred dollars or more, whether in the form of services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form, under circumstances in which it could be reasonably inferred that the money or gift was intended to influence or could be reasonably expected to influence, him or her in the performance of official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action.

(b) Confidential Information. No staff, volunteer or Board Member shall disclose confidential information acquired in the course of official duties or use such information to further a personal interest, except when required by law.

(c) Disclosure of Interest in Legislation. To the extent known, any staff, volunteer or Board Member of the Mendon Public Library who participates in the discussion or gives an official opinion to the Mendon Public Library on any legislation before it shall publicly disclose on the official record the nature and extent of any direct or indirect financial or other private interest he or she may have in such legislation.

(d) Disclosure of Interests in Contracts. To the extent known, any staff, volunteer or Board Member of the Mendon Public Library shall not knowingly receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the Mendon Public Library. He/she shall publicly disclose the nature and extent of such interest in writing to the Governing Board of the Mendon Public Library as soon as he or she has knowledge of such actual activity or prospective interest.

(e) Investments in Conflict with Official Duties. He/she shall not invest or hold any investment, directly or indirectly, in any financial, business, commercial or other private transaction which creates a conflict with his/her duties concerning the Mendon Public Library.

(f) Private Employment. No staff, volunteer or Board Member shall engage in, solicit, negotiate for or promise to accept private employment or render services for private interests when such employment or service creates a conflict with or impairs the proper discharge of his or her duties.

(g) Obligation to citizens. No staff, volunteer or Board member of the Mendon Public Library shall use or attempt to use his/her official position to secure unwarranted privileges or exemptions for himself/herself or others or grant any special consideration; treatment or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.

Procedures: In the course of meetings or activities, all staff, volunteers and Board members will be expected to disclose to the best of their knowledge, any interests in a transaction or decision where personal, professional or business associates could receive a benefit or gain. This may be done in writing or verbally. After disclosure, the disclosing member may be asked to leave the room for the discussion and will not be permitted to vote on the question. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

The staff, volunteer or Board member may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she may be asked leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

The chairperson or the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Mendon Public Library can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Mendon Public Library best interest and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

If any person knowingly and intentionally violates any of the provisions of this policy, he/she may be removed from office or membership. This conflict of interest policy may be amended from time to time by a majority vote in the Mendon Public Library.