

Attachment F-17

Code of Conduct

Section 1. Organizational Code of Conduct

The Bulverde Area Rural Library District (BARLD) Trustees and its employees must, at all times, comply with all applicable laws and regulations. The BARLD will not condone the activities of employees who achieve results based on unethical business practices or through violation of the law. This includes any payments for illegal acts, indirect contributions, rebates, and bribery. The BARLD does not permit any activity that fails to stand the closest possible public scrutiny.

All business conduct should exceed the minimum standards required by law. Accordingly, employees must ensure that their actions cannot be interpreted as being in any way in breach of the laws and regulations governing the BARLD's operations.

Employees uncertain about the application or interpretation of any legal requirements should refer the matter to their supervisor, who, if necessary, should seek the advice of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. General Employee Conduct

The BARLD expects its employees to conduct themselves in a professional and businesslike manner.

Section 3. Conflicts of Interest

The BARLD expects that employees will perform their duties conscientiously, honestly, and in accordance with the best interests of the BARLD. Employees must not use their position or the knowledge gained as a result of their position for private or personal advantage.

Section 4. Outside Activities, Employment, and Directorships

All employees share a serious responsibility for the BARLD's good public relations, especially at the community level. Their readiness to help with religious, charitable, educational, and civic activities brings credit to the library and is encouraged. Employees must, however, avoid acquiring any business interest or participating in any other activity outside the library that would, or would appear to:

- Create an excessive demand upon their time and attention, thus depriving the library of their best efforts on the job.
- Create a conflict of interest – an obligation, interest, or distraction – that may interfere with the independent exercise of judgment in the library's best interest.

Section 5. Relationships with Clients and Suppliers

Employees should avoid investing in or acquiring a financial interest for their own accounts in any business organization that has a contractual relationship with the BARLD or that provides goods, services, or both to the BARLD, if such investment or interest could influence or create the impression of influencing their decisions in the performance of their duties on behalf of the BARLD.

Section 6. Gifts, Entertainment and Favors

Employees must not accept entertainment, gifts, or personal favors that could, in any way, influence, or appear to influence, business decisions in favor of any person or organization with whom or with which the BARLD has, or is likely to have, business dealings.

Section 7. Kickbacks and Secret Commissions

Regarding the BARLD's business activities, employees may not receive payment or compensation of any kind, except as authorized under the BARLD's remuneration policies. In particular, the BARLD strictly prohibits the acceptance of kickbacks and secret commissions from suppliers or others. Any breach of this rule will result in immediate termination and prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

Section 8. BARLD Funds and Other Assets

Employees who have access to BARLD funds in any form must follow the prescribed procedures for recording, handling, and protecting money as detailed in the BARLD's policies, instructional manuals or other explanatory materials. The BARLD imposes strict standards to prevent fraud and dishonesty. If employees become aware of any evidence of fraud or dishonesty, they should immediately contact their supervisor or the Board of Trustees, so that the Board can promptly investigate the matter. When an employee's position requires expending BARLD funds or incurring any reimbursable personal expenses, that individual must use good judgment on the BARLD's behalf to ensure that good value is received for each expenditure.

BARLD funds and all other assets of the BARLD are for BARLD purposes only and not for personal benefit. This includes the personal use of organizational assets, such as computers or other equipment.

Section 9. BARLD Records and Communications

Accurate and reliable records of many kinds are necessary to meet BARLD's legal and financial obligations and to manage the affairs of the organization. The BARLD's books and records must reflect all business transactions in an accurate and timely manner. The employees responsible for accounting and recordkeeping must fully disclose and record all assets and liabilities, and must exercise diligence in enforcing these requirements.

Employees must not make or engage in any false record or communication of any kind, whether internal or external, including but not limited to:

- False expense, attendance, production, financial, or similar reports and statements.
- False advertising, deceptive marketing practices, or other misleading representations.

Section 10. Dealing with Outside People and Organizations

Employees must take care to separate their personal roles from their BARLD positions when communicating on matters not involving BARLD business. Employees must not use BARLD identification, stationery, supplies, and equipment for personal or political matters.

The BARLD's Library Director will handle all public comments and communications. Employees must not presume to speak for the BARLD on any topic, and should refer all communication related matters to the Library Director. The Board of Trustees can by a vote of the whole designate anyone to be spokesperson on a particular set of issues.

When dealing with anyone outside BARLD, including public officials, employees must take care not to compromise the integrity or damage the reputation of the BARLD, or any outside individual, business, or government body.

Section 11. Prompt Communications

In all matters relevant to customers, suppliers, government authorities, the public and others in the BARLD, all employees must make every effort to achieve complete accurate and timely communications – responding promptly and courteously to all proper requests for information and to all complaints.

Section 12. Privacy and Confidentiality

When handling financial and personal information about customers or others with whom the BARLD has dealings, employees should observe the following principles:

- Collect, use, and retain only the personal information necessary for the BARLD's business.
- Whenever possible, obtain any relevant information directly from the individual. Use only reputable and reliable sources to supplement this information.
- Protect the physical security of this information at all times, and retain information only for as long as necessary or as required by law.

Limit internal access to personal information to those with a legitimate business reason for seeking that information, and only use personal information for the purposes for which it was originally intended. Obtain the consent of the person concerned before externally disclosing any personal information, unless legal processes or contractual obligations dictate otherwise.