

GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

- Policy Number:** BP #120A
- Effective Date:** Approved by the Eastern Washington State Historical Society (EWSHS) Board on February 1, 2017.
- Application:** Applies to all trustees, employees and volunteers of the **Eastern Washington State Historical Society (EWSHS)**.
- History:** Enacted by the Board of Trustees on April 27, 1999. Replaces HR #104A. In case of conflict, ethics laws and policy BP #120 will override this policy.
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Purpose: Duties and obligations of trustees, staff and volunteers to protect the public trust. This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on April 27, 1999.

The Eastern Washington State Historical Society serves the public interest as it relates to the history, visual arts, and cultures of the state of Washington and the Inland Northwest. The Society's collections, programs, and facilities are a public trust. This must always be recognized by all persons having important responsibilities in formulating or administering policies and procedures governing the Society. Persons holding such responsibilities have a duty and obligation to preserve and protect this public trust. It is understood that such duty may entail the voluntary surrender of certain rights to personal privacy and economic activity; it is the goal of this Code of Ethics to preserve the public trust with the least possible sacrifice of personal rights.

Those individuals affected in varying degrees are members of the Society's Board of Trustees and its committees, employees of the Society, volunteers, and others who may otherwise be associated with the Society from time to time.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All persons associated with the Society are entitled to engage in the full range of personal and professional activities of their choice, limited by the restraints imposed in these Guidelines for Professional Practices and the following principles:

1. They shall fully and conscientiously fulfill the duties of their positions in the Society;
2. They shall avoid conflicts of interest; and
3. They shall not misuse the Society's name, reputation, property, or services, nor shall they compromise its good will in the community.

Because the Society recognizes that certain core values are essential to the Society's success and well-being and to the achievement of its Mission and Vision statements, all persons associated with the Society shall:

1. Respect all people; and
2. Work for the good of the whole through the concepts of team effort and collaboration.

SECTION I: TRUSTEES

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Board of Trustees of the Eastern Washington State Historical Society serves the public interest as it relates to the Society and considers itself accountable to the public as well as to the institution. In partnership with the state of Washington, the Board acts as the ultimate legal entity for the Society and stands responsible for the formulation and maintenance of its general policies, standards, condition, financial stability, and operational continuity.

Trustees should be loyal to the purposes of the Society. Each trustee must understand and respect the basic documents that provide for the Society's establishment, character and governance such as the bylaws, mission, vision, adopted policies and state enabling legislation, as well as the Society's state agency relationship to the state of Washington.

Each trustee should devote time and attention to the affairs of the institution and ensure that the Society and the Board of Trustees act in accordance with the basic documents and with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. In establishing policies or authorizing or permitting activities, trustees should ensure that no policies or activities jeopardize the basic nonprofit status of the Society or reflect unfavorably upon it as an institution devoted to public service.

Trustees should not attempt to act as individuals in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as trustees. All actions of the Trustees should be taken as a board, committee, or subcommittee, or otherwise in conformance with the bylaws or applicable policies. Trustees must work for the Society as a whole and not act solely as advocates for particular activities or sub units of the Society.

Trustees should maintain in confidence information learned during the course of their Society activities when that information concerns the administration or activities of the Society and is not generally available to the public. This principle does not preclude public disclosure of information that is properly in the public domain, or information that should be released in fulfilling the Society's accountability to the public.

The Board of Trustees holds the ultimate fiduciary responsibility for the Society and for the protection and nurturing of its various assets; the collections and related documentation, the physical plant, financial assets, and the staff. The trustees are obliged to develop and define the purposes and related policies of the Society, and to ensure that all of the Society's assets are properly and effectively used for public purposes.

The Board of Trustees has a strong obligation to provide the proper environment for the physical security and preservation of the collections, and to monitor and develop the financial structure of the Society so that it continues to exist as an institution of vitality and quality.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Each trustee should endeavor to conduct all of their activities, including those relating to persons or organizations closely associated with them and to business or other organizations, in such a way that no conflict will arise between the other interests and the policies, operations or

interests of the Society. The appearance of such conflicts also should be avoided. The reputation of the Society can be damaged should a trustee continue an inappropriate activity concurrent with his or her service in a position of institutional and public trust.

Whenever a matter arises for action by the Board of Trustees involving a conflict between the interests of the Society and an outside or personal interest of a trustee or that of a member of their family, that interest should be disclosed and made a matter of record. In those cases where the trustee is present when a vote is taken in connection with such a question, they should disclose the interest and abstain from voting. There may be situations where the conflict is so grave that it cannot be resolved, in which case resignation may be appropriate.

A visible area for charges of self-interest at the expense of the Society, and of personal use of privileged information, arises whenever a trustee, a member of their family, or a close associate personally collects objects of a type collected by the Society. The board of Trustees should make every effort to be sure that no trustee competes with the Society for objects or takes personal advantage of information available to them because of their board membership.

No trustee, person close to them, or individual who might act for them may acquire objects from the collections of the Society, except when the object and its source have been advertised, its full history made available, and is sold at a public auction or otherwise clearly offered for sale in the public marketplace.

When trustees seek staff assistance for personal needs, they should not expect that such help will be rendered to an extent greater than that available to a member of the general public in similar circumstances or with similar needs.

Trustees serve the Society and its public. They should not attempt to derive any personal material advantages from their connection with the Society. Trustees should use Society property only for official purposes, and make no personal use of the Society's collection, property or services in a manner not available to a member of the general public.

TRUSTEE-DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP

A critical responsibility of the Board of Trustees derives from their relationship to the director, the Society's chief executive officer. The annual performance review of their professional activities is a primary responsibility that cannot be delegated and must be diligently and thoughtfully fulfilled.

Trustees have an obligation to define the rights, powers and duties of the director, in accordance with the state of Washington policies and procedures. Trustees should work in collaboration with the director and deal with the director openly and with candor.

The trustees must act as a full board in appointing or dismissing the director and the relationship between the director and the board should reflect the primacy of Society goals over all personal or interpersonal considerations. The director should attend all board meetings and important committee meetings, except executive sessions concerning the director.

The director has an obligation to bring before the board any matters involving policy questions not already determined; and to keep them informed on a timely basis about all other significant or substantial matters, or intended actions affecting the institution.

The director must carry out the policies established by the trustees, and adhere to the budget approved by the board. Whenever it is necessary to deviate from established policies or to alter or exceed budget guidelines, the director should notify the Board of Trustees in advance and request appropriate approval.

SECTION II: STAFF

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Society employees are ethically obligated to adhere to these Guidelines for Professional Practices. In addition, employees should ensure, as far as possible, that the acts of others do not place the employee or the institution in a position of compromise or embarrassment.

Employees will sign a statement upon employment and each January thereafter, confirming that they have read and understand the Society's Guidelines for Professional Practices.

Employment by the Society is a public trust and involves great responsibility. In all activities, Society employees should act with integrity and in accordance with these Guidelines as well as with the highest standards of objectivity.

At no time should any staff member knowingly misrepresent the mission, objectives, policies, programs, proceedings or motives of the Society.

Loyalty to the Society should be in accordance with fundamental ethical principles and the employee's professional obligations as a whole. The Society enjoys a high visibility and its employees a generous measure of public esteem. While every staff member is entitled to personal and professional independence consistent with professional and staff responsibilities, employees must be aware that in the eyes of the public, no private business or professional interest of an employee can be entirely divorced from the interests of the Society as a whole. Any Society-related action by employees may reflect on the Society or be attributed to it. Employees can never consider themselves or their activities wholly independent of the Society despite disclaimers that may be offered. Employees should be concerned not only with their own, true personal motivations and interests as they see them, but also with the way in which such actions might be construed by the outside observer.

Employees shall abide by the state of Washington's Standards of Ethical Conduct for Executive Branch Employees (Executive Order 93-02), the Washington State Executive Ethics Board rules, and RCW 42.52 relating to ethical practices.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Employees should refrain from any private or public activity that might be in conflict with, or appear to be in conflict with, the mission and interest of the Society.

These Guidelines are designed to help avoid conflicts of interest between employees' public responsibilities, their personal interests and their duties as employees of the Society.

Society employees should never abuse their official positions or their contacts within the museum community, impair in any way the performance of their official duties, compete with the Society, or bring discredit or embarrassment to the Society or to the profession in any activity, Society-related or not. Employees should be prepared to accept as conditions of employment the restrictions that are necessary to maintain public confidence in the Society's goals and in the museum profession.

No employee should use in his/her home or for any other personal purpose any object or item that is part of the Society's collections or under the guardianship of the Society. Nor shall employees use any other property, supplies, equipment, or resources of the Society except for official business of the Society and as approved by the state of Washington Executive Ethics Board and/or as approved by the employee's supervisor.

Employees must not compete with the Society in collecting, nor may employees take advantage of privileged information obtained as a result of his/her position or permit others to make use of information otherwise unavailable to the public for furthering personal interest or gain.

Employees may serve on boards or commissions so long as the activity does not impair the employee's ability to act with objectivity regarding the Society's interest nor interfere with job performance. Board or commission service by any employee should be reported in writing to the Society's director, such service is to be performed on the employee's personal time except as authorized in writing by the Society's director.

Employees should be circumspect in referring members of the public to outside suppliers of services, such as appraisers, conservators, consultants or other vendors of museum-related services. Whenever possible, more than a single qualified source should be provided so that no appearance of personal favoritism in referrals is created.

Whenever a matter arises that could be perceived as a conflict between the interests of the Society and an outside or personal interest of any employee or an employee's family, the employee should bring the matter to the attention of his/her supervisor for resolution.

PERSONAL COLLECTING

The acquiring, collecting and owning of objects is not in itself unethical, and can enhance professional knowledge and judgment. However, the acquisition, maintenance and management of a personal collection by a Society employee can create ethical questions.

Personal collecting is acceptable subject to the following guidelines for staff persons having significant responsibility for acquiring items or collections for the Society.

1. Employees should not become involved in any transactions that by virtue of their position give rise to a conflict of interest.
2. Where a conflict of interest with the Society may be involved, employees should make available to the Society's director, within 60 days of the date of occurrence, full details of all significant purchases, trades, and gifts or sales of objects or items that may fall within the collecting policy of the Society.

To aid in the administration of these Guidelines for Professional Practices, the Society may exercise the option to purchase from an employee at his/her cost, including related expenses, any object or item such employee has acquired under circumstances that involve a known conflict of interest. The option to purchase shall be exercised by the Society within 60 days of disclosure by the employee to the Society's director of the facts involved, whether by voluntary action of the employee or by action of the Society's director or the Committee, who may request all pertinent details for consideration.

The right of the Society to acquire from an employee does not extend to objects or items collected prior to the date he/she became a Society employee or prior to the Board of Trustees' approval of these Guidelines for Professional Practices. This policy excludes the purchase of books and other printed reference materials relating to the collecting subject areas of the Society which are readily available on the open market. Objects or items that are genuine bequests or genuine personal gifts to an employee are exempt from the Society's right to acquire.

Employees and their immediate family may not purchase objects deaccessioned from the Society's collections or trade objects from their personal collection for objects from the Society's collections.

Employees may not store personal collections on Society property, nor may they conduct research on personal collections on Society time.

While it is expected that the foregoing and other requirements of these Guidelines for Professional Practices will be effective in minimizing or eliminating conflicts of interest, it is suggested that where serious doubt exists as to the presence of a conflict, the employee should present full details orally or by written submission to the director or the Committee for a determination prior to proceeding with the contemplated transaction.

DEALING

Employees should not deal (buy and sell objects for profit on a regular basis) in historical or cultural artifacts, artwork, books or paper that relate to the areas of interest expressed in the Society's Collection Policy, nor should they accept outside employment from a dealer or retain interest in a dealership of similar material.

Upgrading a personal collection by occasional trades, purchases or sales is not considered dealing, although the acquisition and deletion of objects from a personal collection may require disclosure as set forth earlier in these Guidelines for Professional Practices.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

There is an existing policy for Outside Employment #BP 121. Generally, Society staff may engage in outside employment or gainful activities under the following guidelines:

1. In the case of employment of a professional nature, the director first should give prior consent in writing;
2. Outside employment for compensation shall not be undertaken while traveling at Society expense unless previous arrangements have been made to donate such

- compensation to the Society and prior approval has been granted by the director, as applicable;
3. Such activities must not lessen the ability of the employee to perform his/her duties and responsibilities in an acceptable manner;
 4. Activities for which employees are paid should be performed on their own time outside of regular Society working hours and off site;
 5. Employees are not required to disclose non-Society related activities on behalf of voluntary community groups or other public service organizations but should conduct themselves so that their activities on behalf of such organizations do not reflect adversely on the reputation or integrity of the Society.

PERSONAL GIFTS

Employees of the Society should avoid the appearance of unethical or compromising practice in relationship with donors, artists, patrons, suppliers, contractors and other businesses.

The employees of the Society are prohibited from soliciting or accepting money, loans, credits, discounts, favors, entertainment, meals, lodging and trips from present or potential suppliers and businesses, which might influence negotiations and purchasing decisions.

