

## CODE OF ETHICS

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The Cuyahoga Falls Library recognizes the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees, and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

1. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
2. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
3. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
4. We recognize and respect intellectual property rights.
5. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of the Library.
6. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the Cuyahoga Falls Library.
7. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of the Cuyahoga Falls Library or the provision of access to its information resources.
8. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

9. We affirm the inherent dignity and rights of every person. We work to recognize and dismantle systemic and individual biases; to confront inequity and oppression; to enhance diversity and inclusion; and to advance racial and social justice in our libraries, communities, profession, and associations through awareness, advocacy, education, collaboration, services, and allocation of resources and spaces.

In conjunction with the above, the Cuyahoga Falls Library also adopts the following as its Code of Ethics.

## **Policy Statement**

It is policy of the Cuyahoga Falls Library to carry out its mission in accordance with the strictest ethics and to ensure that the Library's employees conduct themselves in a manner that fosters public confidence in the integrity of the Cuyahoga Falls Library, its processes, and its services.

## **General Standards of Ethical Conduct**

Cuyahoga Falls Library officials and employees must, at all times, abide by protections to the public embodied in Ohio's ethics laws, as found in R.C. 102 and R.C. 2921, and as interpreted by the Ohio Ethics Commission and Ohio courts. Officials and employees must conduct themselves, at all times, in a manner that avoids favoritism, bias, and the appearance of impropriety.

A general summary of the restraints upon the conduct of all officials and employees includes, but is not limited to, those listed below. No official or employee shall:

1. Solicit or accept anything of value from anyone doing business with the Library;
2. Solicit or accept employment from anyone doing business with the Library, unless the official or employee completely withdraws from Library activity regarding the party offering employment, and the Library approves the withdrawal;
3. Use his or her public position to obtain benefits for the official or employee, a family member, or anyone with whom the official or employee has a business or employment relationship;
4. Be paid or accept any form of compensation for personal services rendered on a matter before the Library, unless the official or employee qualifies for the exception, and files the statement, described in R.C. 102.04(D);
5. Hold or benefit from a contract with, authorized by, or approved by, the Library, (the Ethics Law does except some limited stockholdings, and some contracts objectively shown as the lowest cost services, where *all* criteria under R.C. 2921.42 are met);
6. Vote, authorized, recommend, or in any other way use his or her position to secure approval of a Library contract (including employment or personal services) in which the official or employee, a family member, or anyone with whom the official or employee has a business or employment relationship, has an interest;

7. Solicit or accept honoraria [see R.C. 102.01(H) and 102.03(H)];
8. During public service, and for one year after leaving public service, represent any person, in any fashion, before *any* public agency, with respect to a matter in which the official or employee personally participated while serving with the Library;
9. Use or disclose confidential information protected by law, unless appropriately authorized; or
10. Use, or authorize the use of, his or her title, the name “Cuyahoga Falls Library,” or “CFL,” or the Library’s logo in a manner that suggests impropriety, favoritism, or bias by the Library or the official or employee.

For purposes of this policy:

- “Anything of value” includes anything of monetary value, including, but not limited to, money, gifts, food or beverages, social event tickets and expenses, travel expenses, golf outings, consulting fees, compensation, or employment. “Value” means worth greater than \$25.00.
- “Anyone doing business with the Library” includes, but is not limited to, any person, business entity, or other party that is doing or seeking to do business with, regulated by, or has interests before the Cuyahoga Falls Library.

*Approved by the Cuyahoga Falls Library Board of Trustees, October 19, 2004; Revised March 21, 2023*