

# Employee Handbook



This handbook has been prepared to acquaint employees with the policies, procedures, and philosophy of the Roeliff Jansen Community Library.

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to amend, supplement, or rescind any or all provisions of this handbook as deemed appropriate at their sole and absolute discretion.

Approved by the Board of Trustees  
December 9, 2008  
Amended, April 19, 2022  
Amended, November 19, 2024

## **Our History**

The Hillsdale Library was founded on October 6, 1913 by a group of fifty-five citizens and several local businessmen, led by the Rev. Charles S. Oakley of the Methodist Church and Mr. David Moore, a bibliophile and bookbinder. It was organized as an Association Library and each member of the Association contributed \$1.00 to \$5.00 per year to support it.

The Library was initially housed in an annex to the Arthur Closson store, which stood on the spot now occupied by the Hillsdale Supermarket.

The former Library building, now the Hillsdale Town Hall, on Route 23 was opened to the public on January 3, 1925. The Library had such an admirable structure due to the generosity of Flavia M. Bristol of Hillsdale, who, in her will, left a bequest of \$30,000 for the erection and maintenance of a library.

In December 2004, The Regents of the University of the State of New York granted an amendment to the Library's charter to expand the service area to include the towns of Hillsdale, Copake, and Ancram. The Library's name was changed to Roeliff Jansen Community Library.

On November 6, 2010, the new Roeliff Jansen Community Library building in Copake opened its doors to the public after ten years of planning and twenty months of construction. The new building is designed to be a model for green energy savings and more than doubles the square footage of the old Library building in the hamlet of Hillsdale. The funds to construct the new building came from a mix of private donations, federal, state, and foundation grants, and bank loans. No local tax money was used.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Roeliff Jansen Community Library is to serve every sector of the community by inspiring lifelong learning and curiosity, advancing knowledge and understanding, strengthening the vitality of the Roe Jan area, and securing the Library's stability for generations to come.

## **Vision Statement**

Roeliff Jansen Community Library envisions a world in which every individual is inspired and empowered to achieve their full potential as informed citizens and caring individuals. In so doing, we will strive to help the people of our service area to enhance their knowledge, skills, and talents to the benefit of themselves, their families, their communities, and the world at large. We are committed to equal accessibility for diverse populations and intellectual freedom for all.

## **Roe Jan Library Philosophy**

The Library hopes to provide a working environment that fosters growth, opportunity, and job satisfaction. To establish such an environment, each employee will:

- Respect the individual dignity of others
- Communicate with each other in positive ways
- Maintain a professional attitude
- Be courteous and flexible
- Express dissatisfaction through appropriate channels

## **Equal Opportunity Employment**

The Roeliff Jansen Community Library is an equal opportunity employer. The Library does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, military or veteran status, citizenship status, ethnicity, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by local, state, or federal laws.

The Library will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

Employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring their issues to the attention of the Library Director or the HR Committee. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Hiring and Introductory Period**

The Library Director is appointed by and responsible to the Library Board. The Director hires all other staff.

The Library strives to employ the most qualified person for each position; therefore, employment decisions are based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. To obtain a

diverse pool of qualified applicants, the Library recruits internally and externally by advertising. All applicants considered for employment will receive a copy of the job description of the position for which they are applying.

All new employees work on an introductory basis for the first six months after their date of hire. The introductory period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. The Library uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or the Library may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period, with or without cause or advance notice.

### **Reference and Background Checks**

Offers of employment are contingent upon satisfactory background and reference checks. It is expected that the investigation of personal information will be found to be accurate and that former employers will provide satisfactory references.

### **Performance Evaluation**

Performance evaluations will be conducted annually by the Library Director. The Director will be evaluated by the Board of Trustees. The purpose of these evaluations is to clarify goals and identify areas for growth.

## **Employee Status**

Full-Time, Salaried: Employees who work 30 hours or more per week.

Full-Time, Hourly: Employees who work 30 hours or more per week.

Part-Time, Hourly: Employees work fewer than 30 hours per week.

Limited Part-Time, Hourly: Employees who work fewer than 20 hours per week.

## **Nepotism**

An employee may not directly work for a relative or supervise a relative. The Library Director reserves the right to take action if an actual or potential conflict of interest arises involving relatives who are in positions at any level that may affect the review of employment decisions.

There may also be situations where there is a conflict or the potential for conflict because of the relationship between employees, even if there is no direct reporting relationship or authority involved. In that case, the Library may separate the employees by reassignment.

If an employee is in a close personal relationship with another employee, the Library asks that they avoid displays of affection or excessive personal conversation at work.

**Payday**

Employees are paid every two weeks, on the Friday following the end of the pay period.

**Termination**

An employee may be dismissed for incompetence or for just cause. The notice of dismissal shall be in writing and shall state the specific charges. Layoffs may be made due to lack of funds, discontinuance of activity, or reorganization.

**Resignations**

Resignations must be in writing. Library staff should provide two weeks' notice. The Library Director should provide four weeks' notice.

**Confidentiality**

Staff and patron information is confidential and should not be discussed with any person or persons outside the Library. Copying, removing, allowing unauthorized access to Library or patron documents, information, files, or mailing lists, or any form of distribution of patron information is not allowed. Any breach of this confidentiality requirement is grounds for termination.

**Attendance and Punctuality**

Employees are required to notify the Library Director at least one hour prior to the start of their shift if they are not going to be available for work. If ill, employees must advise their supervisor each day that they will not be in. Excessive absenteeism, habitual lateness, and failure to show up or notify one's supervisor when scheduled can be cause for dismissal.

