

# PUBLIC SERVICES POLICIES

(ACCESS POLICIES)

## APPOMATTOX REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

ADOPTED BY THE APPOMATTOX REGIONAL  
LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD

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## **SECTION ONE: ELIGIBILITY FOR USE AND REGISTRATION**

### **1.1 Residents**

REV 6/20/17

All residents of the City of Hopewell, Prince George County, and Dinwiddie County, regardless of age, are granted full use of all services of the Appomattox Regional Library System.

### **1.2 Nonresidents**

REV 6/20/17

Everyone is welcome to use the services of the Appomattox Regional Library System on library property. The Administration reserves the right to determine if nonresidents may be granted extended privileges. Nonresidents are able to reserve and use the library's meeting spaces as provided in Section 12 of these policies.

### **1.3 Institutions**

REV 6/20/17

Administration reserves the right to grant library privileges to institutions, including borrowing privileges, with the assurance that the institution follows all regulations stated in these policies or established in the library's procedures.

### **1.4 Governments**

REV 2/28/01

The Appomattox Regional Library System serves as an informational agency to the local governments of Hopewell, Prince George County, and Dinwiddie County. All possible cooperation and service will be rendered to agencies of these governments.

### **1.5 Disability Access**

REV 6/20/17

The Appomattox Regional Library System does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to its programs and activities or in employment with the library.

All new facilities of the Appomattox Regional Library System shall be fully accessible to patrons and staff. The Appomattox Regional Library System will strive to maintain its current facilities to be fully accessible to all patrons and staff.

### **1.6 Suspension of Library Privileges**

REV 6/20/17

The Appomattox Regional Library System reserves the right to withdraw or suspend the library privileges (including being present on library property) in the event that any of the public use policies are disregarded. The Appomattox Regional Library System also reserves the right to suspend the library privileges of any individual or institution which acts in an inappropriate manner that interferes with other individuals use of library services. Anyone who has privileges suspended may appeal this action to the Library Board of Trustees.

### **1.7 Reinstatement of Library Privileges**

REV 2/28/01

The Appomattox Regional Library System reserves the right to reinstate the library privileges of an individual once the administration judges that the suspended individual will not break library rules or act in an inappropriate manner that will disturb other patrons.

### **1.8 Replacement of Library Cards**

REV 6/20/17

Staff will replace worn or damaged cards at no charge. As a courtesy, the Appomattox Regional Library System will replace the first lost card at no charge. The library will replace subsequent lost cards at a rate of \$1.00 per card.

### **1.9 Applying for Library Card when patron possesses a card with another library**

REV 6/20/17

If a patron applies for an Appomattox Regional Library System library card and ARLS determines the patron owes more than \$2.00 to another library, the patron will be denied an Appomattox Regional Library System card until the patron pays the amount necessary to bring the patron's debt under \$2.00.

## **SECTION TWO: BORROWING OF MATERIALS**

### **2.1 Borrowing Books and other Materials**

REV 6/20/17

Library borrowing privileges shall be granted to any individual who qualifies under sections 1.1 and 1.2 of this document and makes proper application for such privileges.

Proper application for library borrowing privileges includes providing the library with necessary personal information, promising to comply with all library rules, agreeing to pay promptly all fines and damages incurred, and agreeing to give immediate notice of any change of address. Any child under age 15 may be granted library privileges provided the parent or legal custodian of the child makes a proper application or such application is endorsed by the child's parent or legal custodian.

Circulating Items: Library items, with the exception of special equipment, circulate for a period of three weeks. Each patron may check out a total of 50 items at a time with the exception of Best Sellers. A patron may only borrow three Best Sellers at a time. Best Sellers may not be renewed beyond the original three weeks circulation period.

Reference Items: Reference items may be borrowed from an ARLS library only when a supervising reference librarian has given special permission.

Laptop Computers: The library has a limited number of laptop computers which may be borrowed for in-library use during regular library hours. Laptops are loaned on a first come, first served basis. A laptop checked out by the patron may be used for a maximum of two hours. Library laptop cannot be removed from the library. Laptops are limited to one per user. The patron must give staff a State or Federal photo identification such as a driver's license or passport. The same internet and computer use policies for use of library computers apply to the use of library laptops. All created files will be deleted upon the laptop's return. The laptop must be returned by the person who checked it out.

### **2.2 Renewing or Extending Loan Periods**

REV 6/20/17

Items, unless on request for another patron, may be renewed up to three times. An item on request for another patron may not be renewed.

### **2.3 Overdue Materials**

REV 6/20/17

Items not returned or renewed by their due date are subject to fines. All items are fined at a rate of \$.10 per day not to accumulate over \$4.00 in fines for any one item. The customer may also be charged for long overdue items as "Lost Materials" as provided in 2.4 of these policies. Laptops are fined at \$5.00 for every hour or portion thereof that the laptop is overdue. The laptop becomes automatically "lost" twenty-four hours after checkout and the patron will be assessed a service fee plus full replacement cost of the laptop. The patron assumes full responsibility for the cost of repair or replacement of the laptop should the laptop be lost, stolen, or damaged while checked out to that patron.

### **2.4 Lost Materials**

REV 6/20/17

After notification by a patron, or after a final notice that materials are overdue and maximum fines are owed, the library may declare an item lost. The patron who loses an item is liable for the replacement cost and any fines/fees for the item as determined by the library. If an item is recovered and returned to the library within 90 days, the library will refund only the cost of the lost item. Administration will use outside agencies to assist in the collection of lost items and replacement costs.

## **2.5 Damaged Materials**

REV 5/17/11

If an item is returned in damaged form by a patron and the library determines that the item must be replaced, the patron who had the item on loan when it was damaged is liable for the replacement cost of the item or missing and/or damaged parts as determined by the library.

