



SPOKANE COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT

POLICY: HR6 – Employee Conduct

APPROVAL DATE: 01/01/1982

REVISION DATE: 06/21/2022

Purpose

To set forth the District's policies for hiring and employment.

Scope

Applies to all District employees

Employees are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a professional and courteous manner and shall refrain from behavior or conduct that interferes with their ability to do their job or reflects negatively on the District. They are expected to adhere to all District policies and procedures; comply with all local, state, and federal laws and comply with lawful direction from supervisors, managers, and directors.

Failure to follow policy and meet District expectations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

6.1 Ethics

Employees must avoid any act of impropriety in their role as public servants, including, but not limited to, unauthorized possession or access to District property and/or confidential information, dishonesty, or the appearance of impropriety, and must never use their District position or authority for personal gain or in breach of the public trust.

Employees are expected to uphold the highest standards of ethics at all times while working for and/or representing the District.

6.2 Inclusion

All employees are expected to support an inclusive workplace by:

- Treating others with dignity and respect at all times.
- Addressing and reporting inappropriate behavior and comments that are discriminatory, harassing, abusive, offensive, or unwelcome.
- Fostering teamwork and employee participation, encouraging the representation of different employee perspectives.
- Seeking out insights from employees with different experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds.
- Avoiding slang or idioms that might not translate across cultures.
- Constructively confronting the decisions or behaviors of others that are based on conscious or unconscious biases.
- Being open-minded and listen when given constructive feedback regarding others' perception of your conduct.

6.3 Conflict of Interest

A "conflict of interest" occurs when an individual's private interest conflicts with, or appears to conflict with, the best interests of Spokane County Library District.

Spokane County
LIBRARY DISTRICT
509.893.8200

Airway Heights Library
509.893.8250

Argonne Library
509.893.8260

Cheney Library
509.893.8280

Deer Park Library
509.893.8300

Fairfield Library
509.893.8320

Medical Lake Library
509.893.8330

Moran Prairie Library
509.893.8340

North Spokane Library
509.893.8350

Otis Orchards Library
509.893.8390

Spokane Valley Library
509.893.8400

The BookEnd
Spokane Valley Mall
509.893.8275

Accordingly, no conflict of interest, either real or perceived, shall be allowed between an employee's private or personal interests and the interests of the District.

6.4 Abuse of Authority or Position

Employees may not use the power or authority of their position for personal gain, or to obtain any improper personal benefit for themselves, their family, or for any other person. For example, employees are expected to abide by District policies governing circulation and renewal of library materials. In addition, employees may not use professional work cards for personal use. Overriding of any limit is not allowed without the approval of a supervisor or manager.

6.5 Gifts or Additional Compensation

Employees may not ask for or receive any additional compensation, gift, loan, discount on goods or services, or accept any other things of value, over and above their salary and benefits, for performing their official duties. However, gifts of nominal value, such as an honorarium or compensation for performing work that is related to the library profession, but is outside their official duties, or gifts of food for a group or work unit at holidays or other special occasions are allowed as long as they do not constitute a conflict of interest.

6.6 Motor Vehicles

Use of District-provided vehicles is limited to activities benefiting Spokane County Library District. Minimum use of assigned vehicles for personal purposes, such as purchasing lunch or dinner while on business away from the worksite, or personal stops en route to or from work, or while traveling between facilities, is allowed. Transporting individuals who are not District employees in a District provided vehicle is prohibited.

Employees driving Spokane County Library District vehicles are responsible for all violations, tickets, or fines incurred while operating a District vehicle. Employees receiving a violation, ticket, or fine while operating a District vehicle are required to report it to their supervisor/manager and the Finance Director within one (1) business day of occurrence.

Failure to notify, or failure to pay a fine or ticket in a timely manner, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees whose duties include operating a personal or District-provided vehicle, must report the suspension, revocation, or loss of driver's license and/or insurability within one (1) business day of occurrence.

6.7 Attendance

Employees are expected to report to work punctually, as scheduled, and be at the proper workstation, ready for work, at the assigned starting time.

They shall give proper advance notice whenever unable to work, or report for work on time, or when they need to leave work unexpectedly.

6.8 Gossip

Gossip is defined as rumor or talk of a personal, sensational, or intimate nature. A gossiper is a person who habitually spreads intimate or private rumors or facts. Gossip can be spread through talking or writing, and writing includes email. Gossip almost always involves a person who is not present. Gossip can consist of unwelcome and/or negative criticism of another person. Gossip often is about conjecture that can injure another person's credibility or reputation.

