

History Nebraska

Institutional Values and Code of Ethics

VALUES

Nebraska's history is an essential part of the fabric and identity of the state. History Nebraska, the state's leading and official historical organization, recognizes and adheres to these institutional values as it seeks to interpret and preserve that history:

Preservation

Preservation of Nebraska's past is important; it is our legacy. In everything we do we strive to balance preservation of the state's historical resources with the need for public access to them.

Public Service

We exist to serve the people of Nebraska. As stewards of public resources History Nebraska seeks to interpret Nebraska history to enrich and enlighten all through public access and a wide range of services we hope to promote inquiry, dialogue, diversity of opinion and support.

Trust

History Nebraska staff and trustees are committed to meeting the highest standards of personal integrity and professional ethics.

Excellence

We recognize and value the talent, expertise and contributions of all History Nebraska staff and trustees, and together we strive to meet the highest professional standards.

CONDUCT

History Nebraska's reputation for integrity is its most valuable asset. The trustees, staff, and volunteers of History Nebraska recognize that their first duty to the institution is to act in all things in a manner that merits public trust and confidence.

Trustees, staff, and volunteers of History Nebraska shall observe the highest standards of honesty and good faith in all transactions touching their duties to History Nebraska. They shall not use their positions with History Nebraska, directly or indirectly, for private gain, or to obtain favors or benefits for themselves, members of their families, or any other persons.

The following statements are meant to define the relationship between History Nebraska and its trustees, staff, and volunteers.

1. History Nebraska trustees, staff, and volunteers have both the right and the obligation to present information related to Nebraska history and culture, regardless of format.
2. History Nebraska trustees, staff, and volunteers have the right to use their own time to any legitimate purpose they choose.
3. History Nebraska has the right to expect its trustees, staff, and volunteers to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the mission of the institution and protects its public reputation and credibility.
4. History Nebraska trustees, staff, and volunteers are obligated to insure that their personal publications, speeches, or other activities are not construed to be the policies or opinions of History Nebraska.

DISCLOSURE

Disclosure is fundamental to understanding and dealing with potential conflicts of interest. Disclosure provides an opportunity to examine a proposed activity to determine whether an actual or potential conflict of interest may exist and if so, to resolve it in a manner that is mutually satisfactory to both History Nebraska and to the individual.

Each trustee shall disclose to the board any personal, business, or organizational interests and affiliations that could be construed as a conflict of interest. This disclosure shall be made at the time any conflict or potential conflict of interest becomes apparent. Trustees shall abstain from voting on any issue where a conflict of interest may exist.

History Nebraska staff must disclose personal professional activities, outside employment or consulting, and private collecting to their division head. Disclosure must occur prior to concluding agreements or contracts, or beginning actual participation in such activities. In the case of personal collecting, disclosure shall occur at the time of employment or within ten (10) days of acquiring materials that History Nebraska may be interested in acquiring under the current mission statement and/or formal acquisition policy. If actual or potential conflicts of interest cannot be resolved, the matter shall be brought to the History Nebraska director. If the issue remains unresolved to the satisfaction of all involved parties, the advice and counsel of the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission shall be sought.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest, either real or apparent, may exist whenever proposed activities of the History Nebraska staff fall within the mission of History Nebraska. Broadly stated, the mission of History Nebraska is "to collect, preserve, research, and interpret the history of Nebraska."

