

## SWEARING IN AND ORIENTATION OF NEW TRUSTEES

May is the month when new library trustees, elected in the April 9, 2013 consolidated election, take their oaths of office and begin their duties. There are some differences between the requirements for trustees of local libraries and trustees of public library districts.

For trustees in library districts, the trustees shall take their oath of office and meet to organize the board within 74 days after their election or appointment and meet to organize the board. 75 ILCS 16/30-40. Their term begins on the third Monday of May, which is May 20, 2013. 75 ILCS 16/30-10. The oath of office may be given by the board secretary or by a notary public. 75 ILCS 16/30-40(c).

For trustees of local libraries, the trustees shall take their oath of office and meet to organize the board within 60 days after their election or appointment. 75 ILCS 5/4-6. The oath of office may be administered by the board secretary, secretary pro tem, the county clerk of the county containing all or a larger portion of the library, or other person authorized to administer oaths (judge, notary public or certified court reporter).

Regarding the orientation of new board members, most libraries are aware that new trustees must be given information about the Open Meetings Act, the Freedom of Information Act and Illinois statutes pertaining to local libraries or library districts as appropriate. New trustees should be informed about potential conflicts of interest and be advised of the requirements of the Library Records Confidentiality Act.



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Remember that your new trustees are required to complete the electronic Open Meetings Act training provided by the Illinois Attorney General's Office. The training must be completed not later than the 90th day after the date the trustee takes the oath of office. A trustee who has completed the training is not required to take it again unless the trustee is the Open Meetings Act designee for the library.

There are two additional areas of information that we recommend be included in orientation sessions to educate new trustees and attempt to avoid future problems. New trustees should be informed that their position is one of policy-making, and that the staff is hired to implement the policies made by the board. The purpose of emphasizing the role of the board is to avoid the tendency of some board members to become so involved in the administration of the day-to-day business of the library that they are ineffective in setting policy and making strategic plans for the future of the library. The second area that should be thoroughly covered includes the issues pending before the board. Time will be saved at board meetings if, at an orientation session, the new trustees are given detailed information on the status of issues that may have been discussed by the prior board and are now to come before the new board for a vote.

Please note that we are partnering with Dominican University to provide training sessions for new trustees on July 20, 2013 and on August 3, 2013. For more information, check Dominican's website at: <http://gslis.dom.edu/newsevents/trustee-orientation>.

Your attorney can help to prepare new trustees to start their terms with sufficient background regarding library law and important issues. If you would like any additional information, please contact us.

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