

William B. Ogden Free Library  
CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflicts of Interest and Disclosure of Certain Interests

**1. Purpose**

This conflict of interest policy is designed to help trustees and employees of the William B. Ogden Free Library (WBOFL) identify situations that present potential conflicts of interest and to provide WBOFL with a procedure that, if observed, will allow a transaction to be treated as valid and binding even though a trustee or employee has or may have a conflict of interest with respect to the transaction. In the event there is an inconsistency between the requirements and procedures prescribed herein and those in federal or state law, the law shall control.

**2. Definitions**

- A *Conflict of Interest* is any circumstance described in Part 3 of this policy.
- A *Responsible Person* is any person serving as a trustee or an employee of WBOFL.
- A *Family Member* is defined as one of the following: relationships by blood—parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, and first cousin; and relationships by marriage—husband, wife (as defined by state law), step-parent, step-child, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, half-brother, half-sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, spouse/partner of any of the above and cohabiting couples or significant others. This policy also applies to individuals who are not legally related but who reside with another employee in a familial relationship rather than a roommate relationship.
- A *Material Financial Interest* in an entity is a financial interest of any kind that, in view of all the circumstances, is substantial enough that it would, or reasonably could, affect a responsible person's or family member's judgment with respect to transactions to which the entity is a party. This includes all forms of compensation.
- A *Contract or Transaction* is any agreement or relationship involving the sale or purchase of goods, services, or rights of any kind, the provision or receipt of a loan or grant, or the establishment of any other type of pecuniary relationship. The making of a gift to WBOFL is not a contract or transaction.

**3. Conflict of Interest Defined**

For purposes of this policy, the following circumstances shall be deemed to create conflicts of interest:

- a. Outside Interests.
  - i. A contract or transaction between WBOFL and a responsible person or family member.
  - ii. A contract or transaction between WBOFL and an entity in which a responsible person or family member has a material financial interest or of which such person is a director, officer, employee, agent, partner, associate, trustee, personal representative, receiver, guardian, custodian, conservator, or other legal representative.
- b. Outside Activities.
  - i. A responsible person competing with WBOFL in the rendering of services or in any other contract or transaction with a third party.

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- ii. A responsible person having a material financial interest in or serving as a director, officer, employee, agent, partner, associate, trustee, personal representative, receiver, guardian, custodian, conservator, or other legal representative of, or consultant to, an entity or individual that competes with WBOFL in the provision of services or in any other contract or transaction with a third party.
- c. Gift, Gratuities and Entertainment.  
A responsible person accepting gifts, entertainment, or other favors from any individual or entity that:
  - i. does or is seeking to do business with or is a competitor of WBOFL
  - ii. has received, is receiving, or is seeking to receive a loan or grant, or to secure other financial commitments from WBOFL
  - iii. is a charitable organization collaborating with WBOFL

The acceptance of gifts, entertainment, or other favors can be a conflict of interest under circumstances where it might be inferred that such action was intended to influence or possibly would influence the responsible person in the performance of his or her duties. This does not preclude the acceptance of items of nominal or insignificant value or entertainment of nominal or insignificant value that are not related to any particular transaction or activity of WBOFL.

#### 4. Procedures

- a. Before board or committee action on a contract or transaction involving a conflict of interest, a trustee or committee member having a conflict of interest and who is in attendance at the meeting shall disclose all facts material to the conflict of interest. Such disclosure shall be reflected in the minutes of the meeting.
- b. A trustee or committee member who plans not to attend a meeting at which he or she has reason to believe that the board or committee will act on a matter in which the person has a conflict of interest shall disclose to the chair of the meeting all facts material to the conflict of interest. The chair shall report the disclosure at the meeting and the disclosure shall be reflected in the minutes of the meeting.
- c. A person who has a conflict of interest shall not participate in or be permitted to hear the board's or committee's discussion of the matter except to disclose material facts and to respond to questions. Such person shall not attempt to exert his or her personal influence with respect to the matter, either at or outside the meeting.
- d. A person who has a conflict of interest with respect to a contract or transaction that will be voted on at a meeting shall not be counted in determining the presence of a quorum for purposes of the vote. The person having a conflict of interest may not vote on the contract or transaction and shall not be present in the meeting room when the vote is taken, unless the vote is by secret ballot. Such person's ineligibility to vote shall be reflected in the minutes of the meeting. For purposes of this paragraph, a member of the Board of Trustees of WBOFL has a conflict of interest when he or she stands for election as an officer or for re-election as a member of the Board of Trustees.

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- e. Responsible persons who have a conflict of interest with respect to a contract or transaction that is not the subject of board or committee action, shall disclose to the President or the President's designee any conflict of interest that such responsible person has with respect to a contract or transaction. Such disclosure shall be made as soon as the conflict of interest is known to the responsible person. The responsible person shall refrain from any action that may affect WBOFL's participation in such contract or transaction.
- f. In the event it is not entirely clear that a conflict of interest exists, the individual with the potential conflict shall disclose the circumstances to the President or the President's designee, who shall determine whether there exists a conflict of interest that is subject to this policy.
- g. Confidentiality. Each responsible person shall exercise care not to disclose confidential information acquired in connection with such status or information the disclosure of which might have an adverse effect to the interests of WBOFL. Furthermore, a responsible person shall not disclose or use information relating to the business of WBOFL for the personal profit or advantage of the responsible person or a family member.

#### **5. Review of Policy**

- Each new responsible person shall be required to review a copy of this policy and to acknowledge in writing that he or she has done so.
- Each responsible person shall annually complete a disclosure form identifying any relationships, positions, or circumstances in which the responsible person is involved that he or she believes could contribute to a conflict of interest arising. Such relationships, positions, or circumstances might include service as a director of or consultant to a not-for-profit organization, or ownership of a business that might provide goods or services to WBOFL. Any such information regarding business interests of a responsible person or a family member shall be treated as confidential and shall generally be made available only to the President, the Director, and any committee appointed to address conflicts of interest, except to the extent additional disclosure is necessary in connection with the implementation of this policy.
- This policy shall be reviewed annually by each member of the Board of Trustees. Any changes to the policy shall be communicated immediately to all responsible persons.

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**6. Statement of Associations**

This is to certify that I am not now nor at any time during the past year have been a participant, directly or indirectly, in any arrangement, investment, or other activity with any vendor, supplier, or other party doing business with The William B. Ogden Free Library that has resulted or could result in personal benefit to me.

Any exceptions to the above are stated below with a full description of the transactions, whether direct or indirect, which I have (or have had during the past year) with persons or organizations having transactions with William B. Ogden Free Library.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

WBOFL Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Adopted August 2014  
Revised November 2019  
Reviewed without changes: August 23