

**THE HAMPTON BAYS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
DISCLOSURE OF WRONGFUL CONDUCT  
("Whistleblower" Policy)**

The purpose of this policy is to encourage Library Trustees, officers, employees and volunteers of the Hampton Bays Public Library to report instances of suspected illegal or improper conduct such as theft, fraud, and mismanagement of Library resources, violations of Library policies and regulations, as well as to inform Library Trustees, officers, employees and volunteers of the protections afforded them under the "Whistle-Blower Law" which prohibits a public employer from retaliating against a Trustee, officer, employee or volunteer who discloses to the Library information concerning a violation of law, rule, regulation or policy, which creates a substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety, or which the employee reasonably believes to be true and reasonably believes constitutes an improper action by a Library officer or employee.

No Trustee, officer, employee or volunteer of the Hampton Bays Public Library who in good faith reports any action taken by the Library Board of Trustees, Officers or staff that is (or is suspected to be) illegal, fraudulent or in violation of any substantial policy of the Library shall suffer intimidation, harassment discrimination or other retaliation or, in the case of employees, adverse employment consequences.

The Board of Trustees of the Hampton Bays Public Library expects the Library's Trustees, officers, employees and volunteers to fulfill the public's trust and to conduct themselves responsibly in accordance with Library policies and regulations, as well as applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

For purposes of this policy, the term "wrongful conduct" shall be defined to include:

- Illegal conduct, including theft of Library money, property, or resources;
- Misuse of authority for personal gain or other non-Library purpose;
- Fraud;
- Violations of applicable federal and state laws and regulations; and/or violations of Library policies, regulations, and/or procedures.
- Any other act which may be construed to be illicit or violative of expected conduct.

**Disclosure and Investigation**

Trustees, officers, employees and volunteers of the Hampton Bays Public Library who have knowledge of wrongful conduct or have reasonable cause to believe that wrongful conduct has occurred shall report such circumstances to the Library Director or to the President of the Board of Trustees if the alleged wrongful conduct was committed by the Director. The Library Director, upon receiving a report of alleged wrongful conduct, shall take immediate steps to conduct an investigation independently or by a designee. If the Library Director is the subject matter of the reported conduct, the President of the Board of Trustees shall immediately conduct an investigation independently or by a designee.

The Library Director (or Board President) shall maintain a written record of the allegations, conduct an investigation to ensure that the appropriate authorities investigate the disclosure, and provide the Board of Trustees with a report.

Except as otherwise provided in either state and/or federal law, the Director or Board President conducting the investigation, or his/her designee, shall reasonably attempt to protect the identity of the person making the disclosure and will make reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of the person reporting the conduct, provided that doing so will not interfere with the investigation of the specific allegations and circumstances.

### Complaints of Reprisal

The provisions of Section 75-b of the Civil Service Law (“Whistleblower Law”) and Section 715-B Not-for-Profit Corporation Law prohibit public employers from engaging in retaliatory personnel action against an employee, officer or volunteer who discloses to a governmental body information concerning either a violation of law, rule or regulation, which creates a substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety, or which the employee reasonably believes to be true and reasonably believes constitutes an improper governmental action. However, if an employee discloses information which he or she knows to be false or which is prohibited or protected from disclosure by law, the employee is not protected by these provisions of law.

An employee who has been subject to an adverse employment action based on his or her disclosure of alleged or actual wrongful conduct may contest the action by filing a written complaint of reprisal with the Library Director (or Board President). The Library Director (or Board President, if the allegations involve actions of the Library Director), or his/her designee, will review the complaint expeditiously to determine:

- whether the complainant made a claim of alleged wrongful conduct before an adverse employment action was taken;
- whether the Library personnel initiating the adverse employment action could reasonably have been construed to have had knowledge of the disclosure and the identity of the disclosing employee;
- whether the complainant has in fact suffered an adverse employment action after having made the disclosure; and
- whether the complainant alleges that adverse employment action occurred as a result of the disclosure.

If the Library Director (or Board President) or designee determines that all of the above elements are present, he or she shall appoint a review officer or panel to investigate the claim and make recommendations to the Board. At the time of appointment, the designee shall inform the complainant and the respondent, in writing, of:

- the intent to proceed with an investigation;

- the specific allegations to be investigated;
- the appointment of the review officer or panel; and
- the opportunity of each party to support or respond, in writing, to the allegation.

Once the review officer or panel has conducted a review and considers the investigation to be complete, the officer or panel will notify the Library Director (or Board President) of its completion. From the date of that notice, the review officer or panel has thirty (30) days to report his/her (their) findings and make any recommendations he/she (they) deems appropriate to the designee. The reviewing authority, in consultation with the Library Director and/or Library Board President shall issue a letter of findings to both the complainant and the respondent.

Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with legitimate employment decisions. Moreover, the protections afforded under the “Whistleblower Law” are not applicable under circumstances where the Library had or has independent grounds for disciplinary actions and proceedings against an employee.

The Library Director shall establish regulations necessary to implement this policy.

This policy and accompanying regulations shall be published and posted in employee lounges and distributed to all Trustees, officers and employees.

The Library Director and others responsible for the implementation of this policy shall meet with the Board annually to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and to recommend (if necessary) appropriate modifications to this policy and regulations thereunder.

Ref: Civil Service Law §75-b  
Labor Law §740

Adopted January 2019