

Ethics - Employee Policy

Purpose

To set forth ethical parameters for employees to follow in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

Scope

This policy applies to the employees of Timberland Regional Library (TRL).

Policy

To engender public trust and confidence in the operational and fiscal management of TRL, no actual or perceived conflict between public trust and private interest can exist.

Additional Compensation for Official Duties

Employees may not ask for or receive any additional compensation over and above their salary and benefits for performing their official duties for TRL compensation for work outside TRL.

- Employees may receive honoraria or compensation for performing work that may be related to their profession, but is outside their official duties, if they are not on TRL time, and not using TRL resources such as vehicles, or receiving reimbursement from TRL for registration fees, hotel, or travel, etc.
- Influence: Employees may not use their position with TRL in a manner intended to induce or coerce, or that has the effect of inducing or coercing, any person to provide any compensation, gift, or other thing of value for personal gain.

Example: An employee's brother applies for a position with a firm that has a contract with TRL. If the employee encourages the firm to hire their brother, the employee violates this policy.

Personal Benefit from Confidential Knowledge

Employees may not have any financial interest in any service or property when the interest was acquired because of the employee's knowledge of TRL's confidential plans.

Example: Prior to any public announcement, an employee learns TRL is planning to support library services in a new area. With insider information, the employee purchases property in the new area, anticipating profits through real estate appreciation. In doing so, the employee violates this policy.

Financial Interest in Transaction

Employees may not influence any contract sale, lease, or purchase on behalf of TRL in which the employees have an interest.

Example: An employee owns an interest in an office supply store. The library manager where the employee works needs to purchase a new file cabinet. If the employee were to

attempt to influence the library manager to buy at the store where the employee has an interest, the employee violates this policy.

Special Privileges and Gifts

Employees may not seek or accept any gift, favor, special condition or price, loan, retainer, entertainment, meal, travel expense, compensation, or other thing of value from any vendor or supplier doing business or seeking to do business with TRL, unless the offer is part of an organized service available to all employees or to all attendees at a presentation and approved by the Executive Director.

Examples: TRL budgeted to buy some new computer equipment for all its branches. An employee is asked to select the vendor. One vendor indicates that, due to the quantity of merchandise the employee is purchasing, they could let the employee have one unit for themselves at half the normal price. If the employee purchases this computer at half price, the employee violates this policy.

An employee wins a drawing at a conference paid for by TRL, and receives a computer, video, gift card, or other thing of value. It must be given to TRL. If the employee keeps it, the employee violates this policy. However, if the conference is on non-work time i.e., a weekend, personal time off, and nothing has been paid for by the employer i.e., hotel, meals, travel, etc., then the employee may keep the computer, video, gift card, or thing of value as TRL has paid no funds towards the conference. This cannot be done after the fact.

Exceptions: These references to gifts or things of value, meals, and entertainment do not include such things as memorials, trophies, plaques, or advertising materials of little or no economic value, or awards for a bona fide, non-recurring ceremonial occasion or official recognition. Nor does it include food or other items of nominal value, such as books, offered generally to a large group. Eating at trade shows or other events that are open to many potential purchasers does not violate this policy.

Year of service awards and recognition program awards which are sponsored by or in conjunction with TRL pens, cups, book bags, calendars or similar items with company advertising information are exceptions.

Solicitation

Employees may not make personal solicitation anywhere, nor may they sell, or exhibit items for sale on work time or in public areas.

Example: Cookies, crafts, or other items may be sold only in the break room or other designated non-public areas if a break room is not available.

General sign-up lists for fundraising activities are acceptable in the break room or other designated non-public areas if a break room is not available.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Definitions

TRL Resources: include, but are not limited to, books and other library materials, information technology assets such as computers, data resources, electronic message systems (including email and voice mail), software, software licenses, fax machines,

telephones, cellular phones, Internet connections or accounts; documentation; copyrighted material; photocopiers; print shop equipment; facilities; vehicles; credit cards; supplies; TRL mail services; furniture; equipment; and any item slated for surplus or disposal.

References

Code of Ethics for Municipal Officers (RCW 42.23).

Citations

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association.

Communication Guidelines – TRL Board of Trustee’s Manual.

Confidentiality of Library Records – TRL Resolution No. 84-2 (RCW 42.17.310).

Public Library Trustee Reference Manual – Code of Ethics RCW 42.52.

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By the enactment of this policy the Board of Trustees of Timberland Regional Library is concurrently rescinding any prior policy or procedure within TRL that is either in conflict with or expansive of the matters addressed in this policy.