Conflict of interest for trustees, staff, and volunteers may include (but is not limited to) these considerations:

1. Converting History Nebraska property to private purposes or using History Nebraska personnel, equipment, or supplies in private endeavors.
2. Using their positions or confidential History Nebraska information for financial or other personal gain, or in any way contrary to the best interests of History Nebraska (Holding office in, or being recognized by, professional organizations with which History Nebraska has a supporting or cooperating relationship shall not be construed as using History Nebraska employment for personal gain.)
3. Soliciting or proselytizing for charitable, religious, public service, or other organizations during duty hours (for staff) or using in any way the name of History Nebraska for the benefit of such organizations.
4. Competing with or impeding History Nebraska's mission.
5. Participating in the solicitation of bids or in the awarding of contracts that may result in financial or personal gain to the trustee, employee, or volunteer: to members of their family, or to a business with which they may be associated. For staff, advertising or soliciting for private consulting or outside employment of any type wherein the advertisement or solicitation refers to their employment with History Nebraska

6. Accepting any economic opportunity under circumstances in which there is a significant possibility the opportunity is being provided to influence the individual's conduct in the performance of official History Nebraska duties.
7. Advertising or endorsing, whether or not compensation is received, any product or service in which the advertisement or endorsement refers to an individual's association with History Nebraska.
8. Providing appraisals (statements of monetary value) for any items expected to be donated to History Nebraska or recommending one appraiser over another to a potential donor. Under current IRS guidelines and the History Nebraska Collections Policy, History Nebraska cannot act as a qualified appraiser because of the inherent conflict with its role as a donee.

OBLIGATIONS

Trustees

Trustees, while serving on the board, shall be prudent in the acquisition, retention, and/or disposition of their personal collections, and shall not engage in collecting activities or in the investing or selling of artifacts and historical objects to their own advantage if such advantage is gained through the exploitation of their positions at History Nebraska. Items from History Nebraska's collections, including deaccessioned items, shall not be given, sold, or otherwise transferred, publicly or privately, to trustees, or their immediate families or representatives. Each trustee is obligated to maintain a concerned and committed involvement in its governance. Each trustee must be willing to stay informed on History Nebraska matters, faithfully attend meetings, participate in committee activities, and support measures as may be requested by the President and/or the full board.

Staff

Staff members are obligated to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the mission of the institution and protects its public reputation and credibility. Additional guidelines and standards for staff conduct are itemized in the State of Nebraska Personnel Rules and Regulations.

A. Appraising

- History Nebraska staff may not appraise, either for a fee or as a service, objects or property of the type collected by or associated with the operation of any department of History Nebraska. Reporting or otherwise making available prices or values reflected in published lists, catalogs, or auction reports does not constitute appraisal.

B. Collecting

- Dealing or brokering in items and materials represented in the History Nebraska's collections is prohibited for the History Nebraska staff. History Nebraska staff may not knowingly compete with History Nebraska in any personal collecting activity involving items that History Nebraska (if given the opportunity) might choose to acquire under its mission statement and/or formal acquisition policies. Excepted are books or periodicals generally available for purchase by the public.
- Collecting by staff of items or materials generically similar to those within the History Nebraska's collections should be done with care to maintain the necessary distinction between staff official and private activities. The utmost discretion must be exercised to insure that no real or apparent conflict of interest arises between an employee collecting for him/herself and History Nebraska.
- History Nebraska staff shall inform the appropriate division of personal acquisitions in which History Nebraska might have an interest based on its mission statement and/or formal acquisition policies within ten (10) days of acquisition. History Nebraska reserves the option, for a period not to exceed the time allotted in State of Nebraska and/or the History Nebraska accounting practices regarding employee reimbursement, to purchase the item(s) at the same price paid by the employee, including reimbursement of associated costs such as admissions and transportation.
- History Nebraska staff or members of their immediate families (spouse, children, parents, or others bearing the same relation to a spouse) may not acquire any item or materials from the collections of History Nebraska even if they have been formally deaccessioned.
- History Nebraska staff may not have in their personal possession any item or materials from the History Nebraska collections. Equipment or materials otherwise owned by History Nebraska may be exempt during the performance of official History Nebraska business.