## **2.6 Suspension of Borrowing Privileges**

REV 6/20/17

It shall be within the authority of the library to suspend library-borrowing privileges of library patrons in the following instances:

- Patrons who are negligent in making payment for damaged or lost materials.
- Patrons whose accumulated fines and penalties are in excess of \$5.00.
- Minors whose library privileges are to be suspended at the written request of the parent or legal custodian.

Any patron whose library borrowing privileges are suspended shall have the right to appeal such action to the ARLS Board of Trustees.

## **2.7 Reinstatement of Borrowing Privileges**

REV 6/20/17

The library shall reinstate library-borrowing privileges as follows:

- For patrons whose library privileges were suspended because of overdue or lost materials, library-borrowing privileges shall be reinstated upon return of the materials in good condition and payment of outstanding fines or fees. If materials are not returned in good condition, the patrons must pay the damaged material charges as provided in 2.5 of these policies.
- For patrons whose accumulated fines or penalties are in excess of \$5.00, privileges shall be reinstated upon payment of these fines or penalties.
- For minors whose privileges have been suspended at the request of a parent or legal custodian, privileges shall be reinstated with the written approval of the parent or legal custodian.

## **2.8 Confidentiality of Records**

REV 6/20/17

The following records are excluded from the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Va. Code Ann. § 2.2-3705(3):

3. Information contained in library records that can be used to identify both (i) any library patron who has borrowed material from a library and (ii) the material such patron borrowed.

Accordingly, when any local, state, or federal official, or a private citizen, seeks to gain access to library personal data, the following principles and procedures shall apply:



Library personnel shall not reveal any personal data on library users or allow access to such records. Library circulation records are confidential and gathered for library purposes. These records are not to be used to disclose identities of individuals in connection with materials borrowed from any facility of the Appomattox Regional Library System. Individuals seeking personal data from library records shall be referred to the Regional Library Director.

To protect the library user against invasion of privacy, the Regional Library Director shall withhold any information to be used for non-library purposes until served with a legal process, order, or subpoena which specifically identifies the information required and the purpose of such a request.

Upon advice of legal counsel, if defects are noted in the process, order, or subpoena, there shall be insistence made to proper persons that such defects are corrected before any records are released. No records shall be released until such process, order, or subpoena is proper and in full compliance with proper legal authority, whether local, state, or federal in nature.

Any problems or conditions relating to the privacy of a library user's personal data as recorded by the Appomattox Regional Library System which is not provided for in this policy statement shall be referred to the Regional Library Director. A decision on complying with the request shall be based upon proper study of the issues, and if necessary, upon the advice and counsel of the Chairman of the ARLS Board of Trustees and/or legal counsel.

## **SECTION FOUR: INTERLIBRARY LOAN**

Revised 3/19/19

### **4.1 Borrowing from Other Library Systems**

The Appomattox Regional Library System recognizes the borrowing of resources through interlibrary loan enables us to better serve the informational needs of our users. When an Appomattox Regional Library System patron, in good standing, requests an item not owned by the library system, an attempt will be made to borrow the item from another library system. Normally, there is no charge for this service; however, the library administration reserves the right to pass along any charges incurred in the delivery and return of the material. Furthermore, patrons are liable for any overdue fines or replacement costs associated with items that are borrowed from other library systems. ARLS fines are \$.10 per late business day with a maximum fine of \$4.00.

Because Interlibrary Loan involves items owned by institutions other than ARLS and because of the labor the service requires, certain restrictions and limits apply to Interlibrary Loan borrowing.

- ILL requests will not be processed for cardholders whose loan privileges are suspended due to expired registration, overdue library materials, the accrual of unpaid fines and fees of \$5.00 and over, or a record of returning items late. The Library reserves the right to limit or deny ILL service when circumstances regarding user status warrant such restrictions. PPLS patrons must have an ARLS library card in order to request interlibrary loans through ARLS. Interlibrary loan items must be picked up and returned to an ARLS branch.
- ILL item identification labels wrapped around the cover should stay on the item and NOT be removed by the borrower.
- Circulation restrictions imposed by the lending library apply to ILL materials.
- A patron may not request borrowing of the same material within a two-month period. Additionally any item cannot be requested more than 5 times in total, (even by different patrons) due to copyright restrictions on fair use.
- A maximum of 5 items may be requested and/or borrowed at any given time. Only one copy of a specific title may be requested and/or borrowed at any given time. ILL materials will be returned to the lending library if not checked out three days before its ARLS due date.

ARLS complies with the ALA Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States:

[http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=Interlibrary\\_Loan&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=31579](http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=Interlibrary_Loan&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=31579)

### **4.2 Lending to Other Libraries**

ARLS does not provide this service presently through any online utility. If another library system sends ARLS an ALA Interlibrary Loan Form, however, ARLS will honor it and mail the requested item to the requesting library. Standard accepted ILL procedure will apply. ARLS declines to send DVD items through the mail, and will not loan items that are less than six months from their publish date.

## **SECTION FIVE: COPYING MATERIAL**

### **5.1 Photocopying Print Material**

REV 3/2/01

Copies of print material may be made by patrons at the cost of ten cents per page. The Library System provides photocopying machines in each library.

### **5.2 Photocopying Microforms**

REV 3/2/01

Microfilm machines in the Headquarters Library are capable of making print copies at a cost of ten cents per page.

### **5.3 Photocopying Digital Materials**

REV 3/2/01

Most library computers have print capability. Copies of digital material may be made by patrons at the cost of ten cents per page.

