

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Policy Statement

The Northeast Georgia Regional Library Board believes that it is fundamentally important that the public perceives that all policies and decisions of the Board are fairly and impartially determined. High standards of ethical conduct shall be maintained by those serving on the Board and by all employees to promote and maintain public trust and confidence in library governance.

Conflict of interest encompasses situations where it may seem that the public interest has not been upheld when personal private interests conflict or when there is a reasonable basis for the perception of such conflict. The Northeast Georgia Regional Library Board will ensure that all Board members and employees are aware of what constitutes a conflict and that appropriate procedures are followed when a conflict is perceived or declared.

Conflict Situations

The situations in which a conflict may arise between a person's private interest and public responsibility are many and varied. The following examples of conflict are not intended as a comprehensive statement of all conflicts:

- Membership in an interest group seeking to influence Board policy;
- Participation in decision making about an issue when the person has a direct pecuniary interest in the outcome;
- Ownership of property or shares in a company which will profit from the outcome of Board decisions;
- Participation in decision making about an issue affecting the employment, remuneration, or profit of a spouse, family member, close relation, or friend;
- Acceptance of gifts, accommodation, equipment, or travel from an entity which has or seeks to establish a close working relationship with the Board;
- Use or release of confidential information for personal interests;
- Use of Board property, equipment or resources for personal interests or profit.

Procedure

1. When a Board member perceives that he/she may have a conflict of interest, he/she shall declare the conflict prior to discussion of the issue before the Board. The Chair shall rule as to whether the declaration constitutes a conflict. If the Chair rules that a conflict exists, the member shall not engage in discussion, or vote, and shall be required to withdraw from the meeting for the duration of debate.
2. When a Board member perceives that another member has a conflict of interest which has not been declared, the Board member may request the

Chair to rule. While the Chair determines whether or not a conflict exists, all debate on the issue before the Board will cease. If the Chair rules that a conflict exists, the member shall not engage in discussion, or vote, and shall be required to withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the debate.

3. In the event that the Chair has a conflict or perceived conflict the Vice-Chair will fulfill the role of investigating and ruling on the conflict.
4. The Director shall be responsible for implementing and investigating conflicts of interest at the employee level.