

Jefferson County Library Board

Code of Ethics

Adopted by the Cocke, Grainger, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, and Sevier County (Tennessee) Library Boards of Trustees, 1994.

As a member of the Jefferson County Library Board of Trustees, I support the mission of a public library in a free society. More specifically, I shall:

Work to ensure that the public has equal access to information, both as a Constitutional right and as the best way to sustain a democratic way of life.

Subscribe to and believe in the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read*, and the *Freedom to View* statements. <http://tinyurl.com/LibraryRightsFreedoms>

Support the maintenance of a complete and balanced library collection.

Resist all efforts by groups or individuals to censor library materials.

Work toward meeting the individual library and information needs of all customers.

Maintain an independent judgment free of personal benefits, special interests, and partisan political groups.

Protect the right to privacy of library customers by keeping confidential any information about materials consulted or borrowed.

Keep all library policies free of racism, sexism, and other bigotries.

As a Jefferson County Library trustee, I recognize that a positive working relationship with the library directors and the staff is crucial to the well-being of the library and the delivery of good library service. I shall:

Work with the directors and other appropriate officials to see that the library receives adequate funding.

Recognize and support the need for professional development of the staff.

Be aware of - not manage - the implementation of plans and policies and participate in the evaluation of the general effectiveness of the Jefferson County Libraries.

Respect the professional expertise of the library staff and acknowledge that the internal operation of the libraries is the responsibility of the library directors.

Listen to all concerns of the public, refer all complaints to the library directors; and, act on such complaints at a public meeting only after they have been reviewed by the directors.

As a library board member, I agree that my responsibilities are limited to making policy, planning and goal setting, adopting budgets, authorizing payments, serving on board work committees, evaluating the directors, and encouraging effective service programs. More specifically, I realize that my responsibilities are to:

Attend board meetings regularly and, when attendance is impossible, notify the library directors or board chair.

Understand that, if I miss three consecutive regular board meetings, I become disqualified as a board member and shall submit my resignation.

Expect thorough and appropriate program and financial reports from the directors.

Read the distributed materials before each meeting.

Lend expertise and leadership to the board for achieving the goals of the library.

Participate in discussions and votes.

Serve on committees as needed.

Keep abreast of important developments in library trends and practices.

Become familiar with national, state, and local laws, and with rules and regulations regarding libraries.

Follow legal, professional, and ethical practices in making decisions.

Scrupulously avoid personal conflicts of interest and not condone them in others.

Adhere strictly to the open meetings law.

Not say anything in a board meeting that could be construed to violate anyone's civil rights.

Recognize that authority rests with the whole board assembled in public meetings; therefore, I shall make no personal statements or promises nor take any private action which may compromise the board.

Support the actions taken by a majority of the board and clearly differentiate personal opinions from board decisions.

Refrain from publicly discussing any matters relating to staff or customer privacy.

Collaborate to the best of my ability, with other boards, policy makers, and agencies to improve the county libraries and their services.

Actively participate in regional and state activities.

Support regional, state, and national library development programs that enhance local library development.

Support and promote the public library as an indispensable part of a livable community.