### **Meal Breaks**

All employees working a shift of six or more hours are provided a 30 minute paid meal break.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual Harassment by word or deed of any employee, trustee, volunteer, or patron will not be tolerated. Behavior that is offensive, intimidating, or abusive in nature is prohibited. An employee who feels that they are a victim of any form of harassment should follow the Library's Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy.

### **Worker's Compensation and Unemployment Insurance**

Employee benefits under each program are determined by the law and are available for use in the event of injury or unemployment.

### **Time Off Policy**

The Board of Trustees believes that employees should have the opportunity to enjoy time away from work to help balance their lives. The Trustees recognize that employees have diverse needs for time off from work and have established a separate Leave Policy outlining Paid Time Off, Vacation Time, and other leave by employment class and seniority.

### **Lactation Policy**

Any employee who has a reasonable need to express breast milk will be granted 30 minutes of paid leave to do so and will be provided with a clean, private space that meets the requirements of [New York State Labor Law section 206-c](#).



## **Health Insurance**

The Board of Trustees provides a group health insurance policy for full-time salaried employees, up to a yearly cost of \$12,000. In addition, the Library pays a stipend for health insurance to full-time hourly staff of \$310 per month.

## **Rules of Conduct**

Rules of Conduct are intended to promote the orderly and efficient operation of the Library as well as protect the rights of all employees and patrons. It is each employee's responsibility to know the rules and abide by them.

Employees are expected to follow the Library's Customer Service Policy and abide by the rules listed below. Violations shall be regarded as cause for disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Following is a list of unacceptable acts or behavior:

- Direct violation of Library policies and procedures
- Neglect of duty
- Repeated absences or tardiness
- Any act of dishonesty
- Insubordination
- Disorderly conduct
- Sexual harassment
- Alcohol, drug, or firearm possession or use
- Theft, intentional destruction, or defacing Library property

## **Smoking**

Using tobacco or cannabis products inside the building or smoking or vaping within 100 feet of the Library building is prohibited.

### **Drug and Alcohol Use**

If an employee reports to work visibly impaired and cannot perform the required job functions, that employee will not be allowed to work. Proper treatment of the employee, including sending the employee home, will be considered.

### **General Housekeeping**

All employees are expected to do their part in keeping the Library building clean, neat, and organized. All employees are responsible for cleaning up after themselves in common areas such as the lunch area and restrooms.

### **Telephone Calls**

Use of the telephone is primarily restricted to Library business. Employees are permitted to make or receive personal calls within reason.

### **Computer/Internet/Email Use**

To help employees do their jobs, the Library may provide access to computers, computer files, email, and software. Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization.

The Library tries hard to have a workplace that is free of harassment and sensitive to the diversity of

our employees. Therefore, the Library does not allow employees to use computers and email in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others, or harmful to morale.

Employees may not display, download, or email sexually explicit images, messages, and cartoons. They also may not use computers and email for ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color jokes, or anything that another person might take as harassment or disrespect. Staff should remember that all email is discoverable in any legal proceeding.

Employees may not use email to ask other people to contribute to outside organizations. Use of email for political or religious causes is strictly prohibited. Personal use of work email accounts is discouraged.

The Library buys and licenses computer software for business purposes. The Library does not own the copyright to this software or its documentation. Unless the software developer provides authorization, the Library does not have the right to use the software on more than one computer. Employees may only use software on local area networks or on multiple machines according to the software license agreement. The Library prohibits the illegal duplication of software and its documentation.

If an employee knows about any violations to this policy, they should notify the Library Director. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Outside Employment**

Employees may hold an outside job as long as they can satisfactorily perform their Library job and the job does not interfere with the Library's scheduling demands.

The Library holds all employees to the same performance standards and scheduling expectations regardless if they have other jobs. In order to remain employed at the Library an employee may be asked to alter an outside job if it is determined that it is impacting their performance or ability to meet the Library's requirements, which may change over time. Employees may not have an outside job that is a conflict of interest with the Library.

### **Continuing Education**

Library employees are encouraged to keep abreast of new developments in librarianship or other relevant fields and continue to grow in professional and work-related skills. Library employees are encouraged to attend workshops, seminars, conferences, or appropriate exhibits.

## **Media Contact**

Information is not to be given to the media by a staff member unless designated by the Library Director. In the event contact is made by the media, the staff member should request the name, phone number, and organization represented, and give that information to the Library Director who will return the contact.

## **Health and Safety**

Employees must make a conscious effort to be aware of safety and health hazards at all times.

Following is a list of basic precautions to follow:

- Make sure that the aisles in work areas are free of debris.
- Close cabinet doors and drawers when not in use.
- Remove or cover any sharp edges or objects that protrude from any equipment.
- Observe good lifting practices.
- Report all injuries, no matter how slight, immediately to supervisor.

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**Acknowledgment of Receipt of Employee Handbook  
and  
Agreement to Conditions of Employment**

I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the *Employee Handbook*.

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about everything contained in this handbook pertaining to general personnel policies and my privileges and obligations as an employee.

I understand the contents of the handbook and agree to abide by the conditions specified. I also understand that the Board of Trustees has the sole and absolute discretion to amend, supplement or rescind any provision of this handbook as it deems appropriate.

In addition, I agree to the Confidentiality Policy of the Roeliff Jansen Community Library.

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Employee's Signature

Date

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Director's Signature

Date

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Supervisor's Signature

Date