

# **Library Policy For Argyle Public Library**



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## Library Policies of the Argyle Public Library

### I. Mission and Goal Statements

- a. The mission of the Argyle Public Library is to provide quality materials and services which fulfill educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the entire community in an atmosphere that is welcoming, respectful, and businesslike.
- b. The general library goals of the Argyle Public Library shall be:
  - i. To serve all residents of the community and the surrounding region.
  - ii. To acquire and make available to all residents of the above area such books, periodicals, pamphlets, and other services as will address their needs to a) become well informed, b) locate answers to important questions, c) cultivate the imagination and creative expression, d) develop skills for career and vocational advancement, and e) enjoy leisure by means of reading and other media services.
- c. To acquire the means to provide the most frequently requested material locally and upon demand.
- d. To maintain a program of service which locates information, guides reading, organizes and interprets material for people of various backgrounds, and stimulates thinking and intellectual development in individuals of any age.

- e. To strive consistently to discover new methods and improvements for better service for the library's patrons.
- f. To review regularly these goals of the Argyle Public Library and, if necessary, revise them in the light of new developments.

## II. Who May Use the Library

- a. The library will serve all residents of the community and the public library system area. Service will not be denied or abridged because of religious, racial, social, economic, or political status; or because of mental, emotional, or physical condition; age; or sexual orientation.
- b. The use of the library may be denied for due cause. Such cause may be failure to return library materials or to pay penalties, destruction of library property, disturbance of other patrons, or any other illegal, disruptive, or objectionable conduct on library premises.

## III. Patron Responsibilities and Conduct

- a. It is a patron's responsibility to maintain necessary and proper standards of behavior in order to protect his/her individual rights and the rights and privileges of other patrons. If a patron creates a public nuisance, that patron may be restricted from the library and from the use of the library facilities. Those who are unwilling to leave or do not leave within a reasonable amount of time, after being instructed to do so by the staff, will be subject to the law.
- b. Children
  - i. The Argyle Public Library encourages visits by young children and it is our desire to make this important visit both memorable and enjoyable for the child. Library staff is not expected to assume responsibility for the care of unsupervised children in the library.
  - ii. Children of all ages are encouraged to use the library for homework, recreational reading, and program attendance. The library staff realizes that the library will be noisier at busy times and that children by nature can cause more commotion. However, children (whether with parents or not) who are being continually disruptive will be given a warning that he/she must settle down or will be asked to leave the library. If after a second warning the child continues to be disruptive, he/she will be asked to leave the library.

If the child needs to contact a parent, they may do so and then wait with a staff person until the parent arrives.

#### IV. Services of the Library

a. The library provides materials and resources for information, entertainment, intellectual development, and enrichment of the people of the community. The library should endeavor to:

i. Select, organize, and make available necessary books and materials.

ii. Provide guidance and assistance to patrons.

iii. Sponsor and implement programs, exhibits, displays, book lists, etc., which would appeal to children and adults

iv. Cooperate with other community agencies and organizations.

v. Secure information beyond its own resources when requested (i.e. Using Interlibrary Loan and other resource sharing methods provided through the system and state.)

vi. Lend to other libraries upon request.

vii. Develop and provide services to patrons with special needs.

viii. Maintain a balance in its services to various age groups.

ix. Cooperate with, but not perform the functions of, school or other institutional libraries.

x. Provide service during hours which best meet the needs of the community, including evening and weekend hours.

xi. Regularly review library services being offered.

xii. Use media and other public relations mechanisms to promote the full range of available library services.

#### V. Responsibilities and Authorities of the Library Board

- a. Refer to *Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 43* (particularly section 43.58), the *Wisconsin Public Library Trustee Manual*, and individual library bylaws to provide basis and framework for the responsibilities and authority of the library board and individual trustees.
- b. The Argyle Public Library encourages each library trustee to take advantage of the training opportunities for trustees offered by the public library system or statewide agencies and organizations. Likewise, the Library encourages trustees to be active in state library organizations and its efforts to inform the Governor and legislature of the benefits and needs of public libraries.

## VI. Volunteers and Friends

The library board encourages individuals and groups to volunteer their time and efforts in the service of the Argyle Public Library. In appreciation of volunteer services, the library acknowledges the need to organize volunteer activities and provide for appropriate recognition befitting the benefit to the library and the community it serves.

