



Policy HR 8.5 Limits to Personal Business Conducted on Duty

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees: 09/24/2009

Revised: 01/24/2013; 02/23/2017

As a matter of public ethics, NOLS employees are prohibited from furthering personal interests or realizing financial benefits as a result of employment with the North Olympic Library Systems.

Except as specifically provided below, NOLS employees are expected to refrain from conducting personal business during working hours. Employees may not make personal use of the Library facilities, equipment, materials, services, privileges or other resources, except as specifically provided in this policy. Inappropriate or excessive personal use of NOLS resources may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

1. Library employees as Library patrons

This policy is not intended to restrict the right of NOLS employees to use Library services, resources and facilities to the same extent as such services and facilities are available to the public. Library employees are subject to the same borrowing privileges and responsibilities as other Library patrons.

Library employees must refrain from handling their own patron account transactions (payments, charges, waives). Check-in of materials borrowed by Library employees should be conducted according to standard practices in the branch (i.e. the materials should be placed in the designated "book return" location for that branch/library and routinely processed by assigned staff).

Personal use of Library services and facilities (such as use of public internet stations, copiers, printers, fax machines, rental of library meeting rooms, etc.) by employees is subject to the same conditions as applied to other members of the public.

2. Personal telephone calls

Library telephones are intended for official library business only. However, infrequent personal use of telephones is authorized to conduct personal matters that necessarily must be handled during the business day, for example, arranging for automobile repair, critical communications with family members, etc.

Personal telephone calls while on duty should be limited to only those which are absolutely essential. All calls should be kept as brief as possible. This applies to both incoming and outgoing calls regardless of whether made on Library phones or personal cell phones.

When at all possible, outgoing personal calls should be made during rest or lunch breaks, from a telephone which is not located in a public area of the Library.

Personal long distance calls must be made using a personal cell phone, or charged to an employee's home number, calling card or credit card.

3. Personal email

The NOLS e-mail system is intended for official library business only. Infrequent personal use of NOLS e-mail is authorized only for brief communications such as receipt of messages and response to correspondents who may not be aware that the NOLS e-mail address is not a personal e-mail address. Employees are expected to redirect such communications to a personal e-mail account, and may respond briefly in order to do so.

All e-mail distributed within the Library (to NOLS employees or distribution groups) must be related to Library business or specifically authorized by the Library Director.

Passing discriminatory jokes or statements is prohibited. Under no circumstances should e-mail be used to criticize another employee or member of the public.

NOLS e-mail communications, as with any other written communication created on the job, are considered public documents. All e-mail communications are classified as official business and are the property of NOLS. Employees and volunteers have no privacy interests in such communications. As such they are subject to monitoring by NOLS and possible disclosure under state and federal law.

4. Personal use of Library computers, devices, and digital resources

The ability of NOLS employees to effectively access the information and resources available on the Internet and to use and instruct customers in the use of electronic devices and digital library resources contributes to the efficiency of NOLS and furthers the Library mission and strategic goals; therefore moderate personal use of Library computers, devices, and digital resources is authorized under the following provisions:

- a. Personal use of the Internet, digital devices and electronic resources must not interfere with the performance of normal work duties.
- b. Personal usage should be of reasonable duration and whenever possible should be done during the employee's personal time such as lunch or rest breaks.
- c. Inappropriate uses of the Internet include, but are not limited to: display of photographs, screen savers or text that could be offensive to members of the public or other staff; non-business chat rooms and discussion forums; private commercial activities such as e-commerce, shopping or operating a private business; and other uses incompatible with public service.
- d. Using NOLS systems to access the Internet constitutes consent to monitoring. Any information collected in the monitoring process may be legitimately reviewed by NOLS, and is a public record that may be released for public scrutiny. Users have no privacy expectation concerning the records of their on-line activity.
- e. Access to some websites may be blocked, or blocking of certain types of files may be necessary to maintain network performance and prevent virus attacks. Downloading applications for other than NOLS business is not permitted.

5. Personal printing, copying, mailing, and faxing

Employees may make limited personal use of non-public photocopiers and computer printers and may send personal faxes; however, such copies/prints/faxes must be paid for at the same rates that apply to other members of the public.

Payments for personal printing/copying/faxing must be made to and recorded by a staff member other than the employee him/herself, who is authorized to accept such payments in that branch.

Employees may put outgoing personal mail in the Library's outgoing mailbox as long as the Library is not charged for the postage. Employees may receive mail, express mail, or parcels at the Library when such receipt is approved in advance by the Employee's supervisor, and providing such receipt does not adversely affect other employee's work or incur costs for the Library.

In all of the above cases, personal business should be of reasonable amount and duration and whenever possible should be done during the Employee's personal time such as lunch or rest breaks.

6. Administration

The Director, and all managers and supervisors are responsible for managing this policy.