



Policies

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Policies

Policies are reviewed at least annually, typically at the September meeting of the HCLS Board of Trustees. Approved September 16, 2026.

I. Policies

- A. Howard County Library System (HCLS) pays membership dues to the Maryland Library Association for all members of the HCLS Board of Trustees ("Board").
- B. Registration fees may be paid for HCLS Trustees to attend applicable meetings if the Trustee so requires.

II. Officers

- A. The Board elects the officers of the Board in June. A slate of officers will be presented and voted on. The newly elected individuals will take office in July.
- B. Officers of the Board are the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer. HCLS' President & CEO serves as the Secretary of the Board,
- C. If the Chair of the Board resigns, the Vice Chair becomes the Chair. The election for Chair will take place at the next Board meeting. If the Vice Chair resigns, the Treasurer becomes Vice Chair. The election for Vice Chair will take place at the next Board meeting. If the Treasurer resigns, the Chair will appoint a temporary Treasurer, if needed. The election for Treasurer will take place at the next Board meeting.

III. Board Meetings - §23-404

- A. The Chair of the Board determines the time, place and number of Board meetings as well as the rules for the conduct on those meetings unless the Chair wishes a majority of the Board to decide. At least four Board meetings will be held each fiscal year.
- B. The Chair of the Board may call additional meetings of the Board whenever they deem necessary.
- C. A member of the Board who fails to attend 50 percent of the Board meetings during any calendar year shall be considered to have resigned from the Board. The Chair of the Board shall report the member's name and nonattendance to the Howard County Council by January 15 of the following year. The Council may reject the resignation if the member explains their nonattendance satisfactorily. The resignation is effective from the date of the final review by the County Council, which shall be within ten days after it receives the report from the Chair of the Board.

IV. Quorum

- A. A quorum at Board meetings consists of four Board members.
- B. If at any time Board membership numbers six or fewer members, a quorum shall consist of three members.
- C. If four hours before the meeting it is anticipated that a quorum will be present, the meeting will occur as if a quorum were present.
- D. If a member of the Board, after a review of the agenda, cannot attend the meeting, they may give a proxy to another member of the Board for all or some of the votes that may occur.

V. Committees

- A. The Chair of the Board may establish committees whenever they are deemed necessary. The committees will receive direction and instructions from the Chair of the Board. The Chair of the Board will also appoint each committee chairperson and may assist in the selection of committee membership. The committees may be composed of Board members, staff, and/or citizens or combination as required.
- B. The President & CEO, as Secretary to the Board, will serve as Secretary to each committee unless the President & CEO, with the approval of the Chair of the Board, delegates this responsibility to another staff member.
- C. No staff member will be assigned to a committee without the approval of the President & CEO.
- D. Committees may exist for a given time period or serve during the entire term of the Chair of the Board.
- E. Committee meetings will be open to the public unless the Chair of the Board directs the committee meeting to be closed for a stated reason in accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland.

VI. Powers and Duties of the Board - §23-405

- A. Keep abreast of trends and issues that impact public libraries in the United States.
- B. Assess strategic planning needs in Howard County and ensure implementation.
- C. Establish and continually review all policies for the efficient running of HCLS.
- D. Recommend sites for HCLS facilities to the County Government after review by HCLS staff and community members.
- E. Participate in the planning of HCLS facilities.
- F. Advise in the preparation of and approve the HCLS budget.
- G. Review, under the rules and regulations of the Howard County Government, the budgets and spending of all funds received by HCLS.

- H. Approve leases for any HCLS rental facility after County office of Law review.
- I. Accept any gift, other than books and funding, from any person and/or group under appropriate terms and conditions and dispose of these gifts, if appropriate, for the benefit of HCLS.
- J. Take action on any item presented to the Board by the Chair, a Board member, or the President & CEO.
- K. Select and appoint a professional librarian, eligible for certification as President & CEO to serve at the pleasure of the Board, when a vacancy occurs in the position. §23-406
- L. Review all policies proposed by the Chair of the Board, which relate to Board matters.
- M. Assign to the Chair of the Board or the President & CEO all or any powers for a specific period of time for specific reasons.
- N. Review, if need, the recommendation for dismissal by the Chair of the Board and the President & CEO of a staff member who is not in probationary status.
- O. Review all recommendations from the Chair of the Board for any financial emergency that will lead to the reduction in force in alignment with the Collective Bargaining Agreement and/or discontinuation of any activity or service.
- P. Consistent with applicable law, recognize a Collective Bargaining Unit if and when it comprises 51 percent of all full-time staff members.
- Q. Approve all policies for staff classification, salaries, benefits, and all other personnel matters.
- R. Review Table of Organization changes presented by the President & CEO.
- S. Approve any other policies commissioned by State or County laws, not defined by present Board policies.

VII. Powers and Duties of the Chair of the Board

- A. Instruct the President & CEO to draft items for the agenda of the next Board meeting.
- B. Perform tasks required by the Board.
- C. Review, with the President & CEO, any staff member's grievance who is not in probationary or substitute (on-call) status.
- D. Review with the President & CEO and make recommendations for any financial emergency that may lead to termination of any full-time staff member who is not in probationary status and/or discontinuation of any activity to the Board.
- E. Review a request by the President & CEO to dismiss any full-time staff member who is not in probationary status.
- F. Call all meetings of the Board.
- G. Chair all Board meetings.
- H. Appoint or terminate all committees as needed.

- I. Serve as initial contact for the President & CEO for all problems too sensitive for the President to administer alone or outside the scope of Board policies and procedures.
- J. Perform other duties as written in the Policies of the Board, County regulations and Maryland law.

