

Henderson Memorial Public Library Board – Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity, transparency, and public trust of the Library Board by ensuring that decisions are made in the best interest of the library and the community it serves, free from improper influence or personal gain.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Library Board (“Board Members”), including officers, committee members, and any individuals acting on behalf of the Board.

3. Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when a Board Member’s personal, professional, financial, or family interests could reasonably be seen as interfering with their duty to act solely in the library’s best interest.

Conflicts may be:

- Actual – a real and present conflict.
- Potential – a situation that could develop into a conflict in the future.
- Perceived – a situation that may appear to the public as a conflict, even if no improper action occurs.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Financial interest in a business or vendor seeking to do business with the library.
- Employment or consultancy with a competing or related organization.
- Family member employed by or applying for a position with the library.
- Using confidential information for personal gain.
- Participating in decisions where there is a close personal relationship with the person affected.

4. Duty to Disclose

Board Members must:

- Promptly disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest to the Board Chair (or Vice Chair if the Chair is involved).
- Provide sufficient detail to allow the Board to determine how to proceed.
- Update the disclosure if circumstances change.

5. Procedures for Handling Conflicts -

When a conflict is disclosed:

- The Board will review the nature of the conflict and permit the member in question to explain the circumstances in question to the full Board
- The Board will decide by majority vote (excluding the interested member) whether a conflict exists.

If a conflict exists, the Board Member must:

- Recuse themselves from any discussion, deliberation, or vote related to the matter.
- Leave the meeting room during the discussion and vote, unless invited for clarification.
- The decision and any recusals must be recorded in the official meeting minutes.

6. Gifts and Benefits

Board Members may not solicit or accept gifts, favors, services, or other benefits from individuals or organizations that could be perceived as influencing their decisions, except for items of nominal value (e.g., promotional items under \$25).

7. Confidentiality

Board Members must not disclose or use confidential library information for personal or third-party benefit.

8. Annual Disclosure

All Board Members must complete and sign a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form annually, affirming that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by this policy.

9. Violations

Failure to disclose a conflict or follow this policy may result in:

- Censure by the Board;
- Removal from committee assignments; or
- Recommendation for removal from the Board, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

10. Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed at least every three years and updated as necessary.

Adopted by the Henderson Memorial Library Board of Trustees on: 08/12/2025

Board Chair Signature: _____

Board Secretary Signature: _____