

The Richmond Memorial
Library
Marlborough, CT
Statement of Library Policy

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Governance

The Richmond Memorial Library Association, through the direction of its Executive Board, governs the Richmond Memorial Library (RML). Board members are elected to terms of office through annual elections. All Association members are eligible to vote in Association elections.

The Executive Board is responsible for supporting and executing the Library's mission and goals as well as establishing its philosophy of service. The Executive Board is governed by Association Constitution and By-Laws. The Executive Board sets Library policies.

The Executive Board is responsible for hiring and annual evaluation of the Library Director. The Library Director is responsible for the implementation of the Library's policies. The Library Director reports to the Executive Board.

Services

Collection: The Richmond Memorial Library maintains a collection of materials in a wide variety of formats. Popularity, professional reviews, budget and space limitations, and usefulness to the customer will guide the selection process. Every effort will be made to acquire the information needed by the customer using the resources of our Library consortium (LCI) and those of the Connecticut State Library (CSL), Internet and other interlibrary loan resources. However, Richmond Library will not request materials be sent from outside the state of Connecticut.

Programs: Richmond Library makes every effort to offer an array of programs that have community appeal and support our mission. Programs for adults, children and teens are held throughout the year. A special focus on early literacy happens at the Library with programs starting from birth for children.

Richmond Library strives to be a resource for the entire community. We make every effort to work with the local school system to encourage all learners as well as those who are not in a formal education setting.

The Richmond Memorial Library will assist, in a manner of reasonable accommodation, any person including those persons with disabilities needing special assistance, in their efforts to locate information or use the resources and or services of the RML.

Mission Statement

The Richmond Memorial Library is a resource center that provides access to information from a wide range of sources in a variety of formats. Its commitment is to engage with the Marlborough Community and assist all members with their evolving personal, educational, and cultural needs.

Library Rules of Behavior

Comfort and safety of all customers are priorities for establishing these rules. These rules extend to the Library and surrounding property.

- Inappropriate or threatening behavior, inside or outside the building, will not be tolerated.
- Eating or drinking are not allowed in the public areas of the Library.
- Smoking is not permitted in the Library or on Library grounds.
- Voices and activities should be kept to levels that do not disturb other patrons.
- Cell phones must be set on vibrate. Persons talking on cell phones should do so in the entry foyer or outside.
- Soliciting inside the Library is not allowed unless the Library is the direct beneficiary of such activity and/or the Director's permission has been granted.
- Shoes and shirts must be worn at all times in the Library.
- Sleeping is not allowed in the Library.
- Only Library staff and authorized individuals are allowed in staff areas.
- No animals are permitted with the exception of service animals.
- Customers will conduct themselves in a courteous manner. Those using disruptive or abusive language, unacceptable behavior or endangering others will be asked to leave the Library.
- Harassment of any kind toward any person will not be tolerated.
- Weapons of any kind are not allowed inside the building or on Library grounds.
- Loitering is not allowed inside the building or on Library grounds.
- Use of Library property, including technology, will be conducted in accordance with the Library's technology policy.

Zero-Tolerance Policy on Workplace Violence

Richmond Memorial Library maintains a zero-tolerance policy on violence in the workplace. Any violent act is strictly prohibited. Participating in, provoking or otherwise contributing to any violent act in the Library including, but not limited to abuse, assault, battery, threats and/or harassment will result in severe disciplinary action up to and including discharge (for employees) and immediate removal from the building of any offenders.

Theft of Library Property

No Library materials or objects may be removed from the building unless they have been properly checked out or given approval for their removal. Taking Library materials without authorization will be considered and treated as theft. (Connecticut State Statutes 53a-119, 53a-119a.)

Defacement of Library Property

Defacement of Library property will be considered an act of vandalism and will be referred to the proper authorities.

Children Left Unattended

Children under the age of 12 should not be left unattended in the Library. In the event a minor (under age 18) is left at closing, the police may be notified. (Minor definition, Connecticut State Statutes, Section 1 –1d.)

Parents or caregivers who bring children to Story Time or other Library programs are expected not to leave the building. In the case of an accident or emergency, their presence is needed. Parents or caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior while in the Library.

Confidentiality of Library Records

Circulation records and other records identifying the names of Library users and other personally identifiable information are confidential. In accordance with the General Statutes of Connecticut (Section 11-25 b), “Notwithstanding the provisions of Sections 1-210, 1-211 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, personally identifiable information contained in circulation records of all public libraries shall be confidential,” the Richmond Memorial Library will protect the information contained in these records. Such records shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal, or local government except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigative power.

