

# GOV 03 Duties and Responsibilities of Board Members

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<b>Policy Title:</b>	Duties and Responsibilities of Board Members	<b>Policy Review Date:</b>	December 7, 2023
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## 1.0 Scope

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The Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library Board expects its members to understand the extent of their authority and to use it appropriately. The Board's role is governance of the Library. This policy sets out the obligations of individual Board members and establishes guidelines regarding communications between Board members and library staff.

## 2.0 Duties

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Each member of the Board is expected to become a productive participant in exercising the duties of the Board as a whole.

Board members are responsible for exercising a Duty of Diligence as follows:

- be informed of legislation under which the library exists, Board bylaws, mission, vision and values;
- be informed about the activities of the library and the community and issues that affect the library
- attend Board meetings regularly and contribute from a personal, professional and life experience to the work of the Board; and
- be prepared for all Board meetings and use meeting time productively.

Board members are responsible for exercising a Duty of Loyalty, as follows:

- adhere to the regulations of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*;
- act in the interest of the library members and the community over and above other interest group involvement, membership on other boards, council or personal interest;
- speak with “one voice” once a decision is reached and a resolution is passed by the Board; and
- represent the library positively to the community.

Board members are responsible for exercising a Duty of Care, as follows:

- promote a high level of library service;
- consider information gathered in preparation for decision making;
- offer personal perspective and opinions on issues that are subject to board discussion and decisions;
- show respect for the opinions of others;
- respect the confidential nature of library service to users while being aware of, and in compliance with, applicable laws governing freedom of information;
- resist censorship of library materials by groups or individuals;
- assume no authority to make decisions outside of board meetings;
- know and respect the distinction in the roles of the board and the staff; and
- refrain from individually directing the CEO and the staff.

## 3.0 Communications between Board and Staff

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A Board member who wishes to inquire into a certain matter or who wishes to obtain copies of documents on file at the library should address the inquiry to the CEO. Staff should not be consulted for the purposes of making inquiries.

Reports, information or opinions requested by a Board member from staff, consultants or legal counsel require a resolution of the Board prior to any action being taken on such request. Inquiries which require extensive research and staff time should be directed through the Board.

Routine inquiries may be made in person, telephone or email. Unless copies of documents are requested, the reply will usually be communicated in the same matter as the question. Board members requesting a written response to an inquiry should submit same in writing.

When the response to an inquiry made by a Board member is communicated in written format then all other Board members shall receive a copy of the response accompanied

by a note indicating the name of the Board member making the request and the date of the request.

Board members can expect to receive a response to a routine inquiry within one business day, although in practical terms, the response can usually be obtained in a shorter time. Where a response cannot be provided in one business day, the member making the inquiry shall be informed of the reasons for delay and the expected response date.

In general, Board members have access to any documents on file with the library except:

- documents prepared by staff still in draft format and not approved by the author for release;
- documents to be provided to the Board at a future time such as agenda material;
- personnel files; and
- vital statistics.

No original files, drawings, or other documents may be removed from the library.

All requests for information will be subject to the terms and conditions of the *Freedom of Information Act* and *Protection of Individual Privacy Act*.