

# Coffeyville Public Library

## Policy Manual

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## Materials Selection Policy

### Selection of Material

Public libraries are authorized by K.S.A. 12-1219 et. seq. to acquire books and other materials by purchase, gift or exchange. The library seeks to provide informational, educational, and recreational materials for users of all ages. The board delegates responsibility for book selection to the Director, and to those staff members to whom he/she delegates the responsibility.

The Library endorses the Library Bill of Rights adopted by the American Library Association. It is included in the appendix.

The Library recognizes that many books are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selections will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building collections and to serving the interests of patrons. Materials are evaluated as a whole and not on the basis of a particular passage or passages. Standard book selection tools will be used in the selection of materials.

Responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that adult books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. Children's books will be selected with the age and educational level of the children in mind.

The following general criteria are considered in selecting materials:

- a. Strength of the existing collection in particular areas.
- b. Reputation of the author, publisher, or producer
- c. Reviews of the item
- d. Suitability of subject, style and reading level for the intended audience
- e. Current appeal and popular demand
- f. Value of materials in relation to durability

Recommendations from the public are welcome.

Donated materials are accepted with the understanding that they may be added to the Library's collection, sold, or disposed of as the Director determines is appropriate. The Library will not appraise the value of donated books or other items. A copy of the donor's acceptance agreement is found in the appendix.

### Challenge to Materials

In the event a patron requests that a specific work in the collection be removed from the library, the following action will be taken:

- a. The librarian and the patron will discuss the patron's reasons for the request, and the librarian will explain the library's materials selection policy. If the patron wishes to pursue the matter, he/she will be provided with a copy of this policy and a reconsideration form.

- b. The patron will fill out in full the reconsideration form.
- c. Upon receipt of the signed form, the Director will examine the material in question, the issues raised, and the circumstances involved. He/she will then make a decision to remove or retain the material in question.
- d. The Director will respond in writing to complainant within two weeks of receipt of the form, and will inform the individual of the availability of a board hearing.
- e. If the complainant desires a board hearing, the material reconsideration form, and other relevant material such as book reviews will be presented to the board at its next regular meeting.
- f. The board will review the materials and the reconsideration form listing the patron's objections. The Board will make a final resolution of the matter with the guidelines for selection in mind.

Materials will remain in circulation while under challenge until a decision to remove them from the collection is made.

A copy of the reconsideration form is found in the appendix.

## Service Policy

### Patron Registration

1. Residents of Coffeyville are the primary population served by the Library. Borrowing privileges are also extended to residents of Kansas counties which participate in a regional system of cooperating libraries. A library card grants the patron access to all circulating materials as the library as well as access to public computers with internet access.
2. Minors age 5 to 17 will be issued cards after obtaining the signature of a custodial parent or legal guardian agreeing to be responsible for materials checked out on the card. It is the parent's responsibility to monitor what their child checks out from the library. Anyone with a valid college ID is exempt from the requirement of obtaining a parent's or guardian's signature.
3. Two forms of identification, one showing the current address, are required at the time of the initial registration. A copy of the Library regulations for material circulation and computer use must be given to each applicant. Signature on Library Card indicates acceptance of rules and regulations.
4. Businesses or institutions may be issued an institutional card. The application must be signed by the owner, manager, or director of the institution and a list of employee(s) responsible for the use of the card will be kept on file. The institution or business will be responsible for any lost or damaged materials.
5. Non-residents of the Southeast Kansas Library Systems may purchase a one (1) year individual or household card for \$5.00.
6. Each patron receives a Library card. Library cards issued by other SEKnFIND libraries will be accepted for use in checking out materials.
7. A Kansas Library Card may be issued to patrons if the patron is a member of good standing with our library and lives in Kansas. Kansas Library Cards are valid for three years after date of issue.
8. Violating Library rules may result in the cancellation of the library card, and materials restricted to in-house use only. Willful damage to library materials or equipment may result in replacement costs charged to the patron, and loss of all privileges.

### Circulation

1. Patrons may check out a total of 15 books and periodicals at a time. In addition they may check out a total of 5 DVD's, BluRay, video games, , audiobooks, CD's,.
2. Loan periods are as follows:
  - a. 3 weeks use: books, cassettes, CD's,
  - b. 1 week use: periodicals, videos, DVD's, , BluRay, video games, Mifi devices, and launchpads
  - c. 1 day use: Reference materials, equipment
3. All items may be renewed once unless a reserve is on them.
4. Reserves will be accepted on all circulating materials. The patron will be notified when the material is available. Patrons must pay postage if a reserve notice is mailed. Reserves will be held for 5 days after notification.