Maintaining a gossip-free workplace:

In order to maintain a gossip-free workplace, employees are expected to:

- a. Not speak of or insinuate about another person when that person is not present unless it is to compliment or reference work matters.
- b. Refuse to participate when another mentions a person who is not present in a negative light. Change the subject or voice their commitment to not gossip.
- c. Choose not to respond to negative email or use email to pass on private or derogatory information about any employee, volunteer, Board member, Friends of the Library member or customer of the District.
- d. Refrain from speaking derogatorily about co-workers to other co-workers, both on and off the job site.
- e. Use proper channels to report to a person in authority any first-hand knowledge of another employee's unethical, incorrect, or disruptive job performance.

6.9 Use of Controlled Substances

Reporting to work and/or working while under the influence of any substance that impairs performance or impacts safety is prohibited. Moreover, manufacturing, distributing, possessing, or selling controlled substances (as defined in RCW 69.50) is also prohibited at any time on District premises, including District vehicles.

The possession and use of medically-prescribed and over-the-counter medications during work hours is permissible, provided they do not prevent the employee from safely performing their duties or create a safety threat to the employee or others.

If any of the following conditions are met, the employee may be sent to a local drug testing company via taxi or similar means of transportation. The Human Resources Director, or their designee, has sole discretion and authority regarding the transportation and testing of any employee.

- There are specific, objective grounds to believe the employee's work performance is impaired due to the presence of such substances in the body.
- While on duty, the employee is involved in an accident or incident.
- The District believes the employee presents a danger to themselves or others.
- Other conditions, as determined by the Human Resources Director or designee.

The District will cover the cost of transportation as well as the testing. The employee will be placed on paid Administrative leave until the results of the tests are returned.

Failure to promptly comply may be grounds for immediate termination.

6.10 Workplace Violence

Conduct or behavior that constitutes violence or threats of violence will not be tolerated.

6.11 Personal Appearance

Employees are expected to dress in a manner representing their position and job responsibilities. They should present a clean and neat appearance appropriate to their work assignment. All employees should present to work free of excessive scent.

In accordance with the mission of the District to provide information in a neutral manner, while at work or on District business, staff may not wear political paraphernalia or attire that displays political slogans, statements, or endorsements while on the job.

6.12 Public Records

Work-related emails, text messages, and voice messages sent or received on an employee's personal cell phone or other device are potential public records subject to the Public Records Act. Employees have a duty to maintain such records according to the Washington State Records Retention Schedules.

Therefore, when conducting District business, employees are expected to use District provided equipment and accounts.

Work-related use of personal social media accounts create public records.

In Washington, “public records” include work-related posts, comments, communications, and other records regardless of whether created or stored on personal equipment or on a personal social media account. In Washington, an agency-related Facebook post by a public employee or official on their personal Facebook account can be a public record if the post was made within the employee’s or official’s scope of agency employment. Since an agency acts exclusively through its employees or officials, the location of a record (whether on a personal account or public account) does not matter. Records are “public” even if they reside on private accounts or devices. The critical question is whether an agency-related post on a personal Facebook account was made in the employee’s official public capacity or scope of employment. Addressing work-related matters on personal equipment and/or a personal social media account may likely result it creating a public record. Accordingly, employees should use caution when discussing or addressing work-related matters on personal equipment or personal social media accounts.

The District reserves the right to monitor, review, audit, intercept, access, and disclose all messages and/or data created, received, or sent over any of its electronic systems for any purpose at any time. All messages or data created, sent, or received using any of the District’s electronic communication or computer systems are considered property of the District.

When directed, employees authorized by the Executive Director or designee may research, retrieve, read, or copy messages and/or data stored on any of the District-owned communication equipment and computer systems by another user.

6.13 Remote Work

1. Remote work arrangements may be implemented where appropriate, for employees in eligible positions, and documented in a remote work agreement. Remote work is not appropriate for all positions. No employee is entitled to or guaranteed the opportunity to work remotely.
2. Eligible positions will be determined by the Executive Director and be based on functional role and District needs.
3. The Human Resources Director, or designee, has sole authority to approve or terminate a remote work arrangement.
4. Remote work arrangements will expire annually and must be reviewed by the Human Resources Director, IT, and the employee’s supervisor before the arrangement will be renewed. Any changes to the arrangement will be noted on the remote work request form.
5. The employee’s supervisor will include information regarding the success of the arrangement in the monthly performance meeting notes. This will include if the employee is:
 - Meeting all deadlines and work expectations.
 - Accessible during work hours.
 - Maintaining effective communication and workflow.
6. Working in an environment free from interruptions, distractions or other responsibilities that could detract from the ability to meet standards and expectations. An employee may be called to work at a District worksite or an offsite location on their regular remote workday, based on District needs.