### **5.4 Copyright**

REV 3/2/01

The Appomattox Regional Library System adheres to all of the provisions of the U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, United States Codes Sec. 101 et seq.). Certain areas of copyright law continue to be open to interpretation; this policy represents a sincere effort on the part of the Library to operate within the full intent of the law. Appropriate notices will be posted at all copy machines, and other printing access points (computers, microfilm machines, etc.) reminding patrons of the Copyright Law. The Library disapproves of unauthorized duplication in any form regardless of media. Patrons of the Library System who willfully disregard copyright law are in violation of Appomattox Regional Library System Library Policy and do so at their own risk and assume all liability

## **SECTION 6: REFERENCE SERVICES**

### **6.1 Scope of Reference Services**

2/18/20

The Appomattox Regional Library System strives to answer all informational questions from the public in a timely manner. The library will make reasonable effort to answer patron's questions either by showing the patron how to retrieve the information themselves or by directly providing the information as suits the situation. When necessary, the library system will make referrals and/or contact outside sources to fully satisfy the patron's informational needs. Information questions will be answered using the best resources the library can access within reason considering time of request and cost of materials, other departments such as Inter-Library Loan may be utilized in such situations. Staff provide reference services in person, by phone, or online through email and the library's social media accounts.

### **6.2 "Book a Librarian" Service**

2/18/20

Library users who require in-depth training from a librarian to master a task may request a session from a librarian. Examples of such tasks include:

- Setting up an email account
- Filling out an online job application
- Opening an account with an ebook provider.

These are intended only as training sessions and librarians will not complete personal tasks for the patron.

## **SECTION SEVEN: SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

### **7.1 Permanent Special Collections**

REV 3/2/01

The Library System may maintain special collections on a permanent basis. A special collection consists of materials that warrant being kept separate from the general collection due to local interest, value, ease of accessibility, or needing special environmental considerations.

### **7.2 Temporary Special Collections**

REV 3/2/01

The Library System may take materials from the general collection and temporarily place them in a separate special collection. Normally, this will be done to make it convenient for patrons to access a group of materials similar in nature for a particular period of time. The Library System may also create temporary special collections for displays honoring a person(s), event, or special time of the year, and also for promoting reading, education, and library services.

## **SECTION EIGHT: PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

### **8.1 Library Sponsored Programs and Events**

Rev. 5/21/19

The Appomattox Regional Library System will offer special programs and events throughout the year to promote reading, literacy, education, and other efforts supported by the mission of the library system. All of these programs will be open to the public and free of charge. Due to space restrictions, there may be programs and events that will require advance registration. The library system reserves the right to limit attendance at a program, either through advance registration or on a first-come-first-served basis.

### **8.2 Other Events and Programs**

Rev. 5/21/19

The library system reserves the right to schedule programs and events sponsored by outside organizations if they are consistent with the mission of the library system. All outside groups must adhere to the policies of this document including 8.1.

## **SECTION NINE: DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITS**

### **9.1 Library Sponsored Displays and Exhibits**

REV 3/2/01

The Appomattox Regional Library System will occasionally set up special displays or exhibits throughout the year to promote reading, literacy, education, and other efforts supported by the mission of the Library System.

### **9.2 Outside Agency Sponsored Displays and Exhibits**

REV 3/2/01

The use of library facilities for displays and exhibits by outside organizations is subject to review of Supervising Librarians and/or the Regional Library Director. Material being considered for display or exhibit must be in one of the following categories:

- Material produced by, or in co-sponsorship with local, state, or federal government agencies.
- Public service information produced by an established community organization.
- Material about political issues where both sides will be presented.

Displays and exhibits must be placed and removed at the direction of a library staff member under the direction of the Regional Library Director.

The Appomattox Regional Library System assumes no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged materials. Exhibitors shall indicate in writing that they have been advised of this policy, and that they agree to hold the Board of Trustees and staff of the Appomattox Regional Library System blameless from any claims for loss or damage to exhibits.

### **9.3 Individual Displays and Exhibits**

REV 3/2/01

The Appomattox Regional Library System may solicit or accept the display of an individual for such objects as art and collectibles. The Library system has the right to determine where, how, and for how long the items will be displayed.

The Appomattox Regional Library System assumes no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged materials. Exhibitors shall indicate in writing that they have been advised of this policy, and that they agree to hold the Board of Trustees and staff of the Appomattox Regional Library System blameless from any claims for loss or damage to exhibits.

#### **9.3.1 Art Display Policy and Guidelines**

REV 1/15/13

The Appomattox Regional Library is not an art gallery or a museum. The Appomattox Regional Library System offers display space for the exhibition of artwork, crafts, and collections of unique, interesting or historically significant items to fulfill its mission to promote intellectual freedom, life-long learning, and cultural and leisure activities, and to increase public awareness of the Library's resources. All exhibits are free and open to the public

### 9.3.2 General Policy

REV 1/15/13

The Library encourages exhibitions of painting, photography, sculpture, crafts, and more for civic, cultural, educational and recreational purposes. Exhibit space is made available on an equitable basis to individuals or groups with respect to artworks that best meet the standards for acceptance.

- All displays of original art (not including those produced or solicited by the Library) must be reviewed and accepted by the Board's Art Advisory Committee.
- Artwork displays will be scheduled for the period as determined by the Director.
- Library use of display areas takes precedence over any other use and the Library reserves the right, without notice, to cancel the use of the display area by exhibits if the Director determines that the display space is needed for Library purposes.
- Library-produced or solicited displays (including children's art work) will have priority over displays proposed by non-Library groups or individuals. In addition, preference is given to applicants from Hopewell, Dinwiddie, Prince George or the Town of McKenney.
- The library reserves the right to refuse display space to exhibits that, in its opinion, do not further the mission and philosophy stated above.
- The library does not accept responsibility for ensuring that all points of view are represented in any single display. Granting of permission to display materials does not imply Staff, Advisory Committee, or Board endorsement of content, nor will the Library accept responsibility for the accuracy of statements made in such materials.
- The Library assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, damage or destruction of items left for display.
- All displays will meet existing State and Federal laws on obscenity, libel, defamation of character or invasion of privacy.
- The name and contact information for the group or individual preparing the display must be a part of the display.
- All displays must adhere to established guidelines for mounting.
- The Library Board authorizes the library director to establish guidelines and procedures to facilitate the use of this policy including those for application for consideration, artist notification, mounting and display, and other necessary processes.