## Overdue, Lost and Damaged Items

1. Borrowers assume responsibility for items checked out on their cards. If items are lost or damaged beyond normal wear, the borrower will be charged. Fees paid are for damage to Library property and do not constitute a purchase of the item.
2. Borrowers will be notified of overdue materials. The patron will be liable for all expenses incurred if the City Code or the Library Materials Protection Act (KSA 21-3702) is invoked. Borrowers who have overdue materials or late fees whose value totals \$50 or more will receive up to three written notices from the library via the United States Postal Service or e-mail. If there is no response to the library's requests for return of materials the debt will be sent to a collections agency and/or the Kansas Setoff Program. Any administrative fees associated with debt collection will be charged to the patron.
3. Fines per day for overdue materials are:
  - a. 10 cents, with a maximum of \$10.00 per item
  - b. \$1 a day for MiFi devices (See MiFi Borrowing Policy for more information)
4. Children age 13 and younger may pay their fine by reading in the Library under the supervision of Library staff. Each minute read will pay for 10 cents of a fine.
5. Long overdue materials with accumulated fines in excess of \$ 10.00 will result in the loss of borrowing privileges until materials are returned and fines paid. In-house use of materials will not be affected. Materials overdue more than three months will be considered lost, and charges for replacement will be assessed.
6. Replacement cost will be charged for items lost or damaged beyond reasonable wear to the extent that the Library no longer chooses to keep them in the collection. If the item is no longer in print, the charge will be the greater of either the original cost of the item or:
  - a. \$25.00 for hardback adult books
  - b. \$20.00 for children's hardback books
  - c. \$15.00 for nonfiction paperbacks
  - d. \$10.00 for fiction paperbacks
  - e. \$25.00 for DVD/BLU, CD's, and Video Games
  - f. \$35.00 for audiobooks
  - g. \$50.00 for MiFi Hotspot devices

A replacement of the same title, or material on the same subject of equal literary value, may be accepted in lieu of the monetary charge, at the discretion of the Director.

7. Refunds for lost materials will be made when the item is returned within 6 months of payment and is in good condition. Receipt for the payment of the material or the cancelled check should accompany the request for refund. The accumulated fine will be deducted from the refund.
8. If a patron's home has been damaged by fire or natural disaster and such incident is properly documented, the patron is not required to pay for library material lost or damaged in the disaster.
9. If library materials are stolen from a patron's home or automobile, the patron will not be held responsible for the items provided a copy of the police report is submitted to the library.

## Public Computers

1. The purpose of this policy is to define computer and Internet services provided by the library and to restrict access to those materials which are child pornography, obscene, or, for minors, which are harmful to minors.

Coffeyville Public Library is committed to meeting the information needs of the people we serve by providing the greatest possible information access within the means of the library and within the limitations of policy and law.

2. The library is concerned for the safety and security of users who access online information. The library has no control over the content of the Internet and cannot be held responsible for what the user sees when using the Internet. The restricting of a minor's access to the Internet beyond that required by this policy is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

3. A user may not use a library computer:

- a. To access or display information that is obscene or child pornography as defined by Kansas law
- b. To access or display information that is harmful to minors
- c. To disclose, use, or disseminate personal information that could threaten or create a vulnerability for a minor, for any other person, or for the library
- d. To send threatening, obscene, abusive or harassing messages
- e. To attempt to gain unauthorized access to any data, computer, or network
- f. For any illegal purpose

4. The library shall use a DNS-based filter. Such filter shall be configured as nearly as possible to prevent access to materials that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors while allowing access to other information.

It is recognized that filters do not block all inappropriate sites or allow access to all legitimate sites. The filter will be disabled upon request by an adult, or for a minor to enable access for bona fide research and other lawful purposes. Computers must not be used to display sexually explicit images, even when sites are not blocked by the filter or when the filter is disabled.

5. Patrons who encounter web sites which they believe should be blocked but which are not, or who are prevented from accessing websites which they believe should not be blocked, may submit a complaint. This should be given in writing to the senior employee in charge and include the URL of the site in question and whether the request is to block or unblock it. Staff shall examine the site and determine whether it should be blocked or unblocked. Complaints about enforcement of this policy or observed patron behavior which violate this policy shall also be submitted in writing to the senior staff person in charge, providing as much detail as possible.

6. The library shall inform patrons of the provisions of this policy, including the standards used and procedures for complaint, by making the policy available on the library's web site and in print at the circulation desk.