C. Consulting/Outside Employment

- Consulting in any area of Nebraska history for individuals, organizations, or agencies within the state is part of History Nebraska's mission. History Nebraska staff are expected to provide such services as part of their regular duties as time and resources allow.
- Private consulting within the state on any topic relating to Nebraska history may be a conflict of interest. Private consulting done out of state that uses the name of the History Nebraska or the title of any History Nebraska employee may also be a conflict of interest. Private consulting within or outside the state may be undertaken only with permission of the employee's division head and the History Nebraska director.
- Projects falling within History Nebraska's mission that History Nebraska chooses not to perform may be undertaken by a History Nebraska employee, subject to a case-by-case approval by the History Nebraska director. As time and resources allow, History Nebraska staff may engage in professional consulting under the auspices of organizations or institutions

with which History Nebraska has a supporting or cooperating relationship including, but not limited to AAM, AASLH, or SAA. When such professional consulting is undertaken on the employee's own time, the employee may accept reasonable honoraria and reimbursement of travel and other expenses.

- History Nebraska staff may undertake outside employment as permitted in the State of Nebraska Personnel Rules and Regulations. Care must be taken, however, to prevent conflicts with regular duty hours, public service, any applicable union contracts, and other interests of History Nebraska. The employee's supervisor and the History Nebraska director shall be informed of the employee's intent to accept such employment.
- Outside employment or teaching that uses the name of History Nebraska or the title of the employee or that otherwise draws upon History Nebraska resources may constitute a conflict of interest. Outside employment for which the employee is qualified by reason of his/her affiliation with History Nebraska may constitute a conflict of interest. Such employment may be undertaken only with permission of the employee's supervisor and the History Nebraska director.

D. Gifts

- The acceptance of gifts by History Nebraska staff from sources outside History Nebraska shall be governed by the rules and guidelines established by the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission.

E. Referrals of Vendors

- History Nebraska staff shall be circumspect in referring the public to commercial vendors of goods and services such as appraisers, restorers, or dealers. Whenever possible, the names of more than a single source should be provided so that no appearance of personal favoritism is created, along with a verbal or written disclaimer that providing such a list does not constitute an endorsement. To the extent possible History Nebraska will keep standard lists of providers of goods and services.

F. Speaking

- Public speaking to groups, organizations, or agencies on topics of Nebraska history is part of History Nebraska's mission. History Nebraska staff are expected, as part of their duties, to provide such services as time and resources allow. When speaking is undertaken as part of an employee's regular work schedule or assignment and supported by the expenditure of History Nebraska funds or the use of History Nebraska resources, the employee may not accept personal payment or reimbursement of travel and other expenses.
- When public speaking engagements are prepared for and undertaken outside an employee's regular work schedule and assignment, and travel and other expenses are not provided by History Nebraska, the employee may accept reasonable honoraria and/or reimbursement for travel and other expenses. In such cases the employee's division head and the History Nebraska director shall be notified.

G. Writing and Publishing

- The publication and other dissemination of information about Nebraska history is an important part of History Nebraska's mission. History Nebraska staff are encouraged and expected as part of their duties to engage in writing and publishing as time and resources permit.

- History Nebraska staff may accept payment for articles, books, or other publications written outside of regular work schedules or assignments and utilizing material or data gathered as part of their duties with History Nebraska, subject to the following limitations:
 - The employee's activities at History Nebraska must not be conducted so as to benefit personal research. Regular work assignments must be given priority.
 - The employee's supervisor and the History Nebraska director must be notified of all such outside research, writing, or publication projects, including those for which no payment is received (excluding book reviews for scholarly journals), if the project is in any way related to the employee's History Nebraska affiliation.

Volunteers and Emeritus Trustees

Volunteers are obligated to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the mission of the institution and protects its public reputation and credibility.

I have reviewed the History Nebraska Institutional Values and Code of Ethics and will abide by its terms.

Signature

Date

Please Print Your Name

Title

History Nebraska Board of Trustee/History Nebraska Emeritus Trustee/History Nebraska
Volunteer/History Nebraska Staff

Revised and Approved by The History Nebraska Board of Trustees, July 20, 2018

