



ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM CODE OF ETHICS

Approved by the Board of Trustees on October 21, 2021

Revisions approved on August 12, 2022

NOTE: This Statement of Ethics was prepared with consideration of Illinois laws, rules, executive orders, and contracts. This document was also prepared with consideration of several professional sources including the American Alliance of Museums, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Chicago History Museum.

MISSION: To inspire civic engagement through the diverse lens of Illinois history and sharing with the world the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln.

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (“ALPLM”) was established by the Illinois General Assembly to preserve, protect, and interpret the life and legacy of President Abraham Lincoln and the history of the State of Illinois. The ALPLM is a state agency led and staffed by professionals who are governed by a variety of Illinois statutes, contracts, rules, policies, and codes of conduct that provide guidance for state employees and for the diverse disciplines represented at the ALPLM.

Serving the ALPLM and the public brings with it the responsibility to foster and maintain the highest degree of honesty, integrity, professionalism, and transparency. These values must guide the activities of the ALPLM Board of Trustees, administrators, staff members, volunteers, and interns. Our collective commitment to enunciate and live the principles contained herein ensures that the confidence of the public in the ALPLM is not misplaced.

This Statement of Ethics establishes the standards and principles for ethical conduct that apply to the ALPLM collectively, **which includes the ALPLM Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, and interns.** All members of the ALPLM community are guided by these standards and principles and are expected to use their best efforts to adhere to them in conducting activities on behalf of the ALPLM. The Executive Director will ensure that the Statement is widely disseminated and, in consultation with the Ethics Officer, will ensure that appropriate policies and directives providing necessary guidance are in place and kept current.

As individual professionals, our decisions, actions, and interactions will be carried out with the highest level of **professionalism** reflecting good judgment and the best possible practices. We are committed to ongoing professional development, sharing our knowledge with colleagues and the public and continually striving to raise our standards of practice. We will approach our colleagues with **respect** and **empathy** for one another’s work, time, safety, and dignity. We will foster a collaborative workplace by actively **sharing** professional responsibilities while acknowledging our colleagues’ individual areas of expertise. When acting in a professional capacity, we will not represent our personal beliefs and opinions as those of the ALPLM, and we will ensure that our personal beliefs do not compromise our work-related decisions and professional judgment. We will not abuse our positions, associations, and privileges with the ALPLM, nor our access to ALPLM resources, to benefit ourselves, our families, or other associates financially or personally. Trustees, staff, volunteers, and interns will not compete with the ALPLM on any level, including abstaining from collecting for personal purposes in conflict with the ALPLM Collections Policy



and **will avoid conflicts of interest**, and the appearance thereof, by operating with full disclosure and transparency.

As a world-class institution, the success of the ALPLM is anchored in good governance and operating in a manner that ensures viability and growth. The leadership of the ALPLM must act in a **legal manner** and **transparently manage** the human, financial, material, intellectual, and technological resources. With the support and assistance of the Illinois General Assembly, the Governor's Office and in accordance with appropriate procurement laws and rules, the ALPLM will plan and implement capital projects, exhibits, acquisitions, and programming through an **open and timely process** with shared communication between administrative and professional staff. The ALPLM is committed to a **diverse and inclusive** Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, and interns reflective of the ALPLM's constituencies. In accordance with creative, copyright, and trademark laws, we will **protect the intellectual and physical property** of the ALPLM, while also recognizing the rights of the public. The ALPLM will **develop technological resources** and **maintain infrastructure** to enhance the visitor experience, increase access, and provide necessary tools for staff. The ALPLM campus is recognized as the jewel of the State of Illinois and, as such, our facilities will be safe and appropriate for visitors, staff, and our irreplaceable collections by following established security, preservation, and legal guidelines.

As curators of Lincoln and Illinois history, the ALPLM collection provides the foundation for engaging the public through exhibitions, programming, educational content, historical research, and other related activities. ALPLM leadership will manage documents, images, and artifacts in the best interest of **long-term preservation and historical integrity**. Acquisitions will be based on objective assessment as a document, image, or artifact will contribute to the mission and purpose of the ALPLM. As a public institution, **the ALPLM does not and is not permitted to sell artifacts or manuscripts** as part of deaccessioning, pursuant to Illinois state law. If Illinois state law were to ever permit the sale of deaccessioned items, all proceeds will be used for new acquisitions and/or direct care of collections. We will utilize **scholarship and provenance** to evaluate current items in the collection as well as potential acquisitions. The removal of items from the collection will be accomplished with the **utmost consideration and transparency**. The collection will not be treated as a financial asset nor as collateral. Deaccessioning will be based solely on the standards of an item's relevance to the collection, the historical record, its condition, and obligations set forth by applicable laws. The ALPLM **guarantees the integrity of incoming and outgoing loan materials** through appropriate documentation and conservation, treating incoming materials with the same level of care that we apply to our own collection. We will ensure that borrowers meet preservation and security standards and that both lenders and borrowers' relationships to the ALPLM are free from potential conflicts of interest.

