



SECTION 1: PURPOSE, ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

POLICY 1.3: CODE OF ETHICS

Passed:

Amended: 1.3.2 - February 24, 2016

As a part of its commitment to the public welfare of the Prince George Public Library, the Board of Trustees wishes to define a Code of Ethics for itself and its staff. This code is intended to provide guidance and support for staff in its daily operations, and to define ethical conduct for the Board and its operating officers.

The word “employee” is applicable to anyone including volunteer members such as the Board when operating in the name of the Prince George Public Library.

1.3.1 Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when an employee's personal interests conflict with his or her duties and responsibilities as an employee of the Prince George Public Library.

A conflict of interest can exist whether or not a pecuniary advantage has been or may have been conferred on an employee. When in doubt, it is the duty of an employee to consult with their colleagues, managers, or Trustees on whether a conflict exists. Until that time, the assumption is that a conflict exists.

1.3.1.1 Employees shall NOT:

- Engage in any business transactions or have financial or other personal interests which are inconsistent with the impartial discharge of their duties.
- Place themselves in a position where they are under any obligation to any person who might benefit from special consideration or favour on their part.
- Deal with an application to the Prince George Public Library for a loan, grant, award or other benefit involving relatives.
- Extend any preferential treatment to relatives, friends, organizations or groups in which they (or their relatives or friends) have a pecuniary interest in the discharge of their official duties.
- Gain personal benefit, directly or indirectly, from any agreement or contract with the Prince George Public Library about which they can influence decisions or affect the outcome.

1.3.1.2 Employees shall to inform their supervisors of any business interests of a commercial or financial nature where such interests might be construed to provide an advantage or to be in conflict with their Library duties. Trustees shall be bound to inform the Board Chair or members of the full Board of the same.



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- 1.3.1.3 Employees shall not solicit, accept or condone the solicitation or acceptance of any gift, favour or form of entertainment and/or hospitality from any person or corporation having dealings with the Prince George Public Library whereby the acceptance of such could reasonably be construed as being given in anticipation or recognition of special consideration by the Board.

1.3.2 Public Relations

- 1.3.2.1 Employees shall treat each contact with the public with diplomacy, tact and objectivity, and shall recognize that such contacts affect the Prince George Public Library's public image.
- 1.3.2.2 Employees shall refer to the Chief Librarian or the Board Chair (or designated spokesperson) any contacts from the media, which include information in the public domain, as well as which request opinions or comments on policy, procedures or other matters. Policy queries should be directed to the Board Chair (or designated spokesperson), while procedures and other operating queries should be directed to the Chief Librarian (or designated spokesperson).
- 1.3.2.3 Press releases shall be approved by the Chief Librarian or designate prior to issue.
- 1.3.2.4 Social media activity on behalf of the Prince George Public Library shall be approved by the Chief Librarian or designate. Social media includes online networks such as but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, blogs and wikis.
- 1.3.2.5 Employees shall be mindful of their professional association with the Prince George Public Library in their personal social media activity. Employees shall not engage in social media activity that brings the Prince George Public Library into disrepute, including but not limited to:
- Engaging in discriminatory behaviour, bullying or harassment towards any person
 - Breaching copyright in their personal social media activity
 - Expressing personal views that bring the Library into disrepute



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1.3.2.6. Employees shall not imply Prince George Public Library endorsement of any personal views.

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1.3.3 Confidentiality of Information

- 1.3.3.1 Employees must be respectful and protective of confidential information held in their departments which must not be divulged.
- 1.3.3.2 Employees are prohibited from releasing confidential information or material held or possessed by the Library.
- 1.3.3.3 Employees shall not permit any person, other than those who are appropriately entitled thereto, to inspect or have access to information, papers or documents which are confidential.
- 1.3.3.4 Adherence to informal, assumed, or unwritten policies is not an acceptable justification for violation of the policies set out in this policy manual.
- 1.3.3.5 All personnel matters and files of any employee of the Prince George Public Library shall be kept in strictest confidence with the Chief Librarian and Administration, and knowledge of their contents shall be available only to those who are appropriately entitled thereto.
- 1.3.3.6 Where an employee is unsure of the status of information, he or she shall confer with the Chief Librarian or designated officer for a decision.
- 1.3.3.7 All employees are urged to review Privacy Guidelines for British Columbia Public Libraries which can be obtained from the Chief Librarian or found at <http://www.bclibrary.ca/privacy>. The Chief Librarian is the FOIPPA (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) officer at the Prince George Public Library. Formal procedures are in place, in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, which govern situations where a member of the public requests access to information that is regarded as confidential by the Prince George Public Library.



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1.3.4 Political Activity

- 1.3.4.1 An employee of the Library who intends to be a candidate in an election should consult the Chief Librarian or Board Chair.
- 1.3.4.2 During Municipal, Provincial or Federal elections, employees shall ensure that any involvement in campaigns shall not adversely affect their duties as employees with the Prince George Public Library.
- 1.3.4.3 Library employees should not use Library resources on any election campaign on Library time. No campaign related activities or speeches shall take place on Library property or Library time.
- 1.3.4.4 During election years, the Prince George Public Library displays materials regarding civic duties and citizen participation in the interests of public information, and may display candidate materials, giving equal representation to each and every participating candidate.

1.3.5 Compliance

The Chief Librarian and Management will ensure to the best of their ability that the Code of Ethics is followed by all staff. Where it is determined that an employee is in contravention of any one of the foregoing, disciplinary action shall be taken which may include simple correction, reprimand, suspension or in the case of egregious conduct, immediate dismissal.

1.3.6 Unwritten Policies

There are no unwritten policies at the Prince George Public Library as publicly declared on August 23, 2007 at the morning staff meeting and recorded in the minutes. Any outstanding procedure, practice, or belief to the contrary should be brought to the attention of the Chief Librarian for decision in accordance with the Code of Ethics.