The Friends of the Argyle Public Library, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organized to plan and execute, in conjunction with library goals and the needs of the library director, programs and events to benefit the library. The Friends group is involved in fund-raising for the library and oversees periodic book sales. Friends groups always serve at the pleasure of the library board which is the only body with legal authority to set policy for the development of the library.

## VII. Personnel Policy

- a. Management Policy: The duly appointed library board shall have all management rights, authorities, and responsibilities as stated in *Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 43*.
  - i. The library board shall select, appoint, and when necessary for valid reasons, dismiss the director of the library.

li. The board shall establish all other positions and all wage and benefit levels for all library staff.

lii. The library board shall provide an effective orientation for new directors to assure that the director understands a) the policies and processes related to the daily operation of the library, b) reporting and budgetary requirements that assure accountability and compliance with the law, c) the expectations of the board in regard to administrative processes and protocol, particularly as they relate to conducting effective and efficient board meetings, and d) rules and requirements for state certification and any assistance which is provided by the Library to acquire and maintain appropriate certification.

iv. The library board shall conduct annual appraisals of the library director's performance at which time personal and management goals can be discussed and negotiated.

b. Administrative Policy

The person appointed as library director shall be charged with the sole administration of the library.

1. The director shall be responsible to the library board in matters pertaining to and concerning the library; be present at monthly board meetings and prepare and present such reports and meeting documents as requested.

2. The director shall maintain financial records in an efficient manner; present periodic reports to the library board and to the municipal governing body; prepare the draft of the annual budget to be presented to the library board, and assist trustees with presentation of the adopted request for appropriation to the municipal governing body.

3. The director shall hold regular meetings with staff and/or volunteers for training and interpreting board policy.

4. The director will be responsible for preparing annual performance assessments for the library staff and volunteers.

5. The director shall have the responsibility for collection development for all materials in the library; this includes selection, ordering, processing, weeding, and inventory of the collections according to the guidelines in the policy.
6. The director will recommend changes in or additions to library policies as needed.
7. The director will perform preparatory work to assist the board with regular library planning.

c. Salaries

A classification and salary schedule has been adopted by the library board. The plan is subject to regular revision so that it will remain equitable for both the library and the staff.

d. Health Insurance, Vacation, Holiday, Sick Leave Policies

Health Insurance, Vacation, Holiday, and Sick Leave will be provided to the library director in accordance with the Village of Argyle's employee benefits policies.

e. Leave of Absence

Leaves of absence without pay may be granted to library employees for maternity, adoption, illness, travel, or graduate or certification training. All leaves are considered on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the director. A leave for the director must be approved by the Library Board.

Requests for leave should be submitted in writing well in advance of the time when the leave is to begin. Written requests should indicate both a beginning and an ending date for the leave.

When an employee is on unpaid leave they are responsible for all health insurance costs and other benefit premiums/deductions that may apply.

In some instances it may be necessary to deny requests for leaves of absence. Leaves are a privilege and can be granted only if the best interests of the library can be maintained.

f. Bereavement Leave

Library employees are eligible for three (3) days bereavement leave without loss of pay or sick leave credit in the event of the death in the immediate family,



defined as spouse, children, brother, sister, or parents of either the employee or the employee's spouse.

#### g. Military Leave

Library employees who are duly enrolled members of the National Guard, State Guard, or any other organized reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States shall be allowed a military leave of absence which has been ordered. The leave, under normal circumstances, will not exceed fourteen (14) days excluding Sundays and legal holidays. A copy of the order requiring attendance at military training sites shall accompany all requests for a military leave.

The library can assure no loss of wages if the employee wishes to turn in all earnings from the training period to the library board. Benefits are not affected by a military leave as long as the leave stays within the fourteen day parameter.

#### h. Jury Duty

In the event a library employee is called for jury duty, the library will release them and assure no loss of wages. If fees and expenses paid to jurors do not equal or exceed wages normally paid by the library, these fees can be turned in to the library board and the employee will be paid their wages as usual.

#### i. Work Schedule Policy

Major changes in the director's schedule or other circumstances may not be made without approval of the library board. Requests for such shall be made in writing to the library board. Requests for changes in the work schedule of other staff or volunteers shall be made in writing to the library director.

#### j. Meetings, Conventions, and Workshops

The director, staff, and trustees attending continuing education opportunities to aid the library shall be allowed expenses at the discretion of the library board according to the amount appropriated in budget for such. The director, staff, and trustees are encouraged to attend and participate in continuing education activities.

