

## **FRIENDS OF THE MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES CODE OF ETHICS**

The Friends of the Missouri State Archives is committed to serving the public good by supporting the Missouri State Archives in its mission to foster an appreciation of Missouri history and to illuminate contemporary public issues by preserving and making available the state's permanent records to its citizens and their government. To this end, members offer their time, talent, and resources to assist the Missouri State Archives in support of this mission.

Recognizing that success depends on the support and confidence of the public, the Friends of the Missouri State Archives has developed this code of ethics for its board members to demonstrate the high standards of the organization.

**Public Service:** As an advocate for a public institution, the Friends recognizes that its first obligation is to the citizenry and conflicting obligations would undermine its credibility.

- Decisions by board members should not be influenced or appear to be influenced by personal or outside organizational interests.
- A conflict of interest policy should be maintained to avoid and/or appropriately manage any potential conflicts.

**Equity:** As a statewide organization, the Friends recognizes the value of every region, every group, and every person in the state.

- All people should be treated with respect and protected from discrimination and harassment.
- The organization should be nonpartisan in nature, with a clear distinction between personal values and the common values of the organization.

**Integrity:** As a philanthropic organization acting on behalf of the people, the Friends recognizes the need to be above reproach.

- The organization should adhere to all applicable laws and to its mission as defined by the board of directors.
- The organization should be prudent, fair, and honest in all its actions.
- Board members should serve without any form of compensation, but may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of board duties.

**Dedication:** To better serve its mission, the Friends recognizes the need to devote time and energy to reach its goals.

- Board members should familiarize themselves with their duties, the mission and activities of the organization, and the mission and activities of the Missouri State Archives.
- Knowledge and skills of benefit to the organization should be offered, and any such contribution should be appropriately recognized.
- Board members should actively participate in the organization.
- A policy on attendance and participation should be maintained to establish expectations for board members.

**Responsible Stewardship:** As a nonprofit organization soliciting outside funding, the Friends recognizes the care and attention that must be given to its fiscal policies to earn the trust of its donors.

- Accurate and complete financial reports should be prepared at least quarterly.
- The organization's finances should be reviewed by an audit committee on an annual basis.
- Excessive reserve funds should not be accumulated.
- An annual budget should be approved by the board.
- A reasonable balance between the cost of programs in pursuit of the organization's mission and administrative costs should be maintained.
- A reasonable balance between the cost of fundraising and the donations received should be maintained.

**Responsible Fundraising:** To provide a sound and worthy investment for donors, the Friends recognizes the value of conscientious fundraising and proper recognition of supporters.

- All solicitations for funds should be truthful and free from undue influence or excessive pressure.
- No board members should be paid a commission or rewarded in any manner for soliciting funds.
- The privacy and confidentiality of donors' personal financial information will be respected.
- The intention of donors should be honored in the expenditure of funds.

**Openness:** To ensure its accountability to the public, the Friends recognizes the need to be transparent in its operations and provide public access to information on its activities.

- Information on the organization's mission, finances, and activities should be made available to the public in a timely manner. Whenever possible, such information should be made available on the organization's website.
- Any concerns or complaints brought to the attention of the organization should be responded to and, if necessary, corrective measures taken without delay.

This code is intended to serve as a broad guideline to ethical practices. It is not intended to cover every situation and should be interpreted with common sense and in good faith.

Board members will commit to upholding the principles of this code. If a board member does not comply with the terms of this code or brings the reputation of the Friends of the Missouri State Archives into disrepute, appropriate corrective action will be determined by a majority of board members, including possible release or suspension from board service.

Violations of this code may be reported anonymously to the board president who will bring the matter to the board for action. Complaints against the president may be reported anonymously to any other board member. No adverse action may be taken against someone reporting a violation in good faith.

Board members should review this code biannually to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.