7. Some public computers may be reserved for specific functions, such as using specific software or using the library's catalog. All other public computers will have Internet access.

8. Computers are available on a first come-first served basis. There is a 60 minute time limit on computer use. Computer management software will be used to enforce this time limit and requiring patrons to log in to use the computers. Additional time may be added if the public Internet computers are not all occupied. Patrons must be in good standing to have an active account for logging in. Visitors without library cards may be allowed to log in using a guest account. Users attempting to circumvent the computer management system may have their computer privileges revoked.

9. Patrons may not load software on the computers. Files may not be saved to the hard disk, but may be saved to the patron's own storage devices. Although reasonable precautions will be taken, the library does not guarantee the hard disks to be virus free and assumes no liability for virus infections if persons save files to their own disks.

10. Copies may be printed at the rate of 10 cents per page for black and white copies and 50 cents a page for color copies.

11. Patrons may use their own laptops or other devices to use the library's WiFi network. The library does not provide technical assistance in configuring a patron's device for wireless Internet. Laptops may be plugged in to a library electrical outlet where this does not create an obstacle for other users of the library, such as an electrical cord across a traffic path.

Public WiFi is not secure. Information sent to and from a patron laptop computer may be captured by someone else with a wireless device and appropriate software. The library assumes no responsibility for the safety of patron equipment or data resulting from connection to the library's wireless access.

12. Users who violate this policy may be denied use of the library's computers.

Policy revised 3/6/2018

### MiFi Borrowing Procedures

1. To checkout a MiFi device you must be an adult 18 years or older and have a current library card from Coffeyville Public Library with no outstanding fines and a valid phone number must be on file in order to check out the MiFi device.
2. MiFi devices can be borrowed for a one week period.
3. Overdue fines are \$1 for each day the item is overdue. MiFi devices can only be renewed if there is no one else on the waiting list.
4. Only one MiFi device per person can be checked out at a time.
5. If the device is overdue for three days, the service will be suspended rendering the device unusable. If the device is still not returned after 7 days past the due date, the device will be disconnected from service and marked as lost. If a device is disconnected and marked lost a \$50 replacement fee will then be added to the patron's account. We will attempt to contact the patron by phone, e-mail, and/or USPS to notify them that the device is overdue. If we are unable to make contact or if our communication attempts are ignored we reserve the right to call on the Coffeyville Police Department to stop by the patron's home to recover the device.
6. If the device is stolen while in the patron's possession a police report must be provided to the library before the \$50 replacement fee can be waived.



7. There will be a \$15 replacement fee if the charger for the device is lost.
8. If service to the MiFi device has to be suspended and/or disconnected the patron will lose their ability to check out a MiFi devices in the future.
9. If a patron habitually returns the MiFi device after the due date (more than 2 times in a 12 month period) the patron may lose their ability to check out a MiFi device in the future.

Policy effective 1/1/2016. Amended 4/3/2018

## Meeting Room

1. The Library meeting room may be scheduled at the main circulation desk. Fees for this service are available at the desk. CPL Foundation members may receive special consideration. One person must be designated responsible for the keys and cleaning of the room after the meeting.
2. Only one reservation will be made per day unless otherwise authorized by the Library Director.
3. Keys will be returned to the circulation desk or in the book drop behind the Library immediately following the meeting.
4. Groups are limited by the Fire Code to 60 persons present in the room. Arrangement of the tables and chairs is left to the individual meeting hosts.
5. The host group can make no charges for admission to meetings or classes held in the room.
6. No alcoholic beverages can be served in the room.
7. No smoking is allowed in the Library building or grounds. eCigarettes are considered to be the same as cigarettes.
8. Each group is responsible for cleaning the kitchen area, vacuuming the carpet clean of debris, and cleaning food from tables and chairs.
9. Each group is responsible for any damage done to the room while assigned to them. Damage should be reported immediately to facilitate repair. Paints, inks or other staining liquids are prohibited.
10. A deposit will be required for use of the community room. Upon completion of use, and after a library staff member has determined the room has been properly cleaned and left undamaged, half of the deposit will be refunded. Thermostat is set to provide a constant 72 degrees. A request for any change must be made to the staff at the circulation desk.
11. Audio/Visual equipment is available in the room. If groups wish to use the equipment a \$10 fee will be charged for the use of the system. After the fee has been paid a key to the AV equipment will be provided and will need to be returned to library staff when the room key is returned.

Policy amended 5/15/2018

## Children's Library Access

The Children's area of the library is specifically designed to serve the needs of young customers. Adults in that area not using Children's materials or not using the area for the purpose intended will be asked to use other areas of the library. Staff members will place the safety of children first.

