

BAKER COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Policy : Personal Use of District Resources

Summary

In general, District employees and agents may not use District resources in any form for personal benefit or gain, or for the benefit or gain of any other individuals or outside organizations.

Reason for Policy

Oregon Ethics Law:

All District employees and volunteers must know that as public officials, they are held personally responsible for complying with the provisions in Oregon Government Ethics law. The law prohibits public officials from using or attempting to use their official positions or offices to obtain a financial benefit for themselves, relatives or businesses they are associated with through opportunities that would not otherwise be available but for the position or office held.

In the State of Oregon, public officials become public officials through employment, appointment, election or volunteering. Oregon Government Ethics law prohibits every public official from using or attempting to use the position held as a public official to obtain a financial benefit, if the opportunity for the financial benefit would not otherwise be available but for the position held by the public official. The financial benefit prohibited can be either an opportunity for gain or to avoid an expense.

[ORS 244.040(1)]

Public Trust:

The District deals constantly with the public's perception of how we conduct the business of the District. All District employees must be constantly mindful of the public trust that we discharge, of the necessity for conducting ourselves with the highest ethical principles, and avoiding any action that may be viewed as a violation of the public trust. As custodians of resources entrusted us by the public, government entities, and private donors, we should always be mindful of how we utilize these resources. As members of working teams and our communities, we should also be mindful of our responsibility to act so that others are not deprived of access to necessary resources. These resources include, but are not limited to, employee's time, facilities, supplies, and equipment, such as telephones, fax machines, and computers.

Accountability:

In any business environment, however, accountability must be balanced with a consideration of the needs of employees to carry on normal day-to-day responsibilities related to their personal lives. The complex task of balancing accountability to the public with the life-needs of employees calls for the District to provide direction when weighing these two essential obligations. A release of liability form shall be signed by the employee given authority to borrow District property for personal use.

Policy Statement

The use of BCLD resources and services for non-official purposes is permitted only in compliance with the following criteria:

- The cost to the District must be negligible.

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- The use must not interfere with a District employee's obligation to carry out District duties in a timely and effective manner. Time spent engaged in the non-official use of District resources is not considered to be District work time.
- The use must in no way undermine the use of District resources and services for official purposes.
- The use neither expresses nor implies sponsorship or endorsement by the District.
- The use must be consistent with state and federal laws regarding obscenity, libel, or the like, and state and federal laws and District policies regarding political activity, the marketing of products or services, or other inappropriate activities.
- Users should be aware that internal or external audit or other needs may require examination of uses of District resources or services and should not expect such uses to be free from inspection.

Application:

Each case will depend upon the particular circumstances and other important factors such as materiality or reasonableness. The ultimate control, therefore, lies with each employee's supervisor, as that person should have direct knowledge of the behaviors and needs of the individual employee.

Appropriateness of Practices:

Employees should consult with their supervisor or Library Director in advance if they have any questions about appropriateness of certain practices. A supervisor's decision cannot, however, circumvent other policies and procedures of the District that may restrict personal use beyond the limitations cited herein. For example, the use of District telephones, fax machines, mail services, vehicles, and facilities must comply with existing District policies, and the use of District resources in political activity is prohibited.

Resource Limitations:

Copy, Print and Mail Services:

Postage stamps, mailing materials, copy and printing resources owned by the District may only be used for District-related business.

Facilities:

Access to non-public areas of District facilities is permitted for official or authorized use only. Employees and agents may not access District facilities exclusively for personal use during closed hours.

Telephones and Fax Machines:

Only calls related to District business may be charged to District lines or calling cards. Personal calls may not be billed to District telephone numbers. Personal long distance calls may be made from District telephones only when these calls are placed as credit card, collect, third number (non-District) calls, or reported within 14 days to District administration for reimbursement arrangements by the employee. This telephone policy also applies to the use of District fax machines.

Vehicles:

No employee can allow the use of a District vehicle that is not in compliance with the District's Personnel Policy on Use of Vehicles.

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Reporting Misuse of District Resources:

Employees are required to immediately report to the Library Director knowledge or suspicion of financial or usage irregularities that may constitute misappropriation or misuse of District assets (i.e., improper personal use of District resources, facilities, equipment, supplies, cash).