#### k. Disciplinary Policy

An employee of the Argyle Public Library may be dismissed for any action or behavior that causes the library's image or operation to be diminished. This includes but is not limited to: incompetence, misconduct, inattention to assigned duties, or unapproved absences from assigned duties.

Normally termination would be a final step which would follow:

1. A substandard performance appraisal
2. Verbal and/or written warnings
3. Suspension and/or
4. Extended probation.

It is important that complete and clear records be maintained of all disciplinary processes for the protection of the employee and the library.

The library wants each employee to be successful in his/her job and will work with employees to eliminate deficiencies.

While notice of intent to terminate can be expected, the Argyle Public Library reserves the right to dismiss an employee without notice in cases involving theft, drug or alcohol abuse, criminal activity, or in instances of significant misconduct.

#### I. Resignation or Retirement Policy

A library employee wishing to resign or retire from employment must notify the director or the library board as soon as practicable. The library requires a minimum notice of two weeks. For the library director a notice of at least one month is required.

The employee must submit a formal written resignation statement giving the exact date that employment is to be terminated.m. Grievance Procedure

It is the intent of the Argyle Public Library that every employee shall have the opportunity to express concerns relating to the physical surroundings in which the employee works, procedures and conditions of the specific position, relationships with fellow workers or supervisors, and rules as they apply to staff. A concern or grievance should follow the procedure below:

1. If possible, discuss the problem with the director. In the case of the director having a concern, this should be discussed with the board president.
2. If the director is part of the problem, or if the board president is part of the director's problem, the concern/grievance should be submitted in writing for the library board and be delivered to the director, who will deliver the statement to the board president. The board president

will in turn, present the concern, during closed session, to the full board at the next or special board meeting.

3. The board's representative will respond to the employee within five (5) days of the board meeting at which the issue is discussed, either providing a determination, solution, or a strategy for how the board will address the issue over time.

n. Equal Opportunity Employment Policy

It is the policy of the Argyle Public Library to provide an equal employment opportunity for all qualified and qualifiable persons. Equal employment opportunity shall be according to the provisions of State and Federal laws and regulations.

o. Drug-Free Workplace Policy

In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited while performing work for the Argyle Public Library, whether that work is carried out in the workplace building or not. All employees shall abide, as a condition of employment, by the terms of this notice and shall notify the library director or board within (5) days of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace.

Failure to comply with the above requirements shall be grounds for appropriate personnel action against such employee up to and including termination, or such employee may be required to satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

p. Sexual Harassment Policy

Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Title VII (federal law) and Statute 111.36(b) (state law). Sexual harassment, either verbal or physical, is an unlawful employment practice and will not be tolerated by the Argyle Public Library.

The Argyle Public Library accepts and adheres to all definitions and procedures outlined in the law as regards sexual harassment. Any employee who engages in sexual harassment will subject themselves to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

VIII. Materials Selection/Collection Development Policy

a. Objectives

The purpose of the Argyle Public Library is to provide all individuals in the community with carefully selected books and other materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, research, pleasure, and the creative use of leisure time.

Because of the volume of publishing, as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a selection policy with which to meet community interests and needs.

The materials selection/collection development policy is used by the library staff in the selection of materials and also serves to acquaint the general public with the principles of collection.

The *Library Bill of Rights* and the *Freedom to Read Statement* have been endorsed by the Argyle Public Library Board of Trustees and are integral parts of the policy.

The materials selection/collection development policy, like all other policies, will be reviewed and/or revised as the need arises.

b. Responsibility for Selection

The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the library director who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Argyle Public Library Board of Trustees. This responsibility may be shared with other members of the library staff; however, because the director must be available to answer to the library board and the general public for actual selections made, the director has the authority to reject or select any item contrary to the recommendations of the staff.

c. Criteria for selection

The main points considered in the selection of materials are:

1. Individual merit of each item
2. Popular appeal/demand
3. Suitability of material for the clientele
4. Existing library holdings
5. Budget

Reviews are a major source of information about new materials. The primary sources of reviews are materials from SWLS and from publishers.

The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting a title which is in demand. Consideration is, therefore, given to requests from library patrons and books discussed on public media. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.

d. Interlibrary Loan

Because of limited budget and space, the library cannot provide all materials that are requested. Therefore, interlibrary loan is used to obtain from other libraries those materials that are beyond the scope of this library's collection.

In return for utilizing interlibrary loan to satisfy the needs of our patrons, the Argyle Public Library agrees to lend its materials to other libraries through the same interlibrary loan network, and to make an effort to have its current holdings listed in a tool that is accessible by other libraries throughout the state.

e. Gifts and Donations

The library accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be added to the collection only if appropriate and needed. If they are not needed because of duplication, condition, or dated information, the director can dispose of them as he/she sees fit. The same criteria of selection which are applied to purchased materials are also applied to gifts. Memorial gifts of books or money are also accepted with suitable bookplates placed in the book. Specific memorial books can be ordered for the library on request of a patron if the request meets the criteria established by the Board. It is desirable for gifts of or for specific titles to be offered after consultation with the library director. Book selection will be made by the director if no specific book is requested. The Argyle Public Library encourages and appreciates gifts and donations.

By law, the library is not allowed to appraise the value of donated materials, though it can provide an acknowledgment of receipt of the items if requested by the donor.

f. Weeding

An up-to-date, attractive, and useful collection is maintained through a continual withdrawal and replacement process. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent upon current demand, usefulness, more recent acquisitions, and availability of newer editions. This ongoing process of weeding is the responsibility of the library

director and is authorized by the board of trustees. Withdrawn materials will be handled in a similar manner and under the same authority as donated materials.

g. Potential Problems or Challenges

The Argyle Public Library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy.

Responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be sequestered except to protect it from damage or theft.

h. Challenged Material

Although materials are carefully selected, there can arise differences of opinion regarding suitable materials. Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection may complete a "Request for Reconsideration" form which is available in the library.

IX. Circulation Policy

a. Registration

All borrowers must be registered and must have a valid local or system patron card to borrow library materials.

Identification is required. A driver's license or a student ID is preferred, however, any other official ID or recent nonpersonal piece of mail may be acceptable.

Applicants under 13 years of age must have a parent or guardian give their consent on the application form before a new card can be issued. This parental signature is not required for children who are renewing cards.

Materials cannot be checked out until a library card is issued.

All library cards expire after 5 years. In order to renew a library card, patrons must produce identification and must clear all outstanding fines and bills.

b. Lost or Forgotten Cards

If a patron loses his/her library card, the patron should notify the library as soon as possible and request a replacement. Replacement costs are \$3.00 per card.

All patrons, adult and juvenile, are expected to bring their library cards with them if they intend to check out items. An individual who repeatedly ignores this expectation may be denied the privilege of checking out materials until they present their card at the library.

c. Loan Periods

- i. Three (3) weeks for books. Can be renewed.
- ii. Generally, reference books do not circulate. Upon request, some reference materials may be checked out until the library is next open.
- iii. Interlibrary loans are due the date indicated by the lending library.
- iv. Books may be renewed twice if there is not a waiting list for the title.
- v. Current issues of periodicals circulate for one week.
- vi. Non-current periodicals may be checked out for a period of two (2) weeks.
- vii. Two weeks for DVDs.
- viii. No bound issues of Argyle Atlas, Blade Atlas, Argyle Agenda or Argyle Yearbooks may leave the library unless by permission of the Library Board. They may be taken to the village clerk's office to be copied.

The director may establish the loan period for special collections, materials which are temporarily in great demand, such as for student projects, or materials added to the collection which are in a new format, e.g. computer

software. There is no limit on the number of items a patron can borrow at one time, with one exception – two items on a subject is the limit for a known school assignment.

#### d. Reserves

Reserves may be placed by patrons either in person, over the phone, or using their account online. Patrons will be notified by phone call or email when the materials are available. There is no charge to the patron for placing a reserve or for interlibrary loan services.

#### e. Fines and Charges

Currently, the Argyle Library does not charge fines for overdue materials. However, if an item is lost or damaged, the patron is responsible for replacement costs.

#### f. Confidentiality

As specified in *Wisconsin Statutes 43.30*, “records of any library which is in whole or in part supported by public funds, including the records of a public library system, indicating the identity of any individual who borrows or uses the library’s documents or other materials, resources or services may not be disclosed except by court order or to persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library or library system, to persons authorized by the individual to inspect such records, or to libraries authorized under subs. (2) and (3).”

The Argyle Public Library adheres strictly to all sections of this Statute regarding the protection of the confidentiality of its users.