Adopted 9/1/2015

## Other Services

1. Items not owned locally, or missing, may be requested on Interlibrary Loan. Patrons who are registered with the Library to do so may request Interlibrary Loan materials from home via their computer.
2. The staff of Coffeyville Public Library will offer reference assistance to patrons needing help in using the library, finding materials they need, and in locating information. Such assistance may be rendered in-house, over the telephone, or by e-mail.
3. Information about organizations, activities, meetings, or events may be posted on the library's bulletin board. Only one copy of any item may be posted on the bulletin board. Dated items will be removed after the event they publicize is past. Items not pertaining to a specific date may be removed after one month on the bulletin board
4. Photocopy and fax services are provided to the public. Fees for these services are available at the circulation desk.
5. Reader-printers are provided for the use of patrons doing research with microforms. Microform copying is available for a fee.
6. Temporary exhibits may be accepted for display in the Library. Permanent exhibits that cannot be used as part of a circulating collection or historical research archives may not be accepted.
7. Patrons may call or e-mail requests, and materials will be prepared by the staff for pickup.

## Other Patron Information

1. Any person who is disruptive or verbally abusive to patrons or staff, or who exhibits inappropriate behavior for a public venue will be told to leave the Library. Police will be called if necessary.
2. Children left at the Library and unattended by parent or guardian are not the responsibility of the Library or the Staff.
3. Smoking or using smokeless tobacco on Library property is prohibited. eCigarettes are considered to be the same as cigarettes.
4. Food and drink are not permitted in the computer use areas.
5. Only companion dogs for the disabled, and animals used in Library programs are allowed in the library.
6. Roller skates, skateboards, bicycles and other outdoor equipment are prohibited inside the Library

## Bulletin Board

1. Maximum Size will be 36" by 48"
2. Maximum length of time material may be posted is 30 days with exceptions granted by the director.
3. Dated items will be removed after the event they publicize is past.
4. Items for dated events may be posted no earlier than 30 days before the scheduled event.
5. Local (within 25 miles) materials are given priority

6. General local community activities take precedent; space for all other activities is on a first come first serviced basis.
7. All notices, posters and free literature must be approved and placed on the bulletin board or in the display racks by library staff. Material left for posting or distribution without authorization from the library staff will be discarded.
8. Items will be posted or made available on an equitable basis, subject to space, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations or the individuals or groups represented.
9. Materials that support or oppose any current or pending ballot measure or political candidate will not be accepted.
10. In general, items devoted solely to the sale advertising, solicitation or promotion of commercial products or services will be confined to the bulletin barrel.
11. Posting a notice or placement of materials in a display rack does not imply endorsement by library staff or Board of Trustees.

## Miscellaneous Policies

### Confidentiality

Information regarding an individual's use of the library shall be regarded as confidential. As permitted by K.S.A. 45 221 (a) of the Kansas Open Records Act, the records which libraries are NOT required to disclose are:

- a. (#23), records of patron registration and circulation which pertain to identifiable individuals;
- b. (#4) personnel records and performance ratings; however, employee names, positions, salaries, and length of service are designated as public information;
- c. (#6) letters of recommendation or reference;
- d. (#7) library, archive and museum materials, if restrictions have been imposed as conditions of a contribution;
- e. (#12) building security information;
- f. (#14) correspondence between the library and a private individual;
- g. (#30) Public records containing information of a personal nature where the public disclosure thereof would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Such records shall not be made available to anyone other than the cardholder or those who have signed to accept responsibility for items checked out on the card, except pursuant to a court order or subpoena.

This policy shall not be construed as to prevent the library from pursuing the return of, or payment for, overdue library materials.

The enforcement of such subpoena or search warrant shall wait upon the Board's legal counsel to determine if such process is in proper form and shows good cause for its issuance. Any threats or unauthorized demands shall be reported to the appropriate legal counsel.

If the court order is a search warrant issued under the USAPATRIOT Act, the recommendations for a regular search warrant still apply. However, any court order issued under this Act prohibits any disclosure that a warrant has been served or that records have been produced.

Under the Kansas Open Records Act, KSA 45-215 et. seq., the Board will appoint a Freedom of Information Officer whose purpose is to respond to inquiries relating to the act. The Board has appointed the Library Director to assume this office.