When a proper show of good cause has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction, patron information may be made available. Upon receipt of such process, order, or subpoena, the Executive Board will consult with legal counsel to determine if such request is in proper form and is showing a good cause for its issuance. If the process, order or subpoena is not in proper form or if good cause has not been shown, they will insist that such defects be corrected.

A customer’s Library record may be viewed by that customer, or by that customer’s parent or legal guardian if the customer is a minor as defined by Connecticut law.

Circulation Rules and Regulations

The Richmond Memorial Library follows LCI rules and regulations regarding circulation procedures as well as CSL requirements. There are additional circulation policies pertinent only to Richmond Memorial Library.

As with any rules, exceptions are unavoidable. The Library staff is empowered to use its own discretion regarding circulation regulations. Our job is to provide accurate, efficient and friendly service at all times to our customers. Library records are confidential. (Section 11-25 of the Connecticut State Statutes)

It is the responsibility of parents or caregivers to monitor what their child or children borrow.

Most Library materials may be borrowed for a three-week period including books and magazines and may be renewed if no other customer has requested the item. Museum passes circulate for two days on a first come basis. New DVDS circulate for one week with no renewals. Children's DVDs and older entertainment DVDs circulate for one week and may be renewed. Reference books do not circulate but may be borrowed for one night. An extended loan period is allowable with staff approval on materials that are not recent additions for individuals requiring extra time for such purposes as teaching, vacations etc. All items may be placed on hold, including those not yet received with the exception of museum passes. Customers decide how many items they wish to borrow. We ask that borrowers make every effort to return our items directly to RML so as not to overburden the State delivery system.

Library Cards

Library cards are issued according to CSL and LCI regulations. In order for a RML card to be issued the customer must reside in Marlborough. Proof of residency must be shown—identification that has the patron's name and Marlborough address. In the event the patron cannot provide this information, the application can be completed and the card mailed to the patron at his/her Marlborough address. Delivery through the postal system (excluding post office box addresses) verifies residency. There are no age requirements, but parents or guardians must sign Library applications for minors.

If a customer does not have their Library card with them but wishes to borrow materials, he/she may do so if they can provide another means of identification such as a valid driver's license, school schedule, etc.

Cards that are lost before their expiration date are replaced at a cost of \$5.00.

A patron who has outstanding fines or fees over \$10.00 will be blocked from using their card until the monies owed are reduced to less than \$10.00.

Library Use by Non-Residents

In accordance with CSL regulations, all materials loaned to Marlborough residents shall also be loaned to non-residents. All policies pertaining to residents apply also to those not residing in Marlborough who use the facility, its collection or resources.

Hold

A customer may reserve an item that is in circulation or on order. This is called a “hold”. They can either hold an item online, through the online catalog, ask staff for help or fill out a hold form available at the circulation desk. When the item arrives it is held for 5 days from the day the customer is notified. Notification will take place by telephone, text, or email. The Library is not responsible for lost or undelivered messages concerning holds. On day 6 if the item has not been picked up it is discharged and goes to the next customer or back on the shelf. The customer must request it again if he/she wants it. Museum passes may not be placed on hold. However, a customer may “call ahead” and ask if a pass is available and if so it may be held two hours from the time of the call for that customer.

Electronic Information Services

Customers who provide the Library with their email addresses or cell phone numbers will receive Library-related messages from the Library. “Almost due” notices are sent to enrolled customers the day before borrowed Library items are due. Other electronic communications related to the Library are sent periodically. The Library does not disclose or broker personal information to outside parties. The Library is not responsible for “bounce backs” or undelivered electronic messages.

Renewal of Materials

All materials with the exception of interlibrary loan materials may be renewed one time if no one else has requested the item.

If a customer wishes to renew an interlibrary loan item, staff will verify that the item may be renewed. Renewal is at the discretion of the loaning Library.

Online and Telephone renewals are allowed. The customer should be advised she/he will be contacted if there is a problem with his renewal. Renewals may also be executed by the customer on-line through the LCI system.

Overdue Items and Fines

All materials, with the exception of videos and museum passes, are subject to a \$.20 per day overdue fine. Fines are charged for the days the Library is open. Book drop materials are considered returned the previous day. Overdue notices are automatically generated by computer after they are overdue for 14 days. A second notice is sent after 21 days and followed by a bill.