### 9.3.2 Art Advisory Committee

REV 1/15/13

The Board shall establish an Art Advisory Committee.

#### Duties

- To review periodically, proposals for displays of original art which have not been solicited by the Library, and to ensure that original art displayed in the Library is of high quality.
- To advise the Library Director on purchase or selection of permanent, original art as requested.

#### Composition and Terms



- The committee shall consist of one Library Board member (appointed by the Board Chairperson) and four members of the community who are knowledgeable in the field of art and who are appointed by the Board for staggered three-year terms. The library director will appoint one nonvoting staff member to serve as a liaison to the committee. Current Library staff members are not eligible for Board appointment to the Committee. Art Advisory Committee members may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

## **Meetings**

The Committee will meet as needed to review and determine what artwork will be displayed.

### **9.3.3 Guidelines for Mounting Art Displays at ARLS**

REV 1/15/13

- Artwork must have wire hangers or other applicable hanging fixtures which will work with the Library's hanging display system.
- Artists must supply their own easels or display stands for free standing art.
- All artwork is to be hung or set up, and taken down by the artist.
- Pieces to be hung should weigh no more than 15 lbs.
- Ladders or stools will be provided by the library for use in hanging or removing pieces.
- No pricing information can be displayed in the library.

**9.3.4 Art Display Form:**

**ART EXHIBIT APPLICATION  
APPOMATTOX REGIONAL LIBRARY**

Thank you for your interest in exhibiting with the Appomattox Regional Library System. Please review our Art Exhibit Policy prior to submitting this form. Applications will be evaluated by the Art Advisory Committee for selection. Submit this form along with list of objects and representations of objects by:

To: Art Advisory Committee, Appomattox Regional Library System, 209 East Cawson Street, Hopewell, VA 23860.

Artist or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Location requested for the exhibit: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your preferred display dates (choose three):

\_\_\_\_\_

Please attach photographs representative of the works to be exhibited. If you have any questions please contact the library.

**Release Agreement**

The undersigned exhibitor understands and agrees that the Appomattox Regional Library System is allowing me to display items at the Appomattox Regional Library System. All parties understand that the Appomattox Regional Library System will not assume any responsibility or obligation for any loss or damage to any item or items displayed. The displayed items are not and will not be covered under any insurance policy covering the Appomattox Regional Library System. The exhibitor understands that they are solely responsible for insurance coverage for the items being displayed and any cost resulting from insuring those items.

Exhibitor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of publication **1/15/13**

#### 9.4 Display and Distribution of Free Materials

REV 3/2/01

The Appomattox Regional Library System as practicable will attempt to disseminate current information of popular interest not readily available in other forms through the display of unsolicited free non-profit brochures, notices of non-profit meetings, and nonprofit cultural activities.

Priority will be given as follows:

- Library materials.
- Information generated by Hopewell, Prince George, and Dinwiddie governmental agencies.
- Civic, cultural, and educational information.
- Other non-profit materials which will be displayed on a first-come, first-displayed basis as space permits.

The Library System will collect, catalog, and provide materials on a wide range of subjects as provided in the Collection Development Policy, but will not serve as a distribution point for organizations wishing to disseminate free copies of political (advocating a partisan viewpoint), moral, religious, or commercial tracts, or newsletters.

No materials may be distributed in the Library System without permission of the appropriate Supervising Librarian. Materials will be discarded as soon as they are outdated, or in the case of undated materials, at the discretion of the Supervising Librarian.

The display of an item does not constitute an endorsement by the Library System.

## **SECTION TEN: DISCARDING, DISPOSAL, SALES**

### **10.1 Discard of Library Materials**

REV 3/16/10

Selection of items for discard will be guided by the library's Collection Development Policy, space considerations, unneeded duplication of existing holdings, obsolescence of content, low circulation, and un-repairable damage. Exceptions may be made in cases where an item is deemed to have value from the standpoint of local or state history, ownership association, or antiquarian significance. This policy applies equally to gifts and library-procured materials.

### **10.2 Disposal of Library Items**

REV 5/21/19

Discarded library materials and gift items may be sold or donated to nonprofit or public-interest organizations, which sponsor book sales for fundraising purposes. Organizations supporting library services and located in the region will have priority.

Discarded library materials determined to have little or no potential for sale will be discarded by the library system in an appropriate fashion and recycled whenever possible.

Disposal of newspapers and periodicals will be determined by a librarian as assigned by the Assistant Director. When possible, these materials will be recycled or given to groups which will be responsible for picking up in a timely manner.

### **10.3 Sales of Goods and Materials**

REV 3/16/10

Sales of goods and materials by library-related groups and government departments and agencies are permitted within the limits of time and space.

## **SECTION ELEVEN: OUTREACH SERVICES**

### **11.1 Institutions**

2/18/20

ARLS will work with local institutions such as nursing homes etc., to provide access to library materials for people in their charge. This may take the form of institutional library cards. Such service will be carried out under the same policies as all patrons of the library system, with one caveat: the library may drop transportation service to sites that do not have enough patronage to be cost effective.

### **11.2 Delivery Services Between System Libraries**

2/18/20

In order to assure full access to all library materials of the library system by citizens of Hopewell, Prince George County, and Dinwiddie County, the Appomattox Regional Library System operates a regular delivery system between system libraries. Normal operation consists of three deliveries per week between all branches and Petersburg Public Library, but the number of deliveries may be altered at any time at the discretion of the Director or Assistant Director.