## Patron Behavior

Those whose conduct is disruptive to library operations and other patrons' use of the library may have the privilege of using the library abridged or denied to the extent necessary to deal with the problem. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. damaging library property
- b. threatening or harassing patrons or staff members
- c. eating or drinking in unauthorized areas
- d. smoking, use of smokeless tobacco, and eCigarettes on library property
- e. playing of audio equipment so that others may hear it
- f. talking loudly enough to disturb others
- g. failure to wear shirt and shoes
- h. body odor so offensive as to disturb others
- i. soliciting or selling items without prior approval of the Library
- j. anything which may be reasonably expected to result in injury to self or others
- k. any illegal activity

Patrons indulging in improper conduct may be asked to cease that conduct, to move to another location or activity, or to leave the library. Severe or recurring problems may be dealt with by barring use of the library to the individual involved, or by making library use conditional. In general, the least restrictive means which effectively deals with the conduct should be employed. Minor problems should be dealt with by the staff member observing it; more serious or recurring problems should be handled by the Director. Only the Director or Library Board may bar an individual indefinitely from use of the library. Updated 11/3/2015.

## Unattended Children

The library does not provide care or supervision of children, except to the extent needed to uphold library rules of conduct and use, and does not accept responsibility for such care. Parents or other caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior. Children under the age of eight may not be left unattended in the library, except during scheduled library-sponsored programs. Children age eight and older may be left unattended providing they are mature enough to stay alone and observe proper conduct. Such children are subject to the same rules of conduct as other patrons with the same consequences, including being asked to leave the library.

Children left unattended in the library in violation of this policy may be considered a child in need of care, and the matter referred to the Police Department, the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, or other authorities.

### Closing due to building malfunction

1. The Coffeyville Public Library will close when the heating and/or air-conditioning are inoperable:
  - a. In summer, when the indoor temperature in all public areas of the building reaches 85° or higher for a period of more than two hours.
  - b. In Winter, when the indoor temperature in all public areas of the building falls below 60° for a period of more than two hours.
  - c. Exceptions will be made if the emergency is in the process of being corrected and the repair personnel have the parts needed to correct the problem. The library will remain open if the repair personnel anticipate correcting the problem in less than two hours.
2. The Coffeyville Public Library will close in cases of water or electrical emergencies when either is being turned off for extended periods of time or for unknown reasons ceases to operate properly.
  - a. The Coffeyville Public Library will close whenever the water is off for a period of two hours and it is not known when service can be resumed.
  - b. The Coffeyville Public Library will be closed whenever the electricity is off for more than one hour and it is not known when the service can be resumed.
  - c. Exceptions will be made if the emergency is in the process of being corrected and the repair personnel have the parts needed to correct the problem. The library will remain open if the repair personnel anticipate correcting the problem in less than one hour.

## Expression of Concern for Library Materials

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Individual or Group \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

### Resource of concern

Book or Magazine  DVD/Video Game  Audio recording/CD  Electronic Information

Title, author, artist \_\_\_\_\_

Library program  Display/exhibit  Meeting room  Other

Title, date, time, location \_\_\_\_\_

### Have you:

<input type="checkbox"/> Read the Book or Magazine	<input type="checkbox"/> Viewed the Video/DVD
<input type="checkbox"/> Listened to the Audio Recording/CD	<input type="checkbox"/> Viewed the Electronic Information
<input type="checkbox"/> Attended the Library Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Viewed the Display/Exhibit
<input type="checkbox"/> Attended the Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

How did you find out about the resource(s)?

What are your concerns about the resource(s)?

What action do you seek as a result of your concern?

## Donor Acceptance Agreement

This is to acknowledge that (approximately) \_\_\_\_\_ books or materials have been received by the Coffeyville Public Library from:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

All donated material becomes the property of the Coffeyville Public Library and will be added to the collection, sold or otherwise discarded as the library chooses.

Donor estimate of value \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledged and agreed to this day \_\_\_\_\_

Donor signature \_\_\_\_\_

Director signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Open Records Request Form

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Records requested: Provide detailed information about the records/information you are requesting including name and approximate date document was produced.

### Record Title and Date

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_

Fees: A fee for providing copies of public records is authorized by state law and has been established by the Library's governing body at 25 cents per page. These charges are set at a level to compensate the library for the actual costs incurred in filling your request.

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### Official Use Only

Date request was received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date request was filled: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of pages (\$0.25/page): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Fee: \_\_\_\_\_



## 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 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

## 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:

- a) 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.

- b) 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.

- c) 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.

- d) 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.

- e) 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.

- f) 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.

- g) 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.

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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.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association & Association of American Publishers

## Code of Ethics of the American Library Association

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
- IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Adopted June 28, 1997, by the ALA Council; amended January 22, 2008.