Maximum fines are \$10.00 per item. Paperbacks and magazines are \$2.00 maximum. Video fines are \$2.00 per day for days the Library is open, with a \$10.00 maximum per item. Museum pass fines are \$10.00 for days the Library is open, with a \$30.00 maximum per item.

Customers will lose their borrowing privileges if charges or fines on their Library cards exceed \$10.00. Once the balance is below \$10.00, the use of their card is re-instated.

Lost or Damaged Items

For an item that is lost or damaged beyond repair, the charge for the item is the replacement cost of the item. Replacement copies are only accepted at the Director's discretion.

Computer Use

Computers at Richmond Memorial Library

In keeping with the commitment to provide access to information to our patrons, the computers located in our common entrance area provide access to the Internet and are loaded with software programs such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint to aid document creation. They also provide access to our online Library catalog and online databases. Email is allowed on Library computers.

Children and Computers

Access to the Internet at our Library provides a wealth of information and material to our users. In our commitment to create and maintain a public area appropriate and comfortable for all ages of users, parents or guardians, not the Library or its staff, are responsible for the information selected or accessed by children under 18. Library staff do not act in loco parentis and are not a substitute for parental supervision.

Parents or guardians assume responsibility for the child's use of all Library resources including computers, software, databases and hardware. The computer in the children's area has a variety of age-appropriate pre-loaded games. There is no Internet access and no printer in the children's area and sign-up is not required.

Computer and Internet Use Policy

The user must adhere to and abide by any state or federal laws regarding computers, their use and materials accessed through them, including all decency laws and regulations. Users are reminded that it is their responsibility for which access points are reached. Not all of the information accessed through the Internet is accurate and the Richmond Memorial Library assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of information disseminated.

Library computers are in a public area and are shared and viewed by patrons of all ages. Therefore, all patrons are asked to refrain from accessing potentially offensive information or images. It is not acceptable to use the Internet for any purposes which violate U.S. or state laws to transmit threatening, obscene or harassing materials, or interfere with or disrupt network users, services or equipment. The Library staff reserve the right to monitor computer use; those not using Library materials, including the Internet, in a socially responsible manner may be prohibited from full access to electronic content. Staff will determine appropriate penalties for inappropriate usage, which may include termination of computer and Internet usage.

Individuals whose Internet privileges have been suspended may petition the Library Board in writing to request that their privileges be re-instated. The Library Board will review each request and make a determination.

Wireless Access Policy

The Richmond Memorial Library offers wireless access to the Library's Internet service for properly equipped laptops and hand held computers. When patrons use the Internet in the Library, they are accepting the Library's Computer and Internet Use Policy. Please note that all patrons must abide by that portion of the policy that indicates they are using their devices in a public area that is shared by patrons of all ages. All users are asked to refrain from accessing potentially offensive information or images. Internet privileges will be suspended if use of the wireless network is not in keeping with this policy. The Library's connection to the Internet is not secure; patrons use it at their own risk.

Accessing Our Library Computers

Computer users must log on by using their Library card barcode. If they do not have a barcode, a guest barcode may be purchased for \$1.00. There is one computer, the standing PAC, used for searching the Library catalog only, where logging on is not necessary.

Use of Library computers is on a first come basis. Computer time is limited to ninety minutes per user per day. Users may extend their time for an additional 30 minutes if there is at least one vacant or available computer.

Only two people may use a single computer at one time and Library staff is available for only minimal assistance and guidance to computer users.

Saving Work and Printing

Patrons' work and documents may be printed. The first two pages of printing are free. After two pages, there will be a \$.25 per page charge. Computer users may not save any files to the hard drive. Work may be saved to flash drives, which are available for purchase at the Circulation Desk. The Richmond Memorial Library is not responsible for any damage to personal property. Individuals may not bring their own software. The Library reserves the right to scan disks that are used in Library computers for viruses.

The Library is not responsible for unsaved files, data or information that is lost. Any damage done to hardware or software is the responsibility of the user. The Library expects the user to pay for any repairs necessary for damage done to any Library materials including computers. Damage will be assessed on a case by case basis. Abuse of property will result in loss of Library privileges. Most software is copyrighted or trademarked. Copyright laws must be adhered to by all those using Library property or networks.

