Georgina Public Library Board Policy Manual

Policy Title: EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

Intent:

Each Georgina Public Library (GPL) employee represents the Library and contributes to its public image. As such, staff are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct, integrity, and impartiality.

This Code of Conduct supports ethical decision-making, prevents conflicts of interest, and promotes respectful, inclusive service to the public and professional interactions among colleagues. Employees are expected to promote the GPL's core values and strategic themes through their conduct.

These guidelines are not exhaustive but serve to guide conduct in the workplace

Scope:

This policy applies to all GPL employees, whether full-time, part-time, casual, student, or contract, and covers conduct during work hours, at work-related events, and when representing the Library in any capacity. The expectations outlined herein also extend to electronic communications, social media use, and off-site activities where an employee's conduct may reflect upon the Library.

1. Responsibilities

1.1 Employee Responsibilities

Employees are expected to:

- Adhere to the standards of behaviour outlined in this policy
- Review the policy annually
- Uphold and reflect the Library's values and strategic themes
- Seek clarification from Management or Human Resources (HR) if uncertain about any provision
- Sign the Staff Code of Conduct acknowledgement form

1.2 Management Responsibilities

Managers are expected to:

- Foster a culture of ethical, respectful, and inclusive behaviour
- Ensure employees understand and comply with this policy
- Provide access to this policy during onboarding and via the staff intranet and public website
- Model conduct that aligns with the Library's values and code
- Respond promptly and fairly to potential breaches
- Initiate investigations without undue delay following verbal or written allegation(s)
- Work with the Town's HR Department to:
  - Provide training and guidance

- Support investigations
- Determine appropriate disciplinary action when required

Regulations:

2. Ethical Standards

2.1 Confidentiality and Privacy

- Employees must protect all confidential information related to members, colleagues, and Library operations.
- Personal information is collected under the authority of the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, and must be handled in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).
- Confidential information may not be used for personal benefit or disclosed improperly.
- Breaches may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

2.2 Freedom of Information Requests

- All requests for personal information must be directed to the Library CEO/Director, who will liaise with the Town Clerk for processing.

2.3 Political Activity

- Employees may participate in political activities as private citizens, outside work hours, and without using Library resources.
- Employees running for elected office must request unpaid leave of absence in accordance with legislation.
- Employees must avoid conduct that could reasonably be perceived as aligning the Library with any political campaign or cause.

2.4 Conflict of Interest

Employees must:

- Make decisions that benefit the public and the Library.
- Avoid actions that appear to provide personal or financial gain. Disclose any actual or perceived conflicts in writing to their supervisor or the CEO immediately.

2.5 Gifts and Hospitality

- GPL employees may not accept any gift, hospitality, or entertainment that could be construed as given in anticipation of special consideration from the Library
- Employees may only accept tokens of appreciation if:
  - The value does not exceed $50
  - They are infrequent and business-related
  - They serve a legitimate business purpose, are appropriately related to the employee's role, and do not create—nor appear to create—a sense of obligation or compromise impartiality

2.6 Library Contests and Prizes

- Library employees may not participate in any Library contests, draws, or competitions that are open to members of the public
- Immediate family members of Library employees may only participate when winners are selected randomly and without any employee influence or involvement

2.7 Nepotism

To ensure fairness in hiring and supervision:

- GPL prohibits hiring practices that involve preferential treatment in the recruitment or selection of candidates for vacancies.
- Employees must not be in a direct supervisory relationship with a relative or close personal connection.
  - Relatives include: spouses, partners, parents, children, siblings, grandparents, in-laws, or anyone residing in the same household.
- Employees must disclose such relationships to Management or HR.
- GPL may reassign roles or reporting relationships to prevent conflicts.

2.8 Outside Employment and Use of Resources

Employees may not:

- Engage in external employment or activities that conflict with their Library duties or that could reasonably be perceived as conflicting with Library duties.
- Employees must also avoid any external employment or activities that could reasonably be perceived to influence impartial judgment in the discharge of their duties.
- Use their position for advantage in outside business
- Allow external work to influence Library responsibilities
- Use Library equipment, supplies, and/or services for anything other than Library-related duties unless specifically authorized.

2.9 Security and Property

Employees must:

- Secure any Library property, keys, devices, or funds entrusted to them
- Safeguard access tools such as ID cards, fobs, and passwords

2.10 Substance Use and Safety

- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol, cannabis, or any substance—legal or illegal—that impairs the ability to work safely or professionally is strictly prohibited.
- The illegal use, sale, purchase, transfer, or possession of any controlled substance on Library property will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

2.11 Fraud Prevention

- All employees must act with integrity and honesty.

- Fraud, theft, or misconduct is strictly prohibited.
- All managers are responsible for ensuring adequate internal controls are in place to prevent and detect fraud, and for monitoring employee activity to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Management must maintain systems to detect and prevent fraud.

3. Professional Conduct

Employees of Georgina Public Library will:

- Approach all interactions with positive intent and respect
- Treat all patrons and colleagues with courtesy and professionalism
- Promote and maintain a workplace free of harassment, discrimination, and bias; foster an atmosphere that respects the dignity, self-worth, and human rights of every individual; and comply with the Library's Violence & Harassment-Free Workplace Policy, which includes a zero-tolerance stance for all forms of harassment.
- Support a safe and healthy environment
- Maintain organized and clean personal and shared workspaces
- Avoid non-work tasks during work hours
- Greet patrons, inform them of programs, and provide proactive service
- When a patron's question cannot be answered immediately, staff will follow up or respond within two (2) business days when applicable.
- Explain policies clearly and offer helpful alternatives where possible
- Refer all official Library communications to the CEO or Board Chair
- Keep personal relationships from interfering with workplace dynamics
- Be punctual, meet deadlines, and respect coworkers' time and space
- Avoid abusing staff privileges or using Library resources for personal gain
- Accept feedback constructively and pursue performance improvement
- Adhere to all related Library and Town policies, including:
    - Health & Safety Policy
    - Violence & Harassment-Free Workplace
    - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
    - Dress Code
    - Social Media

4. Compliance and Reporting

- Employees must comply with this policy and all related legislation and standards
- Employees are encouraged to report suspected violations to a Library manager, the CEO, or HR
- Reports may be made verbally, in writing, or via the confidential reporting system. All reports will be acknowledged within two (2) business days and investigated within ten (10) business days where practicable. GPL strictly prohibits retaliation against those reporting concerns in good faith.

Breaches of this policy will be addressed promptly and may result in verbal or written warnings, suspension, or termination of employment. Where applicable, legal action may also be taken.

Related Policies:

- Dress Code
- Privacy of Membership Information
- Violence & Harassment-Free Workplace
- Health & Safety
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Social Media

The Library Board may, at its discretion and through a resolution of the Board, augment or amend the Staff Code of Code as required.

POLICY HISTORY:	
Initial Draft	May 17, 2012
Draft Presentation Review	May 17, 2012
Board Adoption	June 21, 2012
Board Review:	Sept. 15, 2016; April 19, 2018; May 19, 2022; Sept. 18, 2025

Employee CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Staff Policy Acknowledgement Form

I, _____ acknowledge that I have read and understand the Employee Code of Conduct applicable to Georgina Public Library employees. I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct. I understand that if I violate this Code of Conduct, I may face disciplinary action up to and including the termination of my employment, as well as any necessary legal action required or taken by the Library.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____