### X. Reference Service Policy

#### a. The Argyle Public Library:

- Will provide information in the form of short answers to specific questions and guidance in locating material for patrons who appear in person, call on the telephone, or request information through correspondence;
- Will assist patrons in the use of the Library and teach basic research methodology, when appropriate (this includes providing



help in developing a research strategy and advice on whether a trip to the library would be worthwhile for individuals who telephone);

- Will provide bibliographic verification of items both in the Library and not owned by the library and will assist patrons in obtaining materials through interlibrary loan, when appropriate;
- May refer library users to other agencies and libraries in pursuit of needed information;
- May use not only the library's resources in printed form, but consult appropriate digital resources as well as the regional resource library and other agencies by telephone in pursuit of "ready reference" information.

## XI. Programming Policy

A "program" is a planned interaction between the library staff and the program participants for the purpose of promoting library materials, facilities, or services, as well as offering the community an informational, entertaining or cultural experience.

Programming includes such activities as story time, films, and activities on no-school days, summer library program for children, speakers for young adults, and book or author discussion groups for adults.

The board, in conjunction with the library director, will establish a budget and goals for programming to facilitate the effective implementation of this service.

## XII. Public Relations Policy

a. Public relations goals of the Argyle Public Library are:

i. To promote a good understanding of the Library's objectives and services among governing officials, civic leaders, and the general public;

ii. To promote active participation in the varied services offered by the library to people of all ages.

b. The Board recognizes that public relations involves every person who has connection with the 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.

c. The director will be expected to make presentations and to participate in community activities to promote library services. A reasonable amount of library time will be allowed for preparation and speaking. Materials to be used by press, radio, or television will be approved by the director.

d. The board will establish a publications budget to cover costs related to printing, publication, supplies, and miscellaneous needs related to the public relations effort.

### XIII. Equipment Use Policy

A computer is available to patrons on a first-come, first-served basis. Instructions for operating hardware are displayed near the computer. There is no charge for use of the computer; however, in order to make the service available to as many patrons as possible, a time limit for usage has been imposed. That time limit is 30 minutes. Library staff are available for general assistance in using the computer. However, staff are not expected to train patrons in the use of application programs. Tutorial manuals will be provided when available.

a. A printer and photocopy machine is available. Printer paper will cost \$.25 per black and white printed sheet and \$.50 per color printed sheet and must be paid for at the conclusion of the session.

b. Copy machine users are advised that there are restrictions on copyrighted materials. Any violation of copyright is the responsibility of the copy machine user.

### XIV. Internet Use Policy

The Argyle Public Library is providing access to the Internet as a means to enhance the information and learning opportunities for the citizens of the library's service area. The Board of Trustees has established the Internet use policy to ensure appropriate and effective use of this resource.

Access to the Internet is available to all patrons; however, this service may be restricted at any time for use not consistent with the guidelines. Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of the library's Internet service. All users must sign the log-in chart prior to beginning their session.

### Expectations:

Users should be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources can be a violation of local, state, and federal laws and can lead to prosecution. The user will be held responsible for his/her actions using the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the policies below which include generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Unacceptable uses of the service will result in the suspension or revocation of Internet use privileges.

### Warnings:

The Internet is a decentralized, unmoderated global network; the Argyle Public Library has no control over the content found there. The library will not censor access to material nor protect users from offensive information, and it is not responsible for the availability and accuracy of information found on the Internet.

The library cannot assure that data or files downloaded by users are virus-free. The library is not responsible for damages to equipment or data on a user's personal computer from the use of data downloaded from the library's Internet service.

The use of the Internet and e-mail is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the proper authorities.

### Guidelines:

- Users may use the Internet for research and the acquisition of information to address their educational, vocational, cultural, and recreational needs
- Users may use the Internet for the receipt and transmission of electronic mail (e-mail) as long as they use a free email service which will establish and maintain an account for them; the library is unable to manage email accounts for any organizations or individuals
- Internet use is offered in 30 minute sessions on a first-come, first-served basis; each user is allowed one session--if there is no patron waiting for the service at the end of a session, the user can have another session, but once having had the service for 30 minutes the user must abandon use of the Internet if another patron requests use of the service
- Users will respect and uphold copyright laws and all other applicable laws and regulations; they will not use it for illegal purposes
- Users will respect the rights and privacy of others by not accessing private files
- Users agree not to incur any costs for the library through their use of the Internet service

- Users shall not create and/or distribute computer viruses over the Internet
- Users shall not deliberately or willfully cause damage to computer equipment, programs, or parameters.