Materials Selection Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the selection of Library materials in accordance with the Library's mission. The Richmond Memorial Library adheres to the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read, the Freedom to View and Free Access to Minors (see appendices). The Library's mission statement is the guiding force for all activities including collection development.

The Richmond Memorial Library's Mission is as follows:

The Richmond Memorial Library is a resource center that provides access to information from a wide range of sources in a variety of formats. Its commitment is to engage with the Marlborough Community and assist all members with their evolving personal, educational, and cultural needs.

Responsibility for Selection

The Library Director is responsible for all materials included in the Library collection.

Professional staff determines items to be included in the Library collection.

Criteria for Selection –

- Materials are selected to create a well-balanced collection. The Richmond Memorial Library does not advocate any particular beliefs or viewpoints.
- Selections are made with the goal of choosing the best and most useful materials in their fields as needed or wanted by the community.
- Criteria for selection include literary or artistic merit, authenticity, enjoyment and current or historical interest.
- The limits of funds and space considerations to house the item are valid criteria for selection.
- Selections are made based on standard review sources and selection guides such as, but not limited to: Library Journal, Booklist, the New York Times Book Review, School Library Journal and Video Librarian.
- Customer requests and recommendations for materials are considered but not an absolute criterion. When Richmond Memorial Library cannot fill a customer's request through permanent acquisition, resource sharing with other libraries will be used.

Requests for Purchase

Items requested for purchase will be considered. Information from the customer should be as complete as possible, author and title must be given. Requests go to the Director. The customer will be given the opportunity to purchase or contribute towards the cost of the item. Requests for purchase will follow the collection development purchase policy.

Donations and Gifts

The Richmond Memorial Library accepts donations of books and other materials. Donated items are subject to the same selection criteria as any purchased additions to the collection. Gifts are accepted without commitment as to final disposition. Retention and/or utilization of donated materials are at the discretion of the Library staff.

Withdrawing Materials

Materials are evaluated on an on-going basis for accuracy, currency, enjoyment and enrichment. Items are withdrawn when their individual value to the Library's collection no longer exists. Materials, which are no longer useful because of condition, lack of circulation, or because they no longer meet selection criteria will be withdrawn from the collection. Withdrawn materials will be sold at Library book sales, donated to other charities, or discarded.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Richmond Memorial Library Executive Board defends the principles by which materials are selected. The responsibility for what is borrowed and by whom is the responsibility of the borrower -- the Library cardholder to whom the Library card is issued regardless of age.

A customer wishing to lodge a complaint concerning Library materials in the collection will complete the "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form available from the Library staff. The complaint will be reviewed by the Library Director and the Executive Board of the Richmond Memorial Library Association. Written response as to the disposition of the materials will be sent to the complainant.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Title:

Author:

Format: book _____ video materials _____ periodical _____ magazine _____
compact disc _____ other _____

Your name:

Your address:

Your telephone:

Do you represent:

_____ yourself

_____ an organization or group (name) _____

1. To what in the material do you object? Please be specific.

2. Did you read/view/hear the entire work? _____

If not, what parts? _____

3. What do you feel is the result of reading or viewing or hearing this material? _____

4. Is there anything positive about the material? _____

5. What would you like the Library Board to do about this material? _____

Digital Materials Rules

The Richmond Memorial Library has a collection of digital media (i.e., DVDs, Blu-ray discs, CDs, eBooks). Any Library cardholder may borrow from this collection. New DVDs may be borrowed for one week with no renewals. Older DVDs and children's DVDs may be borrowed for one week with one renewal. As with any loaned Library material, it is the responsibility of the parent or caregiver to monitor what their child borrows. All materials are checked out at the Circulation Desk with a valid Library card. The borrower may select as many DVDs as they wish.

Returns

DVD materials borrowed here must be returned to this Library – they may not be returned to other libraries. DVDs may be returned in the book drop (which is located to the right of the front doors on the exterior wall of the building) after hours. Please secure these items with a rubber band before placing in the book drop.

DVD Materials Fines

DVDs that are not returned on their due date are assessed a \$2.00 per day per item charge. The maximum video fine charge is \$10.00 per item.

The person who borrows the video material assumes complete responsibility for it. In case of loss, theft or damage, the user will be charged full replacement cost of the item. Full replacement cost may be charged for damage. Richmond Memorial Library is not responsible for any damage done to the borrower's equipment.

