

Code	GOV-002
Policy Title	Code of Ethics Policy
Category	Governance & Board Policies (GOV)
Cross-Reference	--
Appendix	Trustee Code of Ethics Agreement
Date Adopted	November 2025
Date Reviewed	--

Policy Statement

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to establish standards of ethical conduct for members of the Robert R. Jones Public Library District Board of Trustees. As stewards of a public institution, trustees are entrusted with ensuring that library resources are used responsibly and that decisions are made in the best interests of the community. This policy affirms the Board’s commitment to integrity, transparency, and accountability in all aspects of library governance.

PROCEDURE

Ethical Principles

1. **Service to the Public**
Trustees shall uphold the mission of the Robert R. Jones Public Library to connect people with information, ideas, and experiences. Trustees will make decisions that support equitable access to library resources and services for all members of the community, without discrimination or bias.
2. **Public Trust and Accountability**
Trustees shall regard the library as a public trust and shall act in the best interests of the residents of the Robert R. Jones Public Library District. All decisions and actions shall be made with openness, honesty, and integrity, ensuring responsible stewardship of public funds and resources.
3. **Confidentiality**
Trustees shall protect the confidentiality of library users and their records in accordance with the Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act (75 ILCS 70/1). Information discussed in closed session or regarding personnel, legal, or financial matters shall also remain strictly confidential.

4. **Conflict of Interest**

Trustees shall avoid situations in which personal interests conflict or appear to conflict with the interests of the library. No trustee shall use their position for personal gain or for the benefit of family, friends, or associates. Trustees shall disclose any potential conflicts of interest in accordance with the Public Officer Prohibited Activities Act (50 ILCS 105).

5. **Respectful Conduct**

Trustees shall conduct themselves with decorum, fairness, and respect during all board meetings, library events, and interactions with staff, patrons, and community members. Trustees will model civil discourse and support a positive, collaborative environment.

6. **Compliance with Law and Policy**

Trustees shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, including the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120), Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140), and the Library District Act of 1991 (75 ILCS 16). Trustees shall also adhere to the library's bylaws and all policies adopted by the Board.

7. **Board Authority**

Trustees recognize that authority rests with the Board as a whole and not with individual members. Trustees shall refrain from making public statements, promises, or commitments on behalf of the library unless authorized by the Board President or by board action.

8. **Support for the Director and Staff**

Trustees shall respect the professional expertise of the Library Director and staff and shall refrain from interference in day-to-day operations. All concerns, directives, or requests for information shall be made through the Library Director or through board-approved channels.

9. **Continuous Learning**

Trustees shall engage in ongoing education about library service, governance, and trends in the field. Trustees are encouraged to participate in training opportunities offered by the Illinois State Library, Illinois Library Association, and other professional organizations.

Acknowledgment

Each trustee shall sign an acknowledgment form affirming that they have received, read, and agreed to abide by the Code of Ethics Policy upon appointment to the Board and whenever the policy is revised.

Appendix: Trustee Code of Ethics Agreement

As a member of the Board of Trustees of the Robert R. Jones Public Library District, I recognize the important responsibility I hold in serving the public interest. I understand that the residents of the Robert R. Jones Public Library District have placed their trust in this Board to guide the library with integrity, transparency, and accountability.

I affirm my commitment to uphold the principles outlined in the **Robert R. Jones Public Library District Code of Ethics Policy** and agree to the following:

1. I will carry out my duties in accordance with the mission of the Robert R. Jones Public Library and act in the best interests of the community as a whole.
2. I will comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws governing public libraries and public officials, including but not limited to the Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act, Public Officer Prohibited Activities Act, Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act, and Library District Act of 1991.
3. I will respect the confidentiality of library user records, personnel matters, and information discussed in closed session.
4. I will avoid conflicts of interest, both real and perceived, and will disclose any potential conflicts in accordance with law and policy.
5. I will conduct myself with civility, professionalism, and respect in all interactions with fellow trustees, library staff, and members of the public.
6. I will support the Library Director's role as the library's chief administrator and will refrain from interfering in daily operations or personnel matters.
7. I will recognize that authority rests with the Board as a collective body, and I will not speak or act on behalf of the Board unless authorized to do so.
8. I will continue to learn about library governance and best practices to better fulfill my responsibilities as a trustee.
9. I will uphold the public's trust by using library resources and information responsibly and ethically.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the **Robert R. Jones Public Library District Code of Ethics Policy** and agree to adhere to it throughout my term of service.

Trustee Printed Name

Signature

Date

Board President or Library Director (Witness)

Date