As public stewards, our guests, researchers, and learners are core elements of the ALPLM. Through exhibits, educational programs, research opportunities, and an accessible environment, the ALPLM promotes learning and personal connections to Lincoln and Illinois. The ALPLM is **committed to learning** from our stakeholders with appropriate research methods to better understand and address the needs of our communities. We will employ **excellence in scholarship and historical objectivity** in our selection and interpretation of the collection that are presented in a manner free from self-interest and financial or political influences. The ALPLM **strives to add original voices** in creating meaningful exhibitions and educational programs, making our public offerings more inclusive of **diverse experiences**



and perspectives. The ALPLM will provide **non-discriminatory access** to our facilities and collection while balancing access to and use of the collection with preservation and protection of the collection.

As responsible fiduciaries, the ALPLM is committed to protecting the investment of taxpayer funds allocated annually by the Illinois General Assembly. In order to leverage the States' appropriation, the ALPLM will seek memberships, partnerships, donations, and grants from private and public sources in-line with institutional goals and projects by **honestly communicating the intended use** with all ALPLM members and financial supporters. We will **responsibly and truthfully** carry out our promotional and revenue-generating activities without conflict or impact to the institution's integrity. We will operate in an **open, accessible manner** to provide all stakeholders with appropriate and accurate information regarding our finances and operations. The ALPLM will **vigorously protect confidential information** across all activities pursuant to Illinois law, rules, and agreements.

Additional Resources

At the time this Statement was drafted, discussed, and approved by the ALPLM Board of Trustees, the following laws, policies, and guidance were in effect and impacted this Statement.

- Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum Act
- State Officials and Employees Ethics Act
- Illinois Public Labor Relations Act
- Museum Disposition of Property Act
- Illinois Freedom of Information Act
- Illinois Open Meetings Act
- Illinois Public Use Trust Act
- Gifts and Grants to Government Act
- Illinois Records Retention Act
- Illinois Executive Order 15-09
- Illinois Executive Order 17-01
- ALPLM Collection and Loan Policy
- ALPLM Direct Support Policy
- ALPLM Hostick Policy
- ALPLM Public Use Trust Policy

Additionally, Trustees, staff, volunteers, and interns of the ALPLM, as applicable, are guided by codes of ethics established by various professional associations. The American Association of Museums (AAM) is the accrediting body for institutions similar to the ALPLM. Therefore, this Statement will be interpreted in a manner consistent with the AAM Code of Ethics for Museums. The following codes of ethics and professional principles are also recognized to the extent that they do not conflict with this Statement and the AAM Code of Ethics for Museums.

- American Association for State and Local History – AASLH Statement of Professional Ethics
- International Council of Museums – ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums
- American Society for Public Administration – ASPA Code of Ethics
- American Library Association – Code of Ethics of the American Library Association

- American Library Association Rare Books and Manuscripts Section – ACRL Code of Ethics for Special Collections Librarians
- Society of American Archivists – A Code of Ethics for Archivists
- Curator’s Committee of the AAM – A Code of Ethics for Curators
- American Historical Association – Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct
- Oral History Association – Oral History Evaluation Guidelines
- American Alliance of Museums & Associations of Registrars and Collection Specialists – Code of Ethics and Professional Practices for Collections Professionals
- American Institute of Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works – AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice
- National Association for Museum Exhibition of the AAM – NAME Code of Ethics
- Committee on Education of the AAM – Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums
- National Council for the Social Studies – Revised Code of Ethics for the Social Studies Professional
- Committee on Education of the AAM – Excellence in Practice: ALPLM Education Principles and Standards
- Committee on Audience Research and Evaluation of the AAM – Professional Standards for the Practice of Audience Research and Evaluation in ALPLMs
- Public Relations Society of America – Public Relations Society of America Code of Ethics
- American Marketing Association – AMA Code of Ethics
- Association for Volunteer Administration – Professional Ethics in Volunteer Administration
- Museum Store Association – Museum Store Association Code of Ethics
- Illinois Supreme Court – Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct