



The Ethical Dozen for Friends of the Library

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“Friends can make the difference between a mediocre and an outstanding library.”

Jean A. Ashfield, *Friends of Library Handbook*

Friends support and help their library’s staff and trustees integrate the library thoroughly into the life and work of the community they serve.

1. Friends of the Library is a group of individuals who value public library services to the community and who volunteer their time, talents, and efforts to promote and support the vision, mission, and objectives of their library in whatever way will be helpful.
2. Friends organize to help support the work of the library, not to engage in the work and responsibilities of the library trustee board members or the library staff. Friends of the Library cooperate with both, but do not interfere with either. Friends recognize that they do not perform a decision-making role for the library: they are familiar with and support the policies of the library. Friends provide input into the library’s long-range planning process and remain knowledgeable as to the status of the plan.
3. Friends support quality library services in the community through fund raising, volunteerism, and serving as advocates for the library’s program.
4. Friends 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.
5. Friends subscribe to and believe in the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read*, and the *Freedom to View* statements. <http://tinyurl.com/LibraryRightsFreedomEthics>
6. Friends recognize that authority rests with the whole Friends board assembled in public meetings and shall make no personal statements or promises nor take any private action which may compromise the board. They support the actions taken by a majority of the board and clearly differentiate personal opinions from board decisions.
7. Friends do not interfere with the library operations of the library staff.
8. Friends promote the library program to the public.
9. Friends conduct fundraising which complements the library’s mission. Friends’ activities support library board long-range plans and policies. Friends decide how to spend their funds after conferring with the library director.
10. Friends follow legal, professional, and ethical practices in making decisions. They scrupulously avoid personal conflicts of interest and do not condone them in others. They say nothing in a board meeting that could be construed to violate anyone’s civil rights.
11. Friends serve as advocates for local, state, and national library issues and represent the library program to legislators and funders.
12. Friends are open and welcoming to suggestions, questions and communications from the library staff, trustee board members, and the public.