

Membership Policy

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I Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the conditions, types, rights, and responsibilities of membership in the John Trigg Ester Library as a supplement to the sections on membership in the JTEL bylaws.

II Policy Approval and Review

This policy shall be reviewed every three years by the Board of Directors.

III Conditions for Membership

Membership in the John Trigg Ester Library is open to anyone.

Membership is \$10 per year for individuals or associate members, \$25 for a family and \$250 for a lifetime membership. An associate member is any partnership, corporation, association or other legal entity.

Members must provide the following information to the JTEL:

- Name (or organization name, if an associate member)
- Mailing address
- Phone number
- E-mail (if applicable)
- Website (for associate members, if applicable)

This information is used to contact the member with regard to annual meeting notification and notices concerning membership status, item checkout, or other topics specific to the individual member. Member information will remain private and will be used only for library-related communication.

The JTEL board Secretary has responsibility for maintaining the membership book. The membership book is kept at the JTEL business office. Corrections and updates to member information should be sent to info@esterlibrary.org or by contacting the Secretary.

IV Membership

The JTEL is a membership-driven organization. Membership is not transferable.

Information on member rights, meetings, and so forth is available in the JTEL Bylaws.

V Membership benefits

Members in good standing may check out items, access wifi, participate on committees, vote at the annual or special meetings, or run for a position on the board of directors.

VI Member responsibilities

▪ Member conduct

Members are expected to return items in a timely fashion, to exercise reasonable care of the items they check out, and to replace or reimburse the library for items damaged or lost while in their care. Members are expected to treat the library premises with reasonable care, to clean up after themselves when using the library, and to treat other library members and users with courtesy and decorum. Members will not share WiFi passwords with other individuals.

▪ Member support

Unlike most libraries in the United States, the JTEL is not a government-sponsored library supported by tax dollars and public employees. The JTEL is a privately held library governed by its membership through a board of directors elected at the annual membership meeting. It is operated entirely by volunteers, and is supported through donations, membership fees, item sales (t-shirts, etc.), fundraisers, shelf dedications, and interest earned on its accounts.

Members are strongly encouraged to be actively engaged with the operation and maintenance of the library, and to participate in community events/fundraisers hosted by the JTEL as well as the annual meeting. Members interested in volunteering may serve on the various committees, or more informally (such as at the library itself or at various events).

▪ Circulation & returns

Items at the JTEL may be checked out for 30 days.

▪ Reference materials

Some materials are not available for check out, but may be perused on the library premises. These include but are not limited to periodicals, first edition or rare Alaska nonfiction titles, and certain encyclopedic works.

▪ Lost or damaged items

If an item is lost or damaged, the member who checked it out should first inform a member of the board of directors, then buy a replacement of the title, or reimburse the JTEL for the value of the item.

VII Privacy policy

The JTEL operates in a low-tech environment, and does not keep checkout or return records, with the exception of the library cards associated with each item. After the item is returned, the borrower's name may be blacked out on the card.

From the ALA Library Bill of Rights interpretation on privacy:

Privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association. The courts have established a First Amendment right to receive information in a publicly funded library. Further, the courts have upheld the right to privacy based on the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution. Many states provide guarantees of privacy in their constitutions and statute law. Numerous decisions in case law have defined and extended rights to privacy.

In a library (physical or virtual), the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one's interest examined or scrutinized by others. Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf....

VIII Library affiliations

The JTEL is a member in good standing with the Alaska Library Association (www.akla.org), which is in turn a member of the American Library Association (www.ala.org).