The following exceptions are allowed, as long as they are in compliance with the state of Washington's ethic rules:

1. The employees of the Society are allowed to accept an occasional gift of a value less than \$25.00 as long as this will not impair their judgment or otherwise influence their decision making.
2. Meals and entertainment while on Society official business may be accepted if only in the interest of the Society.

STAFF ASSISTANCE

Trustees or committee members may seek staff assistance for personal needs. However, employees shall provide no greater help than that available to a member of the general public with similar needs.

OWNERSHIP OF SCHOLARLY MATERIALS

Publications, lectures, manuscripts and all other materials prepared by an employee within the scope of his/her employment at the Society and/or any scholarly works produced by the employee as a result of financial support from the Society are the sole property of the Society except as authorized in writing by the director.

Employees should first confer with the director before agreeing to author, as a private individual, any publications that substantially draw upon materials prepared in the scope of employment with the Society.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Employees must adhere to the state of Washington's ethics rules with regards to political activities.

GOING TO A HIGHER AUTHORITY

It is the policy of the EWSHS to encourage discourse and feedback between employees and their supervisors. Employees are expected to discuss problems and issues of concern directly with their supervisors. If an employee feels their supervisor is not being responsive to the problem/issue or a disagreement exists after they have discussed the issue, the employee has the right to bring the matter to the attention of the next highest individual in the chain of command of the organization.

Circumventing this procedure is unfair to both parties as it doesn't give them the opportunity to resolve the issue fairly. Discussing disagreements outside these procedures is counter-productive to the mission of the EWSHS and is a violation of this policy.

Procedure and order to follow to elevate issues

1. Discuss the issue with the immediate supervisor.
2. The employee must inform the immediate supervisor that they are taking the issue to the next level.
3. The employee schedules a formal meeting with the person in higher authority and their supervisor indicating the nature of the issue or problem to be discussed. The employee may request confidentiality from the person in higher authority.
4. The person in higher authority may at their discretion meet with the employee with or without the immediate supervisor being present. If the immediate supervisor is not present, the person in higher authority may not take action on the problem/issue until the employee, the immediate supervisor and the person in higher authority meet to discuss the issue and arrive at a solution.
5. The employee may bring the issue or problem to higher authority levels using the above procedure with the Executive Director being the ultimate decision maker. The Executive Director must inform the President of the Board of Trustees of any issue or problem brought to them through this process.
6. In case of potential conflicts with the Executive Director, a member of the Museum's Senior Staff (other than the complainant) may go directly to the President of the Board of Trustees with an issue or problem between the CEO and any employee.
7. The EWSHS (by policy) assures that no retaliation or adverse activities will affect an employee solely for taking a complaint to a higher authority. All parties agree that they will abide by the decisions reached following this procedure and it will not negatively impact their working relations and or change their job performance.

SECTION III: VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer participation within the Society is a strong and vital tradition, and the Society's programs could not continue without the contributions and personal involvement of devoted volunteers. The staff should be supportive of volunteers, receive them as fellow workers and willingly provide appropriate training and opportunity for their intellectual enrichment.

While volunteers participate in most Society activities, those with access to the Society's collections, programs, and associated privileged information work in areas that are sensitive. Access to the Society's internal activities and information is an honor, and the lack of material compensation for effort expended on behalf of the Society in no way frees volunteers from adherence to standards that apply to paid staff. Volunteers should work toward the betterment of the Society and not for personal gain other than the gratification and knowledge to be derived from Society participation.

Although the Society may accord them stated special privileges, volunteers should not accept gifts, favors, discounts, loans, or other dispensations of things of value that accrue to them from other parties in connection with carrying out duties for the society. Conflict of interest restrictions placed upon the staff should be explained to volunteers and, where relevant, observed by them.

Volunteers should hold confidential matters of program function and administration that are not generally known or available to the public.

SECTION IV: COLLECTIONS

ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL OF COLLECTIONS

In the delicate area of acquisition and disposal of Society materials, the Society must weigh carefully the interests of the public for which it holds the collection in trust, the donor's intent in the broadest sense, the interest of the scholarly and cultural community, and the Society's own financial well-being.

Stewardship of collections entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanence, care, documentation and accessibility.

The Society must ensure that collections in its custody support its mission and public trust responsibilities and are protected, secure, unencumbered, cared for and preserved. Collections in the Society's custody must be accounted for and documented with access to them and related information permitted and regulated unless restrictions are in place regarding any specific collection or item.

