

POLICY

The Greendale Public Library adopts the American Library Association’s *Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, reproduced below.

Authority to approve Library-initiated and non-library-initiated programs, displays and exhibits shall be given to the Library Director. Considerations for approval may include, but are not limited to, physical space available or required, logistics of day to day management, compatibility with Library Mission, Vision and Values, congruence with the library’s Materials Selection Policy, [secondary peer review of chosen programs and displays representing polarizing social topics](#), and/or the ALA Interpretation below.

Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library-initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for accessing information, education, and recreation. Article I of the Library Bill of Rights states, “Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves.” Library displays increase awareness of programs, resources, and services.

Library-initiated programs include, but are not limited to, lectures, displays, exhibits, community forums, performing and visual arts,(1) participatory workshops, technology programming, creative learning programming, wellness programs, story times, continuing education, fairs and conventions, book clubs, discussion groups, demonstrations, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or entertainment purposes. Library-initiated programs may take place onsite at the library, off-site at other locations, or online, and may be provided by library workers, volunteers, or partners. Libraries may also choose to promote their programs, services, and resources through displays and digital signs.

Library-initiated programs and displays utilize library worker expertise for community interests, collections, services, facilities, and providing access to information and information resources. They introduce users and potential users to library resources and the library’s role as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Libraries should not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and shall ensure they have equitable access to library resources. Library-initiated programs and displays should comply with all applicable laws, including the standards and requirements of The Americans with Disabilities Act and state and local disability accessibility guidelines.(2) If a program is held in a location not controlled by the library, the library should assure that the space is accessible to all users. If users overflow designated event areas during library events, libraries should secure accessible public spaces (e.g., ramps, pathways, and emergency exit routes) to ensure access and safety for everyone. Reasonable accommodations should also be made to have interpretation or real-time captioning for the deaf or hard of hearing at library-initiated programs when needed or requested by library users.

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PROGRAMS, DISPLAYS and EXHIBITS (was: Exhibits, Posting and Solicitation Policy)

“Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs that libraries offer.”⁽³⁾ Libraries should actively seek to include a variety of programming options representing diversity of genres, formats, ideas, and expressions with a multitude of viewpoints and cultural perspectives that reflect the diversity in our communities. Library-initiated programs that cross language and cultural barriers introduce community members to the library’s resources and provide access to information. Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those who speak and read languages other than English, including advertising for such events.

Concerns, questions, or complaints about library-initiated programs and displays are handled according to the same written policy and procedures that govern reconsiderations of other library resources. These policies should apply equally to all people, including, but not limited to, library users, staff, and members of the governing body. The policies should set forth the library’s commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Programs should not be canceled because of the ideas or topics of the program or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, nor should library workers censor or remove displays because someone may disagree with the content. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the program content or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, any more than the purchase of resources for the library collection or curation of a display constitutes an endorsement of the resources content or its creator’s views. Libraries should vigorously defend the First Amendment right of speakers and participants to express themselves.

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 encompasses all the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library-initiated programs. Libraries create programs for an intended age group or audience based on educational suitability and audience interest; however, restrictions on participation based solely on the gender, chronological age, or educational level of users violate this right and should be enforced only when not doing so would adversely impact the safety of the participants or interfere with the intended purpose of the program. Parents and guardians may restrict their own children’s access to library programs, but no person or organization can interfere in others’ access and participation. A parent or guardian may discuss their child’s access to and participation in library programs with their child, but may not impose those decisions on others, including other people’s children.

Libraries should not deny access to library-initiated programs if patrons owe the library for overdue fines or other fees. If libraries charge program participants for supplies used, they should make every effort to reduce economic barriers to participation.

Any collection and retention of program participants’ personal information should be on an opt-in basis only. While attendees may need to demonstrate their eligibility to attend the program by showing a library card or student ID, they should not be required to share their personal information in order to attend a library program.

1 "Visual and Performing Arts in Libraries: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," adopted February 13, 2018, by ALA Council.

2 "Services to People with Disabilities: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," adopted January 28, 2009, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 2018.

Approved by the Greendale Public Library Board on 11/20/2019.

Revised 12/15/2021, 4/23/2023 (draft).

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3 “Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights,” adopted June 27, 2017, by the ALA Council.

Adopted January 27, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000; June 26, 2018 under previous name "Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource"; and June 24, 2019.

PROCEDURE

Non-library exhibitors must provide an inventory of all items they are displaying and sign a hold harmless statement waiving all claims of legal liability against the Village of Greendale, the Library Board, and the library and its employees for their property. Exhibits will not be allowed from exhibitors whose purpose is to solicit consideration of a product or service. Artisans are welcome to display, but only for the informational, educational, and recreational aspect of their craft.

When receiving a critical comment regarding exhibits, displays or programs:

- Suggest that the complainant speak with the Library Director.
- Suggest that the complainant submit a *Request for Reconsideration* form.
- Notify the complainant of the in-person Public Comment opportunity at the start of every regularly scheduled Library Board meeting.

Library Director and Library Board:

- Will respond to the presentation of a completed *Request for Reconsideration* form and/or Public Comment requesting specific action at a Library Board meeting.
- Will not alter any material in question until the controversy has been reviewed, no sooner than the next ~~regularly-scheduled~~ Library Board meeting.

Some possible resolutions to a critical comment may include:

- Scheduling of additional programming to provide a platform for diverse opinions to be heard and voiced, pertaining to the controversy in question.
- Establishing a learning opportunity by creating possibilities for thoughtful discussion between concerned stakeholders.
- Establishing a platform to more broadly share the library’s policies with the public and the media.