

CODE OF ETHICS

Statement of Commitment

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees of the Cattaraugus Free Library and the individual trustees and employees to ensure that the Cattaraugus Free Library provides quality library service to the residents of the community we serve. The Code of Ethics, which follows, represents our commitment to the ethical standards for our library which are designed to ensure that quality service.

Ethical Guidelines

- Trustees must distinguish clearly between their personal attitudes and philosophies and those of the institution. After a policy or rule is adopted by a majority of the library board, individual trustees should not criticize or disagree with those decisions publicly.
- Trustees and employees must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information. Trustees must not divulge information learned during executive sessions of the board, or any information regarding future board plans or actions until such action is officially taken.
- Trustees and employees shall protect and uphold library patrons' right to privacy in their use of the library's resources.
- Trustees and employees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues or the situation.
- Trustees and employees should not engage in discrimination of any kind.
- Trustees and employees shall strive to uphold the integrity of the Library and be respectful to their fellow board members and library employees in public settings.
- Trustees and employees should not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure, or fear of criticism when carrying out their official duties.
- It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself or herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interests exists.
- The management of the library is the responsibility of the library director. It is the director's job to select books and other library materials, employ the staff and supervise day-to-day operations. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to set policies for library operations while keeping in mind its fiscal responsibilities to the taxpayers of the library district.
- All rules and policies directed to the library director must be approved by a quorum of the board at a regular meeting. Then it is up to the director to see that all staff adhere to the rules and policies.

- The Board of Trustees must notify the library director in a timely fashion of all board meetings. The director is expected to attend board meetings.
- Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.
- Trustees who accept library board membership are expected to perform all the functions of library trustees. If a trustee is unable to attend meetings regularly and complete work delegated to him or her, the trustee should resign so that an active member can be appointed.

Compliance:

If any Board member or employee appears to be in conflict of the “Ethical Guidelines” above, he or she will be asked to meet with the Board as a whole to discuss the issue. The Board will make a recommendation to the Board member or employee as to how he or she may rectify the conflict. Failure to rectify the conflict to the satisfaction of the Board or law may result in a Board recommendation for the removal of the offending Board member or termination of the employee.

Acknowledgment:

The following statement will be completed and signed annually by each Board member and Director. This requirement does not absolve any Board members of their independent obligation to disclose any conflict of interest as it arises on an ongoing basis. Completed forms shall be reviewed by the Library’s attorney and retained as a part of the Library’s financial records:

I, _____, acknowledge may review of the Library’s Ethics Policy. As a part of my commitment to the transparent administration of the Library’s business and finances, I affirm as follows:

I have no affiliations to business, political, or other interests which would influence the decisions that I make in regards to the Library’s business and finance.

I disclose the following affiliation that may influence my decisions or that shall be a consideration when actions are made by the Board: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Adopted by the Cattaraugus Free Library Board of Trustees this 27 day of May, 2026