

Somers Library Whistleblower Policy

Purpose

The Somers Library is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct, integrity, accountability, and compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and Library policies. The purpose of this Whistleblower Policy is to encourage employees, trustees, officers, volunteers, and other individuals associated with the Library to report in good faith any suspected or actual wrongdoing without fear of retaliation.

This policy is intended to comply with applicable provisions of New York State law, including New York Labor Law §740, and to support the Library's commitment to transparency and responsible governance.

Reporting Wrongdoing

Individuals are encouraged to report any activity that they reasonably believe constitutes:

- Fraud, theft, embezzlement, or misuse of Library funds or property;
- Deliberate falsification of financial records or reports;
- Violations of federal, state, or local laws, rules, or regulations;
- Violations of Library policies or ethical standards;
- Abuse of authority or official position;
- Substantial and specific dangers to public health or safety;
- Improper governmental action;
- Conflicts of interest or other unethical conduct;
- Any other improper, dishonest, or unlawful activity.

A report may be made when an individual reasonably believes that wrongdoing has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur. Proof of wrongdoing is not required before making a report.

Protection from Retaliation

No employee, trustee, officer, volunteer, applicant for employment, former employee, contractor, or other individual associated with the Library who makes a good-faith report under this policy, or who participates in an investigation of a reported concern, shall be subject to retaliation.

Retaliation includes, but is not limited to:

- Termination of employment or service;
- Demotion;
- Suspension;
- Reduction in hours, pay, or benefits;
- Harassment or intimidation;

- Threats;
- Negative employment actions;
- Discrimination; or
- Any other adverse action resulting from making a good-faith report or participating in an investigation.

Any individual who engages in retaliation in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, removal from office, or other appropriate corrective action, consistent with applicable law, collective bargaining agreements, civil service requirements, and Library policies.

Reporting Procedures

Individuals are encouraged to raise concerns as soon as possible.

Reports may be made verbally or in writing and should include as much information as possible regarding the suspected wrongdoing.

Reports should generally be directed through the following channels:

1. The individual's immediate supervisor, when appropriate;
2. The Library Director;
3. The President of the Board of Trustees; or
4. Any member of the Board of Trustees if the concern involves the Library Director, senior management, or if the individual is uncomfortable reporting through other channels.

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to limit any individual's rights under applicable law to report concerns to governmental agencies, law enforcement authorities, or other public bodies.

Confidentiality

The Library will make reasonable efforts to protect the confidentiality of individuals who report concerns and of those who participate in investigations. Information will be shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know in order to conduct a thorough investigation or as otherwise required by law.

While confidentiality will be maintained to the fullest extent possible, anonymity and complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in all circumstances.

Investigation of Reports

All reports made under this policy will be reviewed promptly and investigated as appropriate under the circumstances.

The Library will make reasonable efforts to:

- Acknowledge receipt of the report when possible;
- Conduct a fair and impartial review;

- Take appropriate corrective action when warranted; and
- Inform the reporting individual, to the extent permitted by law and confidentiality considerations, that the matter has been reviewed and addressed.

Investigations shall be conducted by the Library Director, the Board of Trustees, legal counsel, or another individual designated by the Board, as appropriate based on the nature of the complaint. Steps will be taken to deal with the issue consistent with Somers Library and Town of Somers policies, collective bargaining agreements and civil service law.

False Reports

This policy is intended to protect individuals who make reports in good faith. Reports that are knowingly false, made with reckless disregard for the truth, or made maliciously may result in disciplinary action consistent with applicable law and Library policies.

Policy Administration

The Board of Trustees shall oversee the administration of this policy and shall review the policy periodically to ensure continued compliance with applicable laws and best practices.

All employees, trustees, officers, and volunteers shall be informed of this policy and shall be expected to comply with its provisions.

Adopted by the Somers Library Board of Trustees: August 18, 2021

Reviewed and Approved by the Board of Trustees on July 15, 2026