**12.1 Group Use of Library Space**

The Appomattox Regional Library System welcomes the public using the library's facilities and meeting rooms for meetings and events which serve the community's needs for education, information, and cultural enrichment. The library does not discriminate in making premises available for use on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, disability, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, age, or political expression. Granting the use of its facilities does not imply approval by the library of the group, the meeting, or the ideas presented at the meeting.

Library facilities may be used for meetings by clubs and organizations to the extent that such meetings do not prohibit general availability to the public. The library reserves the right to deny application for use based on availability of space, availability of staff, frequency of use, or as further outlined in this policy.

**Room Reservation Rules:**

1. All programs/meetings must be open to the public.
2. No individual or organization may use library rooms for profit-making activity. Activities designed to lead directly to the purchase of goods and services are not allowed. Mandatory sign-in is not permitted.
3. Admission fees may not be charged for attending meetings.
4. Fundraising activities may not be conducted in the meeting rooms unless approved and sponsored by the Appomattox Regional Library System.
5. The library is unable to accommodate the use of library meeting and conference room space for events of a social or personal nature (e.g. birthdays, funerals, wedding receptions, reunions, playgroups, etc.).
6. All publicity must carry the name of the sponsoring organization as well as contact information such as an email address or telephone number. The library cannot be identified as the sponsor, nor can the publicity list the library's telephone number. Library addresses and telephone numbers must not be listed or used as the official address of an organization or group using library meeting space.
7. Publicity materials promoting an activity in the meeting or conference rooms may not be placed in and around a library location without permission of the Assistant Library Director for displays at the Hopewell Library or the Branch Services Manager for displays at any of the branches.
8. The library assumes no responsibility for loss, damage, or liability/injury that may arise through use of the facility.
9. The library uses an online reservation system for its meeting rooms and must include the library card of the person reserving the room. The patron of the library card attached to the reservation and any organization represented shall be financially responsible for any damage to the facility, furniture, and equipment during the period of use.
10. Non-compliance with policies, regulations, or to cooperate with library staff may result in forfeiture of room privileges.

11. In rare instances where the library has an emergency need to use a reserved space, the library will make every reasonable effort to assist the group to reserve another date or library facility or meeting room.

### **Facilities and Scheduling a Room:**

The following scheduling policies are established to ensure community access is fair and as equitable as possible.

Library meeting rooms can accommodate between 2-110 people in a variety of settings across multiple branch locations. Patrons are encouraged to contact the library before making a reservation. Library staff will assist patrons in selecting a room which suits the user's needs. Room requests must be made by a library cardholder of at least 18 years of age who will be in attendance. Reservations can be made 90 days in advance. One reservation per group, organization, or patron is allowed at one time; any subsequent booking may be requested after the time of the initial meeting. Rooms may be reserved for a maximum of four hours. Unreserved rooms may be used on a first-come-first-served basis.

### **Guidelines for Room Use:**

- The library should be notified as soon as possible of meeting cancellations.
- The library will hold a reservation for half of the time reserved. If the person or group making the reservation is late more than the allotted time that reservation will be canceled and the room will be made available for another reservation. As an example, the library will hold the room available for the first 30 minutes of a one-hour reservation.
- Users of the meeting or conference room are responsible for setting up the room according to their own needs.
- Rooms are available during hours when the library is open to the public.
- Users may not enter library buildings before the regular opening time.
- Use of library meeting or conference rooms must conclude 30 minutes before the library closes and users must restore the furniture and the room to the order in which it was found.
- A user's equipment, supplies, or personal effects may not be stored or left in the building before or after use of the room.
- Attendance at events in meeting and conference rooms will be limited to the posted capacity of the room.
- Refreshments, excluding alcoholic beverages, may be consumed in meeting rooms, conference rooms, and study rooms.
- Outside food deliveries are permitted but cannot involve library staff assistance or facilitation.
- Organizations are required to provide their own utensils and supplies and to dispose of leftovers and waste. Aromatic foods are not permitted.
- Any spills must be reported to library staff immediately.
- The library can provide equipment or related items, such as AV carts, cables, projectors, laptops, access to the WiFi, etc. as available at each library location. Equipment for public

use varies between the different library locations. Users must confirm and reserve library equipment at the time of making the reservation. Computers and projection equipment belonging to users can be used in meeting rooms. Users are responsible for any troubleshooting.

- All activities and participants must adhere to the library rules of conduct and to the rules and regulations of the City of Hopewell, County of Dinwiddie, County of Prince George, including those relating to fire prevention.
- Activities in all library rooms must not disturb other users of the library, e.g., excessive noise, aromatic foods.

### **Administration of Policy**

The director of the library is authorized to establish procedures, rules, and guidelines necessary for the administration of this policy.

The Appomattox Regional Library takes precedence in scheduling and is not subject to the guidelines of this policy. The City of Hopewell, County of Dinwiddie, and County of Prince George are allowed reasonable exceptions to the policy with director approval.



## **SECTION THIRTEEN: RULES OF CONDUCT FOR LIBRARY USERS**

### **13.1 Appropriate Library Conduct**

REV 3/5/01

It is the responsibility of the library staff to maintain library environments in a pleasant manner for as many people as possible. In doing so, the library staff should not ignore a patron whose behavior disturbs others. Likewise, it is equally important that the library staff be tolerant of a patron who behaves unusually, but who does not disturb others.

The library system shall have the authority to ask anyone to leave the library that is not behaving in an acceptable manner on the premises. Unacceptable behavior is behavior which interferes with others' use of the library. Anyone who has been removed may appeal this action to the Library Board of Trustees.

### **13.2 Staff Safety Policy**

REV 5/21/19

It is the policy of the Appomattox Regional Library System to seek to maintain a safe workplace, free from any threat of physical violence, emotional abuse, or any form of potentially violent intimidation. Therefore the following policies will be followed:

- Acts of violence, verbal intimidation, obscenity, vandalism, sabotage, damage to library property, or the threat of such acts are prohibited.

