

# **Argyle Free Library Whistleblower Policy**

## **INTRODUCTION**

As beneficiaries of the public trust and stewards of public monies, Argyle Free Library (AFL) requires its trustees, employees, volunteers, and program volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties. As representatives of AFL, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities, adhere to the library's own policies and procedures, and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. This is particularly true regarding matters and controls that impact the library's finances.

## **DUTY TO REPORT**

Trustees, employees, volunteers, and program volunteers have the responsibility to report any concerns that the library's internal controls, auditing function, accounting systems, or governance policies are compromised or threatened. AFL has created a means for reporting any concerns without fear of retaliatory action.

Examples of matters which should be reported under this policy include but are not limited to:

- Supplying false or misleading information on the library's financial documents, including the tax return (990)
- Supplying false information to or withholding material information from auditors
- Violation of AFL Financial Policy
- Library assets being used for personal gain or benefit
- Payment for services or goods that are not rendered or delivered
- Fraud, embezzlement, bribery, kickbacks
- Unmerited hiring, promotion, pay increase or gifting things of value to the exclusion of others
- Planning, facilitating, or concealing any of the above

## **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING IMPROPRIETIES**

A trustee, employee, volunteer, or program volunteer who becomes aware of wrongdoing by a colleague should promptly report the alleged conduct either in person, in writing, or anonymously in writing, according to the following procedure:

- Using the attached Complaint Form, employees, volunteers, or program volunteers should report concerns to the Library Director, who will immediately share the concern with the Board of Trustees.

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- If a board member is involved in the concern the Library Director will report it directly to an uninvolved officer of the Board.
- If the Library Director is involved, the person with the concern should report the concern(s) to an officer of the Board.
- If a trustee, employee, volunteer, or program volunteer does not believe the normal channels of communication can or should be used to express concerns about or knowledge of improprieties, the complaint may be reported to a federal, state, or local agency.

Under this policy, a trustee, employee, volunteer, or program volunteer who makes a report is protected from retaliation, including but not limited to harassment, victimization, and change in employment, up to and including dismissals that result from making the report. The matter will be treated as confidential to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the need to investigate and prevent or correct the suspected action(s). An investigation of the report will be undertaken by the appropriate person(s), determined by the type of concern and the person(s) suspected of improprieties. Appropriate person(s) to oversee an investigation may include the Finance Committee, Board officers, the Library Director, and/or the Personnel Committee. The complaint, all steps of the investigation, and the resolution or findings will be documented in a written file to be kept indefinitely in the library's official record. If the concern was not submitted anonymously, the investigator must acknowledge receipt of the complaint within fourteen days.

Persons making unfounded allegations proven to have been made recklessly, maliciously, or with the foreknowledge that the concern expressed was false, will be subject to disciplinary action. In addition, anyone who retaliates against an individual who reports a suspected concern will be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions may include written warning, suspension without pay, or immediate termination depending on the severity of the incident.

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## Complaint Form

In order to assist in the investigation of your allegations in a prompt and thorough fashion, please complete this form to the best of your ability, with as much detail as you can provide. Once completed, please submit this form to the Library Director or board member, as directed in the Procedure for Reporting section of the Policy.

Name of Complainant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

(please circle the preferred contact number)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person(s) against whom the allegation(s) is/are being made \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List the allegation(s), the basis for the allegation(s), and attach any documentation or evidence you believe is relevant. If more space is needed, use the back of this sheet.

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