The Society must ensure that acquisition, disposal and loan activities are conducted in a manner that respects the protection and preservation of cultural resources and which conforms to its mission and public trust responsibilities. The Society's Collection Policy serves as the guideline for collection-related activities.

The disposal of collection material must follow the process outlined in the Society's Collection Policy and must be solely for the advancement of the Society's mission. As per the Collection Policy, *"The proceeds realized from sales of items deaccessioned from the permanent collections shall be allocated to the purchase of materials for the permanent collections, or to otherwise support acquisition, management, or preservation of the permanent collections."*

HUMAN REMAINS AND SACRED OBJECTS

Human remains, funerary items and religious or sacred objects, as defined by NAGPRA or the tribe of origin, that are in custody of the Society shall be securely and sensitively housed and maintained with the greatest respect in a separate location apart from other Society collections. Consultation regarding the proper care of such items will be sought from official, tribally designated representatives handling such matters for their respective tribe. Access to these sensitive objects shall only be granted to tribally authorized individuals by the director and the curator of American Indian Collections following Society procedures.

Research, exhibitions, interpretation and publications about these sensitive objects should be done with tact and respect for human dignity and in consultation with tribally authorized individuals from the tribe of origin.

APPRAISALS

Society employees should not perform outside appraisals for any individual, business or organization where the items being appraised are being offered to or may potentially become available to the Society by either gift or purchase. The Society should maintain a list of appraisers but should not provide an endorsement.

The exceptions to this "no appraisal" principle are internal use (e.g. insurance evaluation for loans) of the Society, or with written permission of the director, for other non-profit organizations, units of government or tribes. Any such appraisal must represent an honest and objective judgment and must indicate how the judgment was reached.

SECTION V: PROGRAMS

The Society serves the public by advancing an understanding and appreciation of our shared cultural and artistic heritage. Exhibitions, scholarship, publications, and educational programs, public events and other activities must further advance the Society's mission and be responsive to the interests, concerns and needs of the residents of the state of Washington, in particular eastern Washington and the Inland Northwest.

The Society is committed to insuring that:

- Programs support its mission and remain responsive to the interest and concerns of the eastern Washington and Inland Northwest region.
- Programs are intellectually responsible, founded on scholarship, and consistent with current knowledge.

- Programs are accessible and encourage participation of the widest possible audience consistent with the Society's mission, vision and resources.
- Programs respect cultural diversity of the region, pluralistic values, traditions and concerns.
- Revenue-producing activities and those that involve relationships with outside organizations, businesses or groups are compatible with the mission of the Society and support its public trust responsibilities
- Programs promote the public good rather than individual financial gain

SECTION VI: GENERAL POLICIES

PROFESSIONALISM

Members of the Society's administration and its Board of Trustees should respect the professional expertise of the staff, who have been engaged because of their special knowledge or ability in some aspect of historical society and / or museum activity. Society governance should be structured so that the resolution of issues involving professional matters incorporates the opinions and professional judgments of relevant members of the Society's staff. Responsibility for the final decisions will normally rest with the Society's administration. It is hoped that all employees will support these decisions.

PERSONNEL PRACTICES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

In all matters relating to staffing practices, the standard should be the employee's ability in the relevant discipline or job function. In these matters, as well as in trustee selection, management practices, volunteer opportunity, collection usage, and relationship with the public at large, decisions must not be made on the basis of discriminatory factors such as race, color, creed, sex, age, handicap, or personal orientation.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Professional Society / museum employees should be dedicated to the high standards and discipline of their profession, but they should also remain mindful that they are employees as well as independent experts. While they must strive for professional excellence in their own specialty, they should at the same time remember that they are part of a team effort and should cooperate supportively with their colleagues for the good of the Society.

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

The Society, in its mission of contributing to the preservation and increased knowledge of the cultural heritage and artistic expression of eastern Washington and the Inland Northwest and all of its peoples, should respond positively to opportunities for cooperative and/or collaborative action with regional museums, units of government, tribes, and other institutions nationally and internationally to further that mission.

WAC's that apply to this policy and procedure

RCW 42.52 140 and 150	RCW 42.52.080
WAC 292-110-010 (use of state resources)	BP #120 Ethics Policy
Washington's Standards of Ethical Conduct for Executive Branch Employees (Executive Order 93-02)	See also AAM Code of Ethics in the Reference Section. In case of conflicts, this policy and BP #120 override the AAM Code of Ethics.