All complaints, reports, or advisements will be thoroughly investigated and reported to the proper law enforcement authorities as is warranted by the circumstances. Library staff members are advised to report any such acts, or threats of such acts as stated above, to the supervising librarian immediately. Failure to comply with this policy is a direct violation of library rules and may result in the activation of disciplinary procedures up to and including termination of employment. Any such acts or threats of such acts as described above which are committed by library patrons or visitors, will not only be reported to law enforcement officials,

### **13.3 Unattended Children**

REV 3/5/01

Children are welcome in all of our libraries and we are concerned about their safety and welfare. However, parents and caregivers are responsible for monitoring the activities and regulating the behavior of their children while the children are in the library.

If an unattended child is being disruptive, is habitually left unattended for long periods of time, or is deemed to be at risk of coming to harm (as in the case of a child being left unattended when the library is ready to close) the Library will take action. An effort will be made to locate the responsible parent, guardian or caregiver. If necessary, appropriate law enforcement or child protective authorities will be notified to take custody of the child.

We respect the privacy of all library patrons and will intervene only when, in the opinion of the library staff, the safety and well-being of a child is threatened.

### **13.4 Smoking**

Rev. 5/21/19

Smoking, vaping, or e-cigarettes are not permitted in any areas of the library, public or non-public.

### **13.5 Food and Drink**

REV. 6/24/03

The consumption of food or drinks in open containers is not permitted in the public areas of libraries except in specific designated areas (if the library has one) or during appropriate library activities or public activities as covered in policy 12.1 of this document. Drinking of beverages in a container with some type of lid that prevents spillage if the container was dropped or knocked over at any time during its use is allowed in public areas.

## **SECTION FOURTEEN: COMPLAINTS AND CHAIN OF AUTHORITY**

### **14.1 Comment Boxes**

Rev. 3/5/01

All library locations and the bookmobile have suggestion/comment boxes. Blank forms are available at each location. All citizens are welcomed to place any suggestion or comment they wish in the boxes. All suggestions/comments will be viewed by the Regional Library Director who will either directly respond or delegate an appropriate staff member to do so. Unless the patron indicates otherwise, the suggestion/comment and reply will be posted. The patron's name will not be on the posted copy.

### **14.2 Website**

Rev. 5/21/19

The Appomattox Regional Library System has a freely accessible website at [www.arls.org](http://www.arls.org). Patrons may send in reference questions, comments, or suggestions by accessing this page.

### **14.3 By Telephone**

Rev. 5/21/19

Routine reference and other questions should be called at 804-458-6329. A patron may call directly at 804-458-6329, ext. 2005 to speak with the Regional Library Director concerning a serious complaint or comment

### **14.4 In-Person**

Rev. 5/21/19

A patron may request to directly speak with the Regional Library Director in person concerning a serious complaint or comment. Appointments can be made by calling 804-458-6329, ext. 2005.

## **SECTION FIFTEEN : AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE**

### **15.1 Hours of Library Building Operation**

REV 3/5/01

The Library System makes an effort to open all library buildings as many hours as possible that can be justified by the Library System's budget. Attempts are made to have a balanced schedule of morning, afternoon, and evening hours; and weekday and weekend hours. Suggestions for changes to the hours may be submitted to the Regional Library Director as directed under Section Fourteen of this document.

### **15.2 Holiday Closings**

REV 9/15/19

With the exception of Lee-Jackson Day in January, the Appomattox Regional Library System will be closed on the Holiday Closing Schedule adopted annually by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the three jurisdictions the library serves. If any local jurisdiction varies its holiday closing schedule from the schedule adopted by the Commonwealth, the library will follow the schedule adopted by the majority of the jurisdictions it serves.

The library will annually update its website and its publications to post the holiday schedule for the public.

### **15.3 Carson Caboose**

REV 9/30/01

Public access to the Caboose located next to the Carson Depot Library is limited to the hours the Carson Library is open and/or ARLS staff is present. Special permission by the Regional Library Director may be given to representatives of the Town of Carson to open the Caboose to visitors.

All caboose visitors (except for official group tours) will be required to sign the guest register and list their address on the register. ARLS reserves the right for staff to ask for a picture ID to verify a patron's identity and address. After registering, the visitor will be given the key to enter the caboose if a staff member does not accompany them. The visitor will be informed that they must lock the caboose and return the key on completion of their visit to the caboose. If there are more than one visitor at a time, a staff member will use their judgment to coordinate who has the key and who will lock the caboose and return the key.

### **15.4 Emergency Weather and Other Situational Closings**

REV 2/1/2010

It shall be within the authority of the Regional Library Director or his/her designee to close library facilities in the event of hazardous weather, emergency, or unusual situations. Such closings will be announced when possible and practical through broadcast media.

Deviations from the regular operating schedule of the Library System for reasons other than hazardous weather, emergency, or unusual situations must be authorized by the Appomattox Regional Library System Board of Trustees. Publicity about such closings will be posted at all library locations.

**15.5 Twenty Four Hour Web Page Access**

9/30/03

Whenever possible, the Appomattox Regional Library System will post closings on its website, [www.arls.org](http://www.arls.org)

## **SECTION SIXTEEN: USE OF LIBRARY COMPUTERS**

### **16.1 Online Catalog**

REV 3/5/01

Accessible in all libraries and through the Library System's Web Page [www.arls.org](http://www.arls.org) patrons may access a listing of all books and other materials owned by the Appomattox Regional Library System.

### **16.2 Software Applications**

REV 4/5/01

Software applications, such as word processing, are available on computers at all Appomattox Regional Library System libraries. The installment of software by person or persons not under the employ or direction of the Library System is prohibited.

