

Milford Free Library

Code of Ethics and Policies

General Provisions

Trustees and Employees of the Milford Free Library hold their positions to serve and benefit the public and not to obtain unwarranted personal or private gain in the exercise of their official powers and duties. The Trustees recognize that, in furtherance of this fundamental principle, there is need for clear and reasonable standards of ethical conduct. These policies establish those standards.

Standards

The following rules and standards of conduct apply to all Trustees, officers, patrons and employees of Milford Free Library.

Computer/Internet Use Policy

Computing resources are shared resources by all members of the community and may only be used for appropriate purposes. Examples of inappropriate use include, but are not limited to:

- Transmission or viewing of nudity, child pornography and obscene materials.
- Fraud, hacking, spamming and illegally downloading copyrighted material.
- Violation of copyright or communications laws.
- Transmission of speech not protected by the First Amendment, such as libel and obscenity.
- Attempting unauthorized entry to HML's network or external networks or attempting to alter or damage computer equipment, software configurations, or files belonging to HML, other users, or external networks.
- Intentional propagation of computer viruses.
- Violation of software license agreements.

It is the policy of the Milford Free Library to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Failure to abide by the Computer Use Policy may result in the forfeiture of your privileges to use the computer equipment and the library. The following is a guideline for use by library staff:

1st infraction: verbal warning.

2nd infraction: 6-month suspension of computer privileges.

3rd infraction: complete ban of computer privileges.

Confidentiality

The MILFORD FREE LIBRARY will hold all records of constituents private for library use only.

Library records, which contain names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of public, free association, school, college and university libraries and library systems of this state, including but not limited to records related to the circulation of library materials, computer database searches, interlibrary loan transactions, reference queries, requests for photocopies of library materials, title reserve requests, or the use of audio-visual materials, films or records, shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed except that such records may be disclosed to the extent necessary for the proper operation of such library and shall be disclosed upon request or consent of the user or pursuant to subpoena, court order or where otherwise required by statute.

This policy applies to all information collected by or submitted to Milford Free Library in person or on the library's website and will be considered confidential. The types of personal information collected are:

- Name
- Address
- Email address
- Phone number
- Library card number
- Materials currently checked out
- Last patron to check out an item
- Items on hold awaiting pickup
- Attendance logs and participations in programs
- Existence of library patron account
- Record of donations
- Transaction details related to donations, including credit card and bank account information
- Pledge commitment documentation

We do not share information collected with outside parties, except: (1) with written authorization of the library user, (2) by court order, (3) under U.S.A. Patriot Act, or (4) as otherwise required by Law. Information is used for library purposes.

Conflict of Interest

The Milford Free Library is committed to transparency and openness in its operation. Milford Free Library Trustees shall comply with all ethical standards as set forth in the NYS Library Code of Ethics. Trustees have the fiduciary duties of loyalty to the library and maintaining policies and procedures that will benefit the library and its patrons. The Trustees will faithfully pursue the interests of the library rather than personal interests and benefits. Trustees will oversee the library's assets, including attending meetings, reading, understanding and approving financial statements, and using sound judgement in developing and maintaining operations. Trustees will maintain confidentiality, will not accept benefits personally and will not use the library to further any business or personal growth in outside interests.

Parents and Child Library Card Information

The library protects the privacy and confidentiality of children as well as adults.

The library requires a parent or legal guardian to authorize a child 12 years old, or in grades 6 and under, to obtain a library card. A parent or legal guardian of a child 12 years or under who wishes to obtain information regarding their child's library materials must present valid identification at the time of their request.

For children who are 12 years and under, the library will disclose that child's current circulation records upon request from the child's parent or legal guardian who 1) originally authorized the child to obtain a library card, or 2) presents the child's card at the time of the request, or 3) is accompanied by the child to whom the circulation records pertain.

Patrons 13 years and up are able to apply for and receive library cards without a parent's signature if they meet our identification requirements. If your child is 13 years and up, then the Library cannot disclose your child's circulation records without your child's written authorization. Identification requirements will consist of a valid and verifiable address and phone number.

Gifts

No library personnel/volunteers may directly or indirectly solicit, accept or receive any gift under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended or expected to influence the individual in the performance of his/her official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on the part of the individual. This prohibition applies to any gift, including money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing of promise, or any other form.

Open Meetings

The Milford Free Library has an "Open Meeting" policy and encourages any patrons or community members to attend any Board meeting. The Agenda and Minutes will be posted to the Milford Free Library Facebook page and the website. All financial records are open for public review and clarification.

Patron Code of Conduct

To efficiently and safely conduct library business in and around the Milford Free Library, the Board of Trustees has adopted the following rules and regulations. These apply both to patron conduct with other patrons and patron conduct with staff members:

1. Patrons will respect the rights of other patrons and library staff at all times. They may not interfere with staff or the performance of their duties and will comply with lawful direction given by them.
2. Any illegal activities on library property, including the use of alcohol or illegal drugs or the possession of weapons of any kind are prohibited. In addition, loitering or soliciting on library property or grounds will not be tolerated.
3. Any sort of disruptive behavior, including sexual harassment, the use of abusive, obscene or threatening language, exhibitionism, voyeurism, nudity of any kind, including bare feet and/or bare chests, or any abusive behavior that is a nuisance to others. Cell phones may be used in designated areas.
4. Patrons will utilize library facilities for purposes normally associated with a library, but not sleeping, bathing or washing clothes, using skateboards, in-line skates, balls, etc. Bicycles and other wheeled devices must be left outside the building.
5. Parents, guardians or caregivers are responsible for the safety, behavior and supervision of their children at all times in the library and on library property as per the library's Unattended Children's Policy.
6. Patrons shall not deface or mar library materials, furnishings, walls, equipment or any other library property, including computers. This includes placing feet on furniture, walls or computer columns. Patrons may not rearrange or disarrange library furnishings or materials.
7. Smoking is banned from ALL Library property including inside the building.
8. Cameras, camcorders or any other video recording devices may not be used unless prior permission of the Library Director is received.
9. Posting or distribution of promotional material of any kind or sale of goods is forbidden by any person or agency other than the Milford Free Library except by permission of the Library Director.
10. Patrons shall check out with a valid library card all materials and/or equipment removed from the library. There will be no charge for overdue books, however patrons are responsible for lost or damaged books at the assessed replacement value.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity and the status of being transgender. It includes inappropriate jokes, language, pranks and intimidation

The Milford Free Library is committed to maintaining a space free from sexual harassment. Employees and patrons have a legal right to work and interact with others in the Milford Free Library without sexual harassment. Any complaints may be filed with the Milford Free Library Board of Trustees. The complaint will be investigated internally and if appropriate, with an outside police force. Any complainant is free from retaliation of such a complaint. Employees can also file a complaint with a government agency or in court under federal, state or local antidiscrimination laws.

Unattended Child

No child under the age of 10 years old will be allowed in the library unless accompanied by an adult.

Whistleblower Policy

The Milford Free Library Trustees have a duty to maintain the Library's function and business appropriately. No employee, trustee or patron will be discharged or penalized in retaliation for making a complaint, instituting a proceeding or testifying at a proceeding concerning a violation of law or for refusing to participate in illegal activity.

Revised & Adopted at the Milford Free Library Board of Trustees meeting 5/1/23