#### XV. Meeting Room Policy

a. The room is available to individuals or organized groups and is organized through the village clerk, not the library staff.

b. The fact that a group is permitted to meet at the Library does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs by the library staff or Board.

c. The library Board and staff do not assume any liability for groups or individuals attending a meeting at the library.

#### XVI. Displays and Exhibits Policy

As an educational and cultural institution, the Argyle Public Library welcomes exhibits and displays of interest, information and enlightenment to the community. Displays of handiwork, historical material, nature study, or any other material deemed of general interest may be exhibited. The director shall accept or reject material offered for display based on its suitability and availability.

The Library assumes no responsibility for the preservation or protection, and no liability for possible damage or theft of any item displayed or exhibited. All items placed in the Library are there at the owner's risk.

Areas available to the public for displays and exhibits are the glass exhibit case, shelves, the meeting room, and the general bulletin board. A release must be signed by the exhibitor before any artifact can be placed in the library. An example of the release follows:

### *Argyle Public Library Display and Exhibit Release*

*I, the undersigned, hereby lend the following works of art or other material to the Argyle Public Library for exhibit purposes only. In consideration of the privilege of exhibiting them in the Library, I hereby release said Library from responsibility for loss, damage, or destruction while they are in the possession of the Library.*

*Exhibition to be held in the* \_\_\_\_\_

*During* \_\_\_\_\_

*Description of materials loaned* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Address* \_\_\_\_\_ *Telephone* \_\_\_\_\_

### XVII. Public Notice Bulletin Board Policy

Bulletin board materials may be submitted for posting by nonprofit organizations for civic, educational, or cultural purposes. Such organizations may submit literature publicizing a specific event. Limited space generally allows only short-term notices. The director must approve all postings and may prohibit postings which do not meet library standards. Library staff will place and remove postings promptly.

Each item posted must be dated and signed. A request for return of items, along with name and telephone number of the person to be contacted, should be printed on the back of each article. Unless such arrangements are specified, items must be picked up the day following the date of the publicized event if the owners want them returned. Otherwise, the library will not be responsible for returning materials.

## XVIII. Disasters Policy

### a. Snow storms

The library will follow the recommendation and actions of the Village.. Closing during other days and hours will be at the discretion of the Library Director.

### b. Fire

Do not panic, but do not under-estimate the potential danger to customers or staff represented by a fire. At the first indication of smoke or flame, investigate the situation to determine location and extent of the fire. If the fire can obviously be contained and extinguished quickly and safely by staff, proceed to do so. However, if there is any doubt about whether the fire can be controlled, immediately call 911 or the fire department and then clear the building.

The time to think about fires is before they happen. Familiarize yourself with the type, location, and application of the fire extinguisher(s) in the building. Orient all staff and volunteers to this information. If you share a building with another agency and it occasionally initiates fire drills, library staff should respect those training exercises and respond as they would in the case of a real fire.

### c. Health emergencies

Staff members should exercise caution when administering first aid of even a minor nature because of the safety of the injured individual and the potential liability of the staff member. Without specialized training it is not advisable for staff to undertake more than keeping the sick or injured patron comfortable and protected from needless disturbance until medical help can be obtained. Since each case is unique, staff members should use their own judgment to do what is prudent and reasonable.

The Rescue Squad/Police (911 if available) should be called immediately in the event of any serious problem.

No medication, including aspirin, should ever be dispensed to the public.

### d. Bomb threats

Keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message and try to write down every word spoken by the person.

If the caller does not indicate the location of the bomb or the time of possible detonation, ASK FOR THIS INFORMATION.

Pay particular attention to peculiar background noises such as motors running, background music and any other sounds which may indicate where the location from which the call is originating.

Listen closely to the voice (male, female), voice quality (calm, excited), accents and speech impediments.

Immediately after the caller hangs up, call the police. Clear the building. The police will handle the actual bomb search.

#### XIX. Review and Revision of Library Policies

The preceding statements of Argyle Public Library's policies shall be subject to review and revision at least every five years by the Library Board. Individual policies will be reviewed or added as needed.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_ July 2023 \_\_\_\_\_

## XX. Appendices

1. "Library Bill of Rights"
2. "Freedom to Read Statement"



# 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.

Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

## 4. 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 like. 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.

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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.

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*A Joint Statement by:*

American Library Association

Association of American Publishers

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

American Booksellers for Free Expression

The Association of American University Presses

The Children's Book Council

Freedom to Read Foundation

National Association of College Stores

National Coalition Against Censorship

National Council of Teachers of English

The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

