



**Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS)
Trustees' Roles and Responsibilities
August 2025**

I. ABOUT IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEES

A board of trustees governs the Idaho State Historical Society, an Idaho state agency within the Department of Self-Governing Agencies. The board is responsible for administering the powers and duties required to preserve and protect any historical record of the history and culture of Idaho. Idaho Code § 67-4123 and 67-4126.

Trustees have a number of statutory responsibilities. There are also Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) policies and goals that Trustees should keep in mind when serving on the Board. These policies and goals are meant to serve as guiding principles to help align the Trustees with the vision and objective of the Idaho State Historical Society. This document outlines both the Trustees' statutory responsibilities of a Trustee as well as the Idaho State Historical Society policies and goals.

Appointment and Term of Office

The board of trustees consists of seven members. The Governor of the State of Idaho appoints the members of the board. Board members serve terms of six years, except when appointed for the unexpired portion of a term. No board member shall serve more than two consecutive full terms. Idaho Code § 67-4124. Two board members concurrently serve as representatives on the Board of the Foundation for Idaho History, the non-profit support group of the Agency. One board member concurrently serves on the Governor appointed Idaho Lewis and Clark Trail Committee.

Qualifications of Members

Members of the board are chosen on the basis of their qualifications with due regard to their knowledge, competence, experience, and interest in the fields related to the preservation and promotion of Idaho history.

Geographic representation is considered in the selection process with one board member chosen from each of the judicial districts of the state. Idaho Code § 67-4124.

When considering the mix of desired skills and attributes of board members, the following areas of professional and personal expertise may be considered:

- Idaho history
- Historic preservation
- Fundraising
- Agency promotion
- Public administration
- Education and public programs

- Operation of cultural facilities: sites, museums, research libraries
- Government relations and working with elected officials

Conduct of Business

The board must meet at least once each quarter. The board may meet at other times as necessary for the orderly conduct of its business. Four members of the board constitute a quorum and the action of a majority of the members present at a meeting constitutes the decision of the board. The statute requires at least 72 hours' notice of regular meetings. The Chair and Vice Chair are elected to serve terms lasting two years. Idaho Code § 67-4125.

Specific Powers and Duties

The board of trustees encourages and promotes interest in the history of Idaho and the Historical Society. The board appoints a director of the Historical Society and advises the director on the performance of their duties. The board governs the agency in accordance with state statute and governance policies.

II. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

Pursuant to, Idaho Code §67-4126, the board of trustees of the Idaho State Historical Society shall have powers and duties as follows:

1. To appoint a director of the Idaho State Historical Society as provided herein and advise them in the performance of their duties and formulate general policies affecting the agency.
2. To encourage and promote interest in the history of Idaho and encourage membership to the agency.
3. To collect for preservation and display, artifacts and information illustrative of Idaho history, culture and society.
4. To print such publications and reports as may be deemed necessary.
5. To encourage the creation of county historical societies and museums in Idaho counties.
6. To facilitate the use of Idaho records for official reference and historical research.
7. To be responsible for records management services for state government. Records management services include the management, storage and retrieval of all state created records under retention. State created records shall mean any document, book, paper photograph, sound recording or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, made or received pursuant to law or in connection with the transaction of official state business. The board may charge reasonable amounts for records management services. The records managed pursuant to this subsection will not be subject to the exemption in public records law provided in section [74-101\(15\)](#), Idaho Code.
8. To accept from any state, county, or city, or any public official, any official books, records, documents, original papers, newspaper files, printed books, or portraits, not in current use. When such documents are so accepted, copies therefrom shall be made and certified under the seal of the society upon application of any person, which person shall pay for such copies reasonable fees established by the society.
9. To require that any state, county, or city, or any public official, deposit official books, records, documents, or original papers, not in current use, which are of definite historical importance, in the society for preservation and to provide methods whereby such materials, which have no significance, may be destroyed.

10. To establish such rules as it may be necessary to discharge the duties of the agency.
11. To employ such personnel as may be necessary for the administration of the agency's duties in accordance with the rules of the administrator of the division of human resources promulgated pursuant to [chapter 52, title 67](#), Idaho Code.
12. To have and use an official seal.
13. To delegate and provide sub delegation of any such authority.
14. To identify historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural sites, buildings, or districts, and to coordinate activities of local historic preservation commissions.
15. To serve as the geographic names board of the state of Idaho.

III. DUTIES OF TRUSTEES

1. Govern in accordance with state statutes and Board policy

- Formulate and sustain the mission and vision of the agency.
- Select, guide, and monitor the executive director. To a large extent, monitoring the performance of the executive director is synonymous with monitoring the performance of the organization.
- Work with the executive director to develop long range plans and evaluate and revise them periodically. Focus on establishing goals rather than on the administrative means of accomplishing those goals.
- Monitor the agency and its programs to assure that the goals, objectives, and outcomes are being achieved efficiently and effectively. Monitor use of the agency's resources.
- Ensure that all legal and ethical responsibilities of the agency are being fulfilled.
- Attend all quarterly and special teleconference board meetings; carefully review and consider all agenda related materials in advance of the board meeting date.
- Maintain confidentiality of confidential documents and information.

IV. Best Practices

These "best practices" further the mission of the Idaho State Historical Society and utilization of these practices will help advance the Idaho State Historical Society's various ambitions, goals, and objectives.

Meeting Attendance

- To function effectively and productively, the Idaho State Historical Society needs the expertise, advice, and varied experiences of all its trustees. Consistent meeting attendance and participation are paramount to these efforts. In the event that a trustee should miss more than two consecutive meetings of the board, the chair may confer with the trustee to decide what, if any, actions may be appropriate, up to and including a consideration of resignation.