Fax Machine

The fax machine is primarily for the Library staff's use, but can be used by customers to send information. The charge is \$1.00 per page other than the cover page. The Library does not receive faxes for individuals. Faxes can be sent to individuals on our machine, but it is the receiver's responsibility to pick up his or her fax. Staff do not notify persons of faxes sent.

Telephones

Library telephones are for Library business use.

Cell phones may be used in the lobby or outside only. Patrons are asked to refrain from using cell phones in the Library. Cell phones should be silenced upon entering the Library.

Library Bulletin Board and Displays

The Library bulletin board, located in the entry of the Library, is for non-profit or non-commercial organizations and businesses located in Marlborough. Regional or state events will be posted only as space permits and they must be non-commercial in nature. Space priority will be given to Marlborough organizations. Events must be open to the general public. The Library

reserves the right to oversee the postings and to add and discard postings as necessary. Posting materials on the bulletin board does not signify an endorsement by the Library.

Lost and found ads, items for sale, want ads and other miscellaneous ads are accepted as space permits. The Library does not accept notices of items for sale to the public unless the proceeds directly benefit the Library and the Library Director's approval has been given.

The Library bulletin board is not a forum for political, religious or social discourse. Postings deemed inappropriate by the Library Director and/or Library Board will be removed.

There is limited space for displays in the Library. Richmond Library reserves the right to have priority for use of display areas and to oversee content of display areas. The Director of the Richmond Memorial Library must approve requests for displays. Responsibility for the display rests with the owner. Richmond Memorial Library is not liable for loss or damage to the display.

Richmond Memorial Library and the Americans with Disabilities Act Relocation of Event Policy

The Richmond Memorial Library complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The Library will provide equitable service to all who use the Library's services, programs and activities.

The Library has limited meeting room space including a second floor meeting room with capacity for 25 persons. There is no elevator to the second floor. If a Library-sponsored program is scheduled to be held on the second floor, notice in the Library's publicity about Library-sponsored events will include information about its lack of accessibility and how to request accommodations. **If the event is not a Library-sponsored program, it is the responsibility of the individual or group using the space to publicize a notice at least one month prior to the event about the second floor's lack of accessibility, with information for the public about how to request accommodations. It is the sponsoring individual or group's responsibility to find alternate accessible space if requested, or to re-schedule the event to such a time that a fully accessible location is available.**

If full accessibility is needed by a person or persons to attend a Library-sponsored program, **a request for Relocation of Event should be made as early as possible, preferably at least two weeks prior to the program.** This notice should be made to the Library Director requesting relocation so that alternate space can be found. Notice can be given by:

1. Telephone – call Library Director Nancy Wood at 860-295-6210
2. Email – email the Library Director at nwood@richmondlibrary.info

If the Director receives a request more than two weeks prior to the Library-sponsored program, the Director will make every effort to move the event to another location that is accessible for all and located in the Town of Marlborough. If no such space is available, the event will be re-scheduled to such a time that a fully accessible location is available. In the event that the Director is unavailable, requests can be directed to the Children's Librarian or the Catalog/Reference Librarian.

If the Director receives a request less than two weeks prior to a Library-sponsored program, the Director will make every effort to move the event to another location, but is under no obligation to re-schedule the event if no accessible space is available.

Richmond Memorial Library Upstairs Meeting Room Responsibilities

- Organized groups are eligible to book the meeting room at the library's discretion. Meeting room use is limited to library hours of operation and one additional hour after library closes for business. The upstairs meeting room is not a private room. Only a curtain separates the space from the rest of the library. Noise must be kept to a minimum as those downstairs can hear those in the upstairs meeting room. A maximum of 25 people is permitted per order of the Fire Marshall.
- Groups may reserve the room up to three months in advance; tutors may reserve one month in advance.
- Organizations are responsible for setting up the room according to their needs and clearing the room when finished. Failure to return the room to its prior condition may result in forfeiture of future use.
- No food or drinks are allowed in library meeting rooms.
- Prior notification of the Library Director is requested if the news media is invited to or will be present at any event.
- Proper adult supervision of minors is required at all times. Groups using a meeting room may not leave children unsupervised in other areas of the Library.
- When leaving, shut off all lights and close windows. If leaving after Library is closed, the outside front doors will lock behind you, please check to make sure doors are completely shut.
- The organization using the room agrees to be responsible for any damage done to the building or its furnishings.
- The Library and the Town of Marlborough assume no responsibility for property left in the building.

