

Whistle Blower Policy

Cattaraugus Free Library is committed to operating in furtherance of its tax-exempt purposes and in compliance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, including those concerning accounting and auditing, and prohibits fraudulent practices by any of its board members, officers, employees, or volunteers. This policy outlines a procedure for employees to report actions that an employee reasonably believes violates a law, or regulation or that constitutes fraudulent accounting or other practices. This policy applies to any matter which is related to Cattaraugus Free Library's business and does not relate to private acts of an individual not connected to the business of Cattaraugus Free Library.

The library requires trustees, employees and volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. Employees and representatives of the library must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Now is the time for all good

Reporting Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all trustees, employees, and volunteers to report ethics violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistle-blower Policy.

Appropriate subjects to raise under this policy include financial improprieties, accounting or audit matters, ethical violations, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies.

Reporting Procedures and Corrective Action for Employees

If an employee has a reasonable belief that an employee of Cattaraugus Free Library has engaged in any action that violates any applicable law, or regulation, including those concerning accounting and auditing, or constitutes a fraudulent practice. The employee should first discuss their concern, in confidence, with their director. If after speaking with his or her director, the employee is convinced that his or her concern is unwarranted or that, in the opinion of the employee, the director will take appropriate steps to resolve the employee's concern, no further action is required by the employee.

However, further action is required if the employee (a) continues to have reasonable grounds to believe the concern is valid and that the response of his or her director is not adequate or (b) the Director recommends that the issue should be referred to a higher level in the organization or (c) The Director is the subject of the employee's concern. In this situation, the employee should write a formal complaint to the President of the Board who will investigate the matter promptly.

All reports will be followed up promptly, and an investigation conducted. In conducting its investigations, Cattaraugus Free Library will strive to keep the identity of the complaining individual as confidential as possible, while conducting an adequate review and investigation.

Reporting Procedures and Corrective Action for Individuals Not Employed By The Library

Individuals who are not employees of the library should submit their concerns in writing directly to the President of the Board of Trustees. If the President of the Board is not available or is the subject of the concern, the complaint should be directed to the Vice President of the Board.

The President or Vice President shall be responsible for designating an appropriate committee as circumstances dictate, to investigate and make appropriate recommendations to the Board with respect to all concerns received in writing. The designated committee has the authority to retain outside legal counsel, accountants, private investigators, or any other resource deemed necessary to conduct a full and complete investigation of the allegations. The President or Vice President Shall inform the originator of the receipt of the written complaint. All Trustees of the Library shall be informed of the nature of the complaint with emphasis on maintaining the confidentiality appropriate for personnel issues.

The Board of Trustees and its designated committee shall resolve all complaints in a timely fashion and inform the individual submitting the complaint of the Board's final action.

No Retaliation

No trustee, employee or volunteer who in good faith reports an ethics violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment consequences. Cattaraugus Free Library will not retaliate against an employee in the terms and conditions of employment because that employee: (a) reports to a supervisor, to the executive director, the Board of Directors or to a federal, state or local agency what the employee believes in good faith to be a violation of the law; or (b) participates in good faith in any resulting investigation or proceeding, or (c) exercises his or her rights under any state or federal law(s) or regulation(s) to pursue a claim or take legal action to protect the employee's rights.'s

An employee who retaliated against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. The Whistle-blower policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns, in good faith, within the library prior to seeking resolution outside the Library.

[In addition, Cattaraugus Free Library will not, with the intent to retaliate, take any action harmful to any employee who has provided to law enforcement personnel or a court truthful information relating to the commission or possible commission by Cattaraugus Free Library or any of its employees of a violation of any applicable law or regulation.]

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone reporting a concern must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing information disclosed indicates financial improprieties, accounting or audit matters, ethical violations, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies.

The act of making allegations which prove to be unsubstantiated and to have been made maliciously, recklessly, or with the foreknowledge that the allegations are false, will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the trustee or volunteer position. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

Confidentiality

Reports of concerns and their investigations shall be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. Disclosure of reports of concerns to individuals not involved in the investigation will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment or removal from the Board of Trustees. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

Adopted September 25, 2024