### **16.3 Online Periodicals**

REV 3/5/01

Magazine indexes, abstracts, and full text articles are available in all libraries and through the Library System's Web Page [www.arls.org](http://www.arls.org)

### **16.4 Computer and Network Resources**

The library provides access to computer equipment, programs, databases and the Internet (collectively, the "computer resources") for informational and educational purposes. All users of the library's computer resources, both staff members and patrons, are expected to use these resources correctly and only for legal purposes. Computer resources may not be used for the following purposes:

- Violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws, ordinances, rules, or regulations. ● Harassment of other persons or parties.
- Destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the library or other users.
- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to any computing, information, or communication devices or resources.
- Disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications.
- Unauthorized copying of copyright or other protected material.
- Violation of computer security or privacy.
- Unauthorized use of computer accounts, access codes, or network identification numbers assigned to others.
- Violation of software license agreements.
- Access or transmit illegal activity, child pornography, sexually explicit material that appeals to the prurient interest or any other material that is not constitutionally protected.
- Online dissemination of obscene or harmful to minors materials, including 34 those for the specific purpose of inducing them to engage in or perform sexual acts.
- Violation of another person's or party's privacy. Use of computer facilities in ways that unnecessarily impede the computing activities of others (such as randomly initiating electronic communications or email exchanges, overuse of interactive network utilities, etc.)

- Any and all other matters which the library, in its sole discretion, subject to constitutional limitations, and in consideration of the best interests of the public, determines to be an unacceptable purpose.

Any staff member who observes any violation of these policies will take action to enforce compliance. In this regard, failure to comply with ARLS policies can result in suspension or cancellation of computer resources access, and/or in some cases legal proceedings.

16.5 Internet

10/28/01

## **INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY APPOMATTOX REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM**

**Rev. and Adopted 10/28/03**

### **I. Library Mission Statement**

The Appomattox Regional Library System will provide services and programs to the communities it serves through support of life-long learning, general information, and the exchange of ideas with effective use of traditional library resources and emerging technology.

### **II. Internet Philosophy**

Providing Internet access, as an information resource is a logical continuation of the Library's role of formal education support and reference service. The Internet enables the Library to provide information and commentary from around the globe to users who may not otherwise have access to this resource. This resource enhances the library's existing collection in depth and in currency.

However, the Appomattox Regional Library System disclaims any responsibility as to the Internet's quality, informational accuracy, authoritativeness, or usefulness for a particular purpose. The library also assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from the use of its connection to the Internet or other electronic resources.

### **III. Responsibilities of Internet Users**

The library wishes to make the Internet and all computer resources available to anyone who respects the rights and property of others, including the library, and who abides by these policies. In offering Internet access, library staff cannot control access points which often change rapidly and unpredictably. Users are hereby notified that they are responsible for the access points they reach.

Parents or guardians of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of or exposure to the Internet through the library's connection. The Library System applies a filtering system to their computers to protect against access to visual depictions that are obscene, contain child pornography, or are harmful to minors. However, access to Internet sites containing "adult" content, as well as on-line communication with anonymous persons, is still possible. This is because no filter system has been found to be perfect and there can be no guarantees that our filtering system will block undesirable sites 100 of the time.

In order for the library to be in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act and with section 42. 1-36.1 of the Code of Virginia, the following regulations, provisions, and recommendations are provided for Library Internet use:

1. All Internet accessible computers are filtered and may be used by patrons of any age without restrictions.
2. Adult patrons (18 years and older) may request from Library staff unfiltered access to the Internet, without explanation.
3. A minor (17 years and younger) may request a librarian to unblock an Internet site. If the librarian determines to the best of their ability that the site is not obscene, does not contain child pornography, and is not harmful to minors as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act or Virginia law the librarian may unblock the site.
4. Computer resources may not be used for the following purposes:
  - Violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws, ordinances, rules, or regulations.
  - Harassment of other persons or parties.
  - Destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the library or other users.
  - Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to any computing, information, or communication devices or resources.
  - Disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications.
  - Unauthorized copying of copyright or other protected material.
  - Violation of computer security or privacy.
  - Unauthorized use of computer accounts, access codes, or network identification numbers assigned to others.
  - Violation of software license agreements.
  - Access or transmit illegal activity, child pornography, sexually explicit material that appeals to the prurient interest or any other material that is not constitutionally protected.
  - Online dissemination of obscene or harmful to minors materials, including those for the specific purpose of inducing them to engage in or perform sexual acts.
  - Violation of another person's or party's privacy. Use of computer facilities in ways that unnecessarily impede the computing activities of others (such as randomly initiating electronic communications or email exchanges, overuse of interactive network utilities, etc.)
5. Any content on a computer screen that the library, in its sole discretion subject to constitutional limitations, and in consideration of the best interests of the public, determines to be an unacceptable purpose, a staff member may request the patron using the computer to cease viewing the offending computer site.

Any staff member who observes any violation of ARLS Internet policies will take action to enforce compliance. In this regard, failure to comply with ARLS policies can result in suspension or cancellation of Internet access, and/or in some cases legal proceedings.



#### IV. Time Limits

Due to a limited number of computers, all patrons wishing to reserve a computer will need to sign up at the Circulation Desk. Reservation for computers designated for one-hour sessions are taken during the same day with a maximum of 2 hours per day. A patron is booked only one hour per day; the library reserves the right to "bump" any patron who has used up their hour of computer use, if that computer is needed for another scheduled patron. Patrons are expected to begin logging off a minimum of 15 minutes before library closing time.

Computers designated for INTERNET EXPRESS are intended to supplement the one-hour Internet service. They are designed to allow a patron to look up some quick information, access the library catalog, or check e-mail, without having to wait for a one-hour computer. There is a maximum logon of 4 usages or 2 hours per day. All policies listed previously in this document apply to these computers, even though patrons do not need to reserve them at the circulation desk.

#### VI. Printing

Each user may print at the charge of ten cents per page. This is the same rate charged for use of our photocopiers. Printed copies must be paid for at the Circulation Desk.