The Library Board reserves the right to modify these rules at any time in response to changing conditions.

**Richmond Memorial Library
Meeting Room Application**

By signing this I acknowledge that I have read and understand the rules governing the use of the Library meeting rooms for me and those attending my meeting. I accept responsibility and agree to comply with the meeting room rules and regulations.

Date_____

Name of Organization_____

Date and Time of Meeting_____

Name and address of applicant_____

Approximately how many people will attend (maximum capacity 25 persons) __

I have received a copy of the Richmond Memorial Library Americans with Disabilities Act Relocation of Event Policy and understand that, once signed, this signifies my organization agrees to abide by the conditions specified therein. **I understand if any person who wants to attend the event or meeting needs full accessibility it is my responsibility to make sure that a fully accessible venue is found .**

Signature of organization representative_____

Date_____

Library Staff witnessing_____

Policy on Proctoring

- Proctoring fees will be charged: \$25.00 per test. Payment expected at the time of exam.
- The student must reside in the Town of Marlborough.
- Any Library staff member available must be acceptable as the proctor when the student takes the exam.
- The Library agrees to receive the exam. When contacted by the student, the Library will set the time for the exam to be taken.
- The student must present a current photo ID at the time of the test. The ID must match the name on the test the student is registered to take.
- The student must understand that the Library is a public place and the Library environment and noise level will vary. The Library does not have quiet study rooms or private spaces or private computers available for the public.
- If the student must take the exam online, the Library is not responsible for any failure to connect, loss of power or other interruption to the test taking process. Library staff will disable time limiting computer software for the test period.
- The Library staff will hand out the exam or access the exam online, collect it when completed or complete the process online if required, and mail or fax it back to the appropriate educational institution. If mailed, a mailing fee of \$5.00 per test is required unless the student has a pre-paid, addressed mailing envelope. The Library's regular faxing fees are applied. (\$1.00 per page, no charge for cover page.)
- This policy is subject to change at the discretion of the Richmond Memorial Library Executive Board or the Richmond Memorial Library Staff.

I, the undersigned, have read and understand the Policy on Proctoring and agree to abide by it.

Signed name: _____

Printed name: _____

Date: _____

Adopted 10/13/09

Public Relations Policy

The primary goals of the Library public relations program are as follows:

- To promote community awareness of the Library and its services
- To stimulate public interest and active participation in the services offered by the Library
- To develop understanding of and support for the Library and its role in the community by governing officials, civic leaders and the general public.

The Library Board recognizes that public relations involve every person who has any connection with Richmond Library. The Board urges its own members and every staff member to realize that he or she represents the Library in every public contact. Good service supports good public relations.

A variety of methods, including but not limited to local news media, websites, flyers, newsletters, e-mail and special events, shall be utilized to keep the public aware of and informed about the Library's resources and services. The Library Director and the Association President and or their designee shall be responsible for dispensation of this information.

Volunteers

Volunteers are assigned tasks by the Library Director, and supervised by Library staff, based on their qualifications and the needs of the Library at any given time. Duties may be assigned as needed or on a continuing basis, suitable to their talents. Volunteers are not paid or compensated in any way. Volunteers are expected to meet their commitment made to the Library by reporting when expected, performing their tasks in a timely manner and in such a way that meets acceptable Library standards and practices. Volunteers should record their time spent at their duties in a manner as directed by Library staff. Volunteers are protected as provided by law. Volunteers serve at the discretion of Library management, and are required to sign a liability waiver in order to serve.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

(Formerly titled "Free Access to Libraries for Minors")

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users violate the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library"

includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Equitable access to all library resources and services shall not be abridged through restrictive scheduling or use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, games, software, and other formats.¹ Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.² Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As “Libraries: An American Value” states, “We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children’s use of the library and its resources and services.” Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children’s—and only their children’s—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children.

Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Note

1. See *Brown v. Entertainment Merchant's Association, et al.* 564 U.S. 08-1448 (2011): a) Video games qualify for First Amendment protection. Like protected books, plays, and movies, they communicate ideas through familiar literary devices and features distinctive to the medium. And 'the basic principles of freedom of speech . . . do not vary' with a new and different communication medium."

2. See *Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville*, 422 U.S. 205 (1975): "Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors." See also *Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.*, 393 U.S.503 (1969); *West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); *AAMA v. Kendrick*, 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).

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The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the

United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than

those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the [First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States](#). In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.

5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council