Enhance agency visibility and connectivity with elected officials and stakeholders

- Attend regularly scheduled meetings with the Governor's office/Liaison.
- Be present at the agency's budget hearings and legislative presentation(s).
- Implement agency's annual legislative program.
- Encourage past board members' involvement.
- Ensure timely transmittal of advocacy messaging to Congressional delegation.
- Serve as an advocate within Idaho state government and the community to encourage and promote interest in Idaho history and in the Idaho Historical Society.

Enhance agency standing throughout the state

- Be knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the programs and services of the Agency.
- Acquaint yourself and become knowledgeable of the historical organizations, supporters, and issues in your area and serve as liaison between your district's groups and the ISHS.
- Represent the agency in each Judicial District; seek opportunities to present the agency's message.
- Promote membership with the Idaho State Historical Society.
- Make strategic calls to members/donors quarterly.
- Know the historical organizations, supporters, and issues in your area
- Present agency awards in your judicial District.
- Host community forums and fundraising events as scheduled.
- Keep abreast of local, state, and federal historic preservation issues
- Support and uphold decisions.
- Demonstrate a respectful team collegiality among members of board and agency staff.

Lead and manage signature Board of Trustees programs

- Esto Perpetua Awards program
- Community Enhancement Grants
- Sister Alfreda Award
- Century Farm & Ranch Presentations
- Promote and attend history-related events in your area, particularly those presented, funded, or sponsored by the Idaho State Historical Society.

Enhance the financial position of the agency

- Maintain personal membership with the Idaho State Historical Society.
- Make an annual financial gift appropriate to your circumstances.
- Participate in strategic development activities in coordination with staff and Foundation for Idaho History board. These activities may include membership drives, donor cultivation events, donor visitations, personal requests, special events, or special project/campaigns.
- Set policies that serve to guide the agency's operation. Empower staff to implement those policies.

V. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND PERSONAL CONDUCT

Statement of Philosophy

The board of trustees is committed to excellence and transparency in public service. Each trustee is responsible for both the integrity and the consequences of his or her own actions and is expected to follow the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and fairness when engaging in any activity concerning the Idaho State Historical Society.

Conflict of Interest

Disclosure Requirement. Any time a real or potential conflict exists between or there could appear to be impropriety arising from a trustee's public duty and his or her private interest, outside activities or employment, the Trustee shall disclose it to the board chair, in writing, at the earliest opportunity, and prior to acting upon the conflict or potential conflict. Following disclosure, the Trustee shall take such steps as may be necessary to eliminate a conflict of interest, a potential conflict of interest or the appearance of an impropriety.

Prohibited Activities. Trustees shall not engage in conduct that violates or appears to violate the Ethics in Government Act of 2015, Idaho Code title 74 Chapter 4, or in bribery or corruption in violation of Idaho Code title 18 Chapter 13. Conduct in violation of these laws or presenting a conflict of interest arising from these laws or other laws include but is not limited to the following:

- Acts that provide or appear to provide preferential treatment to any organization or individual in the receipt of contracts or other benefits granted by the Idaho State Historical Society.
- Profiting, directly or indirectly, from public funds, supplies, or equipment under the trustee's influence or control.
- Disclosing or appearing to disclose information that is not generally available to the public and is obtained in connection with the Trustee's official duties.
- Hiring or supervising, on behalf of the Idaho State Historical Society, the Trustee's spouse, child, parent, sibling, or same relatives by marriage.
- Accepting or soliciting any gift, favor, service, loan or entertainment that might reasonably be interpreted as influencing the performance of the Trustee's duties for the Idaho State Historical Society.
- Receiving compensation from sources other than the Idaho State Historical Society for performing the Trustee's duties for the agency.

Appearance of Impropriety. Certain situations require special attention and caution to avoid the appearance of impropriety. Trustees shall disclose such situations to the board. These situations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Employment by or volunteer activity for an organization that may receive benefits from or provide services to the Idaho State Historical Society.
- Accepting gifts of any kind (including meals and entertainment) from individuals or organizations that receive or may receive benefits from or provide goods or services to the Idaho State Historical Society. No gifts of more than \$50 in value should be accepted without prior approval from the Board Chair. The Board Chair shall not approve any gift in excess of \$50 unless they are assured that the gift involves no substantial risk of undermining official impartiality and that no pecuniary benefit in excess of \$50 accrues to the recipient, i.e. that no money, property or commercial interests be provided, the primary significance of which is economic gain.

Political Activities

No Trustee may:

- Use their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with an election to or a nomination for office or affecting the result thereof.
- Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command or direct any state employee to pay, lend or contribute any part of his/her salary or compensation or anything else of value to any party, committee, organization, agency, or person for political purposes.

Trustees retain the right in their personal capacity to:

- Register and vote in any election.
- Express their opinions as individuals privately and publicly on political subjects and candidates.
- Display a political picture, sticker, badge or button.
- Participate in the nonpartisan activities of a civic, community, social, labor, or professional organization, or of a similar organization.
- Be members of a political party or other political organization and participate in its activities.
- Attend a political convention, rally, fund-raising function or other political gathering.
- Sign a financial contribution to a political party or organization.
- Make a financial contribution to a political party or organization.
- Take an active part, in support of a candidate, in an election.
- Be politically active in connection with a question that is not specifically identified with a political party, such as a constitutional amendment, referendum, approval of a municipal ordinance or any other question or issue of a similar character.
- Serve as an election judge or clerk, or in a similar position to perform nonpartisan duties as prescribed by state or local law.
- Otherwise participate fully in public affairs, except as prohibited by law, in a manner that does not materially compromise the neutrality, efficiency, or integrity of his/her function as a Trustee.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Idaho State Historical Society Statute, Chapter 41, Title 67, Idaho Code
Chapters: 67-4123, 67-4124, 67-4125, 67-4126