**ALL PATRONS USING ANY OF THE LIBRARY'S COMPUTERS FOR INTERNET ACCESS MUST ACKNOWLEDGE AND ABIDE BY ALL OF THESE COMPUTER RESOURCES AND INTERNET ACCESS POLICIES.**

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE POLICIES CAN RESULT IN SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION OF PRIVILEGES, AND IN SOME CASES LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.**

**THIS POLICY WAS ADOPTED BY THE APPOMATTOX REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES 10/28/03.**

#### 16.6 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

REV 2/21/12

This policy governs the creation and publication of content on social media by employees of Appomattox Regional Library System. For the purposes of this policy, social media is defined as any web application, site or account created and maintained by ARLS which facilitates an environment for library staff and library patrons to share opinions and information about library-related subjects and issues; to increase the public's knowledge of and use of library services; and to promote the value and importance of library services among governing officials, civic leaders, and the general public.

This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the Internet.

ARLS employees are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. ARLS employees are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as an ARLS employee (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to ARLS).

Before engaging in work related social media, employees must obtain the permission of the Regional Library Director.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that ARLS employees must otherwise follow.

The role and utility of social media sites will be evaluated periodically by library staff, and may be terminated at any time without notice to subscribers. As with more traditional resources, the library does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of these resources.

The library does not collect, maintain or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party social media site in any way other than to communicate with users on that site, unless granted permission by users for library contact outside the site. The purpose for contact outside the site may include program promotion, volunteer opportunities, reference help, or other similar activities. Users may remove themselves at any time from the library's "friend" or "fan" lists or request that the library remove them. Users should be aware that third party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly.

Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on ARLS social media sites. While the library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will be regularly monitored and reviewed for content and relevancy (before publishing when possible). All postings which contain any of the following will be removed, and the poster will be banned from posting any subsequent messages to library social media sites:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarized or copy-written material
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Organized political or religious activity or proselytizing
- Photos or other images that fall in any of the above categories

In addition, ARLS reserves the right to edit or modify any postings or comments for space or content, while retaining the intent of the original post. ARLS reserves the right to reproduce comments, posts, and messages in other public venues. For example, the library may reproduce a response to a YouTube book review in a newspaper article or on the library website. Identifying information, other than first name, will be removed unless prior approval is granted by the user.

ARLS assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any library-sponsored social media service. The library does not endorse or

review content outside the "pages" created by ARLS staff. Participation in ARLS social media services implies agreement with all library policies, including its Social Media Policy and Internet Access Policy. If a user does not agree to the terms of the library's policies, they are not to interact on library-sponsored social media services.

## **SECTION SEVENTEEN: PUBLIC USE OF FAX TRANSMISSIONS**

### **17.1 Location Availability**

Rev. 5/21/19

Because public fax facilities are not readily available in most areas of the ARLS service region, the library system offers public fax services at all locations. The library only provides fax service to destinations in the United States.

### **17.2 Cover Sheet**

Rev. 4/30/02

Each fax must have a cover sheet, either provided by the patron or the library.

### **17.3 Costs**

Rev. 5/21/19

Transmissions of outgoing faxes to within the United States are as follows: \$1 for the cover sheet and \$1 for each additional page.

### **17.4 Incoming Faxes**

Rev. 5/21/19

Service is primarily available only for outgoing faxes. If the library receives an incoming fax it will be held on the reserve shelf for no longer than seven days. The library will not contact a patron to let them know that a fax has been received. It is the responsibility of the sender to notify a patron that a fax is awaiting them at the library. There is a charge of \$0.10 per page for receiving faxes.

### **17.5 Content Responsibility**

Rev. 4/30/02

The Appomattox Regional Library System provides fax facilities as a public service, but is not responsible for transmitted content.

## **APPENDICES**

### **A. Library Mission Statement**

The Appomattox Regional Library System will provide services and programs to the communities it serves through support of lifelong learning, general information, and the exchange of ideas with effective use of traditional library resources and emerging technology

### **B. American Library Association 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

### **C. American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement**

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

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

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

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

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

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

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain

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

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

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## **D. School Library Media Bill of Rights**

### **Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS**

The school library media program plays a unique role in promoting intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. Although the educational level and program of the school necessarily shape the resources and services of a school library media program, the principles of the Library Bill of Rights apply equally to all libraries, including school library media programs. Under these principles, all students have equitable access to library facilities, resources, and instructional programs.

School library media specialists assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry. School library media specialists work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively. Intellectual freedom is fostered by educating students in the use of critical thinking skills to empower them to pursue free inquiry responsibly and independently. Through resources, programming, and educational processes, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School library media specialists cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources that meet the needs as well as the developmental and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources that support the mission of the school district and are consistent with its philosophy, goals, and objectives. Resources in school library media collections are an integral component of the curriculum and represent diverse points of view on both current and historical issues. These resources include materials that support the intellectual growth, personal development, individual interests, and recreational needs of students.

While English is, by history and tradition, the customary language of the United States, the languages in use in any given community may vary. Schools serving communities in which other languages are used make efforts to accommodate the needs of students for whom English is a second language. To support these efforts, and to ensure equitable access to resources and services, the school library media program provides resources that reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community.

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School library media specialists resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access via electronic means.

Major barriers between students and resources include but are not limited to imposing age, grade-level, or reading-level restrictions on the use of resources; limiting the use of interlibrary loan and access to electronic information; charging fees for information in specific formats; requiring permission from parents or teachers; establishing restricted shelves or closed collections; and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

It is the responsibility of the governing board to adopt policies that guarantee students access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by persons in the school community, provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. It is the responsibility of school library media specialists to implement district policies and procedures in the school to ensure equitable access to resources and services for all students.

Adopted July 2, 1986, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 12, 2000; January 19, 2005; July 2, 2008.