VIII. Powers and Duties of the Vice Chair of the Board

- A. Assume all duties and responsibilities in the absence and/or illness of the Chair.
- B. Act as Chair when the Current Chair resigns or retires.
- C. Be responsible for any operation assigned by the Chair of the Board.
- D. Perform other duties as written in the Policies of the Board, County regulation and the laws of Maryland.

IX. Powers and Duties of the Treasurer of the Board

- A. Sign forms that enable HCLS to produce a checkwriter signature plate in order for HCLS to run off all HCLS checks co-signed by the Treasurer and the President & CEO.
- B. Serve as temporary Vice Chair of the Board in the absence and/or illness of both the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board.
- C. Function as Chair of the Board in the absence and/or illness of both the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Board.
- D. Be responsible for any operation assigned by the Chair of the Board.
- E. Assure that HCLS provides for a yearly audit by an accounting firm approved the Maryland State Library Agency. This audit will be available to the County Government, the Board, the State Department of Education, and the public.
- F. Perform other duties as written in the Policies of the Board, County Government and the laws of Maryland.

X. Duties of the President & CEO

As Secretary of the Board:

- A. Record the minutes of each Board meeting and serve as an ex-officio member of the Board.
- B. Serve as the Corresponding Secretary for the Chair of the Board and all committee chairpersons for all official HCLS correspondence.
- C. Prepare the agenda of Board meetings for the Board.
- D. Perform other duties as written in the Policies of the Board, County Government regulations, Maryland laws, and requests by the Chair of the Board.

As President & CEO:

- A. Manage HCLS' operation as Chief Executive Officer under the policies approved by the Board.
- B. Work with the Chair of the Board when usual problems occur and act upon the decision of the Chair of the Board.
- C. Produce reports for the Board, County Government and Maryland State Library Agency which show the source and amount of money received by HCLS, the itemized expenses and statistics, and other information as requested.
- D. Evaluate curriculum areas to see if they should be expanded, changed, terminated, etc., and make recommendations to the Board.
- E. Develop the Table of Organization, job descriptions, and budgets subject to Board review.
- F. Appoint and promote all full-time and part-time employees in HCLS within the confines of the Table of Organization, job descriptions, and budget.
- G. Recommend to the Chair of the Board dismissals and other disciplinary actions in reference to full-time and part-time staff members who are not in probationary status.
- H. Based upon staff supervisory recommendations, institute disciplinary actions or dismiss staff members who are in probationary status or other classification other than full-time and part-time status.
- I. Adopt rules and regulations for the use of HCLS subject to review by the Board.
- J. Perform other duties as written in the Policies of the Board, County Government regulations, Maryland law, and requests of the Chair of the Board and other members of the Board.

XI. Input into the Agenda Process

- A. Any individual or organization wishing to submit an item for the agenda may do so by sending the full text of that item in writing to the President & CEO at last 20 days prior to the Board meeting. The President & CEO will submit the item to the Chair of the Board who may instruct the President & CEO to
 - 1. include it into the agenda of the next meeting;
 - 2. table it for further investigation; or
 - 3. determine that the item is not a policy concern of the Board and may refer the item to the President & CEO.
- B. An item brought to the President & CEO between 19 and ten days of the Board meeting will be referred to the Chair of the Board who may
 - 1. Table the item for further investigation;
 - 2. Determine that the Item is not a policy concern of the Board and refer the item to the President & CEO;
 - 3. Bring the item up for review at the Board meeting for discussion only; or

- 4. Submit item into a future agenda process as soon as possible.
- C. No item brought to the Board fewer than ten days prior to the Board meeting or at the Board meeting will be discussed at that time, unless the Board waives the rule. The Chair of the Board will request that the person bringing up the issue write to the President & CEO giving the full text of the item 20 days prior to the Board meeting. However, if two-thirds of the Board members present wish to listen to person presenting the item, the item can be presented and discussed. No decision will take place unless two-thirds of the Board members present wish to have a motion presented. The President & CEO may present new agenda items to the Board for consideration at the meeting, with approval by the Chair of the Board.
- D. Information items can be presented to the Board from the floor at the end of each meeting if such item is not part of the agenda. However, no immediate action will take place as a result of that information until it is reviewed by the President & CEO or at a future meeting of the Board unless the Board waives the rule by a two-thirds vote.

XII. Public Attendance at Board Meetings

- A. All meetings are open to the general public and announced in accordance with Maryland's Open Meetings Law.
- B. If the Board is to discuss an individual personnel matter, the Chair of the Board may be asked by the staff person, any Board member or the President & CEO to defer the item so that a closed meeting could be held at a later date or after the Board meeting adjourns. The Chair of the Board will automatically accept the request but could determine when the meeting will take place at a future date.

XIII. Revisions of the Policies of the Board

Partial revisions can occur at any Board meeting requiring a two-thirds vote of those Board members present.

XIV. Supplements to the Policies of the Board

- A. Supplement 1 - All policies to conduct the business of the Board.
- B. Supplement 2 - All rules and regulations on budget, income, expenditure of funding, and donations.
- C. Supplement 3 - All policies for the operation of HCLS curriculum and ancillary services.
- D. Supplement 4 - All policies of salaries, benefits, wages, and other personnel and organizational matters.

- E. Supplement 1 may be reviewed in September of each year. Supplement 2 may be reviewed in November of each year. Supplement 3 may be reviewed in March of each year. Supplement 4 may be reviewed in June of each year.
- F. Procedures, other than specific procedures of the Board itself, may be revised at will by the President & CEO in order to carry out the mission of HCLS.
- G. Procedures of the Board identified in Supplement 1 may be revised by majority vote of the Board in order to carry out the mission of HCLS.
- H. While the above schedule is in place, sections of Board policy may be reviewed by the Board at any time.