- If an employee is working remotely and during their work hours are required to report to a District location or offsite location, they shall be compensated for travel time per HR03, Section 3.16.
7. Employees who work remotely are expected to be working during their scheduled hours. Any leave must be scheduled in the same manner as an employee who is not working remotely.
 - An employee who is ill and unable to work on a remote work day must notify the District per appropriate procedure.
 8. The duties, obligations and responsibilities of an employee who works remotely are the same as an employee working at a District location. Only District work is to be performed during remote work hours.
 9. A set schedule will be identified in the remote work agreement. This will include the hours when the employee will be working and can be reached by staff and/or customers. Supervisors will outline specific job assignments and expectations for the remote work employee.
 - Employees must track and submit hours worked to their supervisor.
 - FLSA Overtime Eligible employees must have any hours beyond their normal work schedule approved in advance by their supervisor.
 10. Remote work shall not be used as a substitute for dependent or childcare. Employees working under a remote work agreement are expected to make dependent/childcare arrangements for during their work time.
 11. Employees are covered by workers' compensation for any job-related injuries that occur during their remote work schedule. The employee is responsible for maintaining a safe and ergonomic working environment for any areas used during their remote work time. Injuries shall be reported per standard District policy and procedure.
 - Should an injury occur, the employee must allow an inspection by the District of the remote work area, if required.
 - Workers' compensation shall not apply to non-job-related injuries that occur at the remote work site. The employee will be responsible for injuries to third parties and/or members of the employee's family at the remote work site.
 12. The employee will provide all furniture and equipment that is needed to work remotely, unless otherwise noted in the remote work agreement. The District will not be responsible for any damage to employee-owned furniture or equipment. District-provided equipment and furniture remains the property of the District and shall be returned to the District upon termination of the remote work agreement or termination of the employee's employment.
 13. Workers' compensation does not apply to injuries to any third parties or members of the employee's family on the employee's premises. In the event of a job-related injury, employees should report the incident to their supervisor as soon as possible.
 14. In-person meetings with staff or internal/external clients shall not be held at the remote work site.

6.14 District-Provided Equipment

District-owned communication equipment and computer systems (hardware, software, and network) provided to employees are intended to be used for District business. Unethical, inappropriate, or illegal use of District-owned communication equipment and computer systems is prohibited and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Equipment, furniture, fixtures, vehicles, and computers owned by the District are provided for on the job use. All information and materials transmitted by, received by, or stored in these items are District property. Staff should have no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of these items. The District reserves the right to review, copy, and/or delete any files, documents or items found in its computers, files, desks, mailboxes, and other storage facilities and to monitor employee use of such equipment.

Employees may make limited personal use of District-provided devices. As a publicly-funded organization, the District expects that staff will apply good judgment when making decisions as to the appropriate use of equipment to maintain ethical, legal, and fiscally responsible stewardship of public resources.

Employees are prohibited from:

- Engaging in any purposeful actions harmful to computer equipment, the network or information stored on it, such as creating or propagating malicious software; damaging files; making unauthorized modifications to District data or gaining unauthorized access to network resources.
- Sending e-mails, voicemails, or using District-provided access to social media to harass, embarrass, or intimidate an individual; accessing or attempting to access another individual's email, voicemail, or social media account without proper authorization.
- Using the District's computer or communication equipment, systems, or networks for personal, financial, or commercial gain, or for any other reason deemed inappropriate by the District, including engaging in illegal activities, such as copyright violations, libelous statements, and transmission or storage of illegal or inappropriate materials.

6.15 Video Surveillance Systems

The District employs video surveillance systems and recorded digital video images to enhance the physical security of District customers, employees, and property, while protecting the privacy and confidentiality of District customers pursuant to state and federal law. Video recordings and images may be used to review activities and actions by a District employee, when justified by a legitimate business purpose, including but not limited to investigation of illegal or improper conduct.

The Executive Director will establish administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy. In accordance with the administrative procedures, any appeal of an administrative action under this policy will first be made in writing to the Executive Director. Any subsequent appeal of Executive Director action and/or decision will be made in writing to the Board of Trustees.

The District will make a good faith effort to implement this policy in a fair and consistent manner.