



Hoboken Public Library

Employee Political Speech and Activity Policy

Policy Statement

Employees have exactly the same right as any other citizen to free speech, to join political organizations, and to participate in political activities in their private lives. However, the Library as an institution is and must remain politically neutral and non-partisan, therefore, it has the right to and must restrict those rights for employees while they are working.

Policy Guidelines

- While performing their job duties at and/or for the Library, each employee is a representative of the Library to the public and must refrain from participating in political discussions, expressing personal political opinions, engaging in political activities while performing their job duties at and/or for the Library, and using the Library's time, supplies, equipment, or other personnel in any political activity.
 - Political activities include, but are not limited to: advocating the election or appointment of any candidate for office, verbally or otherwise; distributing literature or stickers; distributing or wearing buttons, apparel, or accessories supporting a political candidate or cause, soliciting or accepting funds for political candidates, campaigns, or campaign materials, and soliciting participation in political campaigns.
- Employees may not express personal political views in a way that implies endorsement by the Hoboken Public Library, the Library Board of Trustees, or by the City of Hoboken.
- As a courtesy to other staff members and to avoid disharmony among staff, employees are also expected to avoid expressing their personal political opinions during working hours and while representing the Library both in the Library and the community.
- Nothing in this policy shall be construed as restricting employees right to express their political and other opinions, or to engage in lawful political activity, including seeking political office, provided all related political activities are conducted outside of the Library during non-working hours, and when not otherwise being paid or working on behalf of the Library.
- Nothing in this policy shall limit employees' right to speak openly with patrons and visitors to the Library with regard to political subjects initiated by patrons and visitors, in order to assist and provide service to such persons, provided

employees maintain a neutral position and not express any personal opinion on political topics or candidates

- A limited exception to these requirements may exist with regard to certain political topics that are specifically related to public libraries, such as supporting patrons' personal rights, free speech, and freedom of choice in what they read, learn, and absorb while in the Library and while using Library resources.
- Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Adopted by the Hoboken Public Library Board of Trustees on April 22, 2025