

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Revised by the Argyle Public Library Trustees

February 20th, 2023

Freedom to Read

The Argyle Public Library Board of Trustees believes that borrowing items from the library is an individual matter. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to read, watch, or inquire. Parents have the primary responsibility to guide and direct the reading of their own minor child(ren). The library does not stand in loco parentis.

The library contains materials presenting various points of view concerning problems and issues of our times, international, national and local. No materials should ever be excluded because of the beliefs or characteristics of the writer nor be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. Censorship of books, urged by morals or political opinions must be challenged by libraries in maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.

Opinions may differ regarding the appropriateness of materials in any library. Resolutions of conflicts between freedom of expression and information and an individual or groups wish to restrict certain materials' use is often a difficult task.

Collection Development Process

In an attempt to ensure the rights of all parties, Argyle Public Library has established procedures for handling complaints for or against materials housed within the library.

Argyle Public Library professional staff work within budget constraints to provide services and materials to all people in the community. Staff are responsible for the selection of resources for the library. The Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement will always be important foundation statements underlying selection questions.

Filing a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials and the Review Process

Individuals, staff members or Library Board members may make a request for reconsideration for any item in the Library's collection. All official requests must be made using the Formal Statement of Concern about Library Resources form which is available at the end of this policy or in the Library. If any part of the form is incomplete, the request for consideration will not take place. Anonymous submissions are not allowed. Additionally, due to the amount of time required for the reconsideration process, a household may only have one active Request for Reconsideration on file at a time. Complainant must live in a county that has paid annual circulation reimbursement to Argyle Public Library in the previous fiscal year.

The material or materials being reconsidered will not be removed or restricted in any way during the review process. Once the review is completed, and if action was deemed necessary by the Library Board, the item will be handled accordingly.

After receiving a written request for reconsideration the Library Director will send a written response to the complainant, within 60 days, explaining in detail their decision regarding the request and any other necessary information including but not limited to a copy of the collection policy and supporting documents.

If the complainant is unhappy with the final decision of the Library Director, 30 days after having received the Director's written response, they may request a formal review by the Library Board. The Library will then procure copies of the items for each trustee. Trustees will be required to read the materials and will review the professional research compiled by the Library Director. The Library Board will have final decision making power over whether the item will be removed from the collection in response to the reconsideration request.

The Request for Reconsideration review process can be a months-long process. Because of this, any item under review will continue to be made available to patrons until a final decision has been made.

Formal Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Do you represent yourself or an organization? _____

Resource about which you are concerned:

- Book
- Audiobook
- Magazine
- Visual Materials (DVD/Blu-ray/)
- Newspaper
- Content of Library Program/Event
- Kit
- Other:

Title: _____

Author/Publisher/Date: _____

1. Have you read our Collection Development Policy?
2. Has this item won any awards?
3. What brought this resource to your attention?
4. Have you viewed/read/listened to the entire content? If not, what parts did you read/view/listen to?

5. What concerns you about this resource? Please summarize your concerns along with references to specific page/chapter numbers.

6. What do you feel the effect of the material might be?

7. Are there other resources you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

8. What action are you requesting the committee consider?

Signature: _____ Date: _____