

## **I. Mission and Vision**

**A.** The Chester Public Library is Chester's community center and premier resource for information, life-long learning, and cultural enrichment.

**B.** Chester Library will provide the following services to all members of our community from the very youngest child to our most senior citizen.

1. **Current Topics and Titles:** Chester Library will supply current, high-demand, high-interest material in a variety of formats for persons of all ages
2. **Information Delivery Systems:** Chester Library will provide information and technology skills:
  - a. Through and abundant supply of up-to-date technology
  - b. By extending help in finding, evaluating, and using information on a broad array of consumer topics
3. **Cultural Awareness:** Chester Library will increase awareness of:
  - a. Culture, the arts, history, and genealogy
4. **Life Skills:** Chester library will offer services designed to provide and promote:
  - a. Reading Readiness
  - b. Reading and Technology literacy skills
  - c. Opportunities for the enjoyment of lifelong reading

## **II. Goals**

**C.** The general goals of the Chester Public Library are:

1. To serve all residents of the community and the surrounding region.
2. To acquire and make available to all residents of the above area such books, periodicals, multi-media resources, programming, and other services as will address their needs to:
  - a. Foster a vibrant learning community
  - b. Become well informed
  - c. Locate answers to important questions
  - d. Cultivate imagination and creative expression
  - e. Enjoy leisure by means of reading and other media services
  - f. To acquire the means to provide the most frequently requested material locally and upon demand

3. To maintain a program of service which located information, guides reading, organizes and interprets material for people of various backgrounds, and stimulates thinking and intellectual development in individuals of any age.
4. To strive consistently to discover new methods and improvements for better service for the town and library's patrons.
5. To regularly review these goals of the Chester Public Library and if necessary, revise the in the light of new developments.

### **III. Who May Use the Library**

**D.** The library serves all residents of Chester, including non-resident property owners. Connecticut residents who do not qualify as Chester residents may use the library through the Connecticut System by using their hometown library card. Service will not be denied or abridged because of religious, racial, social, economic, or political status; or because of mental, emotional, of physical condition; age; or sexual orientation.

**E.** 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.

### **IV. Patron Responsibilities and Conduct**

It is the patron's responsibility to maintain necessary and proper standards to protect his/her individual rights and the rights and privileges of other patrons. If a patron creates a public nuisance and/or a safety hazard, or uses the library for illegal or inappropriate purposes, 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.

#### **Young children**

The Chester Public Library encourages visits by young children, and it is our desire to make such visits both memorable and enjoyable for the child. Library staff is not expected to assume responsibility for the care and supervision of children in the library.

Therefore, it is library policy that all children must be accompanied by a parent or designated responsible person while in the library. Also, if the young child is attending a library program, we require the parent/responsible person to remain in the library throughout the program.

#### **Disruptive children**

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 the child continues to be disruptive, he/she may be asked to leave the library at the discretion of the library staff. If the child needs to contact a parent, they may do so and then wait with a staff person until the parent arrives.

### **Animals in the Library**

Pets may make brief visits to the library in the company of their human companions. Pets are always expected to be on good behavior and must be kept on leashes or otherwise under control. Keeping in mind that people come first, library staff members will ask that animals be removed from the library if a library user is made uncomfortable by the animal's presence. Owners may be held responsible for any damages caused by their pet. Service animals are welcome at any time.

## **Sexual Harassment:**

### **Purpose**

It is the policy of the Chester Public Library to provide an environment free from harassment for any reason, whether because of age, race, color, religion, gender, creed, national origin, disability, or any other factor, especially sex. Sexual harassment violates an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity, is unlawful, and will not be tolerated by the library. The Chester Public Library considers sexual harassment in all its forms to be a serious offense.

### **Definition**

Sexual Harassment is unwanted sexual attention of a persistent or offensive nature made by a person who knows, or reasonably should know, that such attention is unwanted. Sexual harassment includes sexually oriented conduct that interferes with an employee's job performance and created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. While sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of conduct, some examples of specifically prohibited conduct include:

- Promising, directly, or indirectly, an employee a reward if the employee complies with a sexually oriented request.
- Threatening, directly or in indirectly, to retaliate against an employee if the employee refuses to comply with a sexually oriented request.
- Denying, directly or indirectly, an employee an employment-related opportunity if the employee refuses to comply with a sexually oriented request.
- Engaging in sexually suggestive physical contact or touching another employee in a way that is unwelcome.
- Engaging in explicit language, gestures, or indecent exposure.
- Making sexual or romantic advances toward an employee and persisting despite the employee's rejection of the advances.

- Deliberately creating overall offensive environment, including use of vulgar language, displaying, storing, or transmitting sexually explicit photographs or other materials, and the telling of sexual stories.

Sexual harassment can be physical and/or psychological in nature. An aggregation of a series of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered on its own would not be harassing.

Employees are prohibited from harassing other employees whether the incidents of harassment occur on library property and whether the incidents occur during working hours.

Sexual harassment can involve males or females being harassed by members of either sex. Although sexual harassment typically involves a person in a greater position of authority as the harasser, individuals in positions of lesser or equal authority also can be found responsible for engaging in prohibited harassment.

Consensual sexual or romantic relationships between employees are deemed unwise and are strongly discouraged if one employee has supervisory authority over the other employee.

### **Responsibilities**

If employees believe that they have been subject to sexual harassment or any unwanted sexual attention by anyone (e.g., a coworker, library patron or other person), they should:

1. Make their unease and/or disapproval and immediately known to the alleged harasser.
2. Complete an Incident Report form (Appendix A); and
3. Report the incident immediately to the Library Director. If that individual is responsible for the harassment, report the conduct to the President of the Library Board of Trustees.

Employees should feel free to raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprimand. It is unlawful to retaliate against an employee for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. All incidents of sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual conduct must be reported regardless of their seriousness. Alleging harassment without following these procedures might be considered evidence of a malicious intent on the part of the complainant.

### **Resolution**

Employees often can stop or prevent sexual harassment by immediately and directly expressing their disapproval of an individual's sexuality-oriented attention or conduct. In many cases, an informal warning by the Library Director to an alleged harasser, combined with appropriate follow-up supervision and monitoring of the employee's behavior might be sufficient to prevent or stop sexual harassment. In certain instances, if the employee is uncomfortable addressing the Library Director the Board may be approached directly.

If this approach does not stop the harassment, a thorough and impartial investigation of all complaints will be conducted in a timely and appropriate manner. The investigation will be

conducted by the Library Director. Any employee of the library will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Confidentiality**

All inquiries, complaints and investigations are treated sensitively. Information is revealed strictly on a need-to-know basis. However, the identity of the complainant usually is revealed to the accused and witnesses. All individuals contacted in connection with a complaint will be counseled that any information pertaining to the complaint shall be held in confidence.

## **V. Services of the Library**

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

1. Select, organize, and make available necessary books and materials.
2. Provide guidance and assistance to patrons.
3. Sponsor and implement programs, exhibits, displays, book lists, etc., which would appeal to children and adults as available space permits.
4. Cooperate with other community agencies and organizations.
5. Secure information beyond its own resources when requested.
6. Lend to other libraries upon request only after Chester's patrons.
7. Develop and provide services to patrons with special needs.
8. Maintain a balance in its service to various age groups.
9. Cooperate with, but not perform the functions of, school or other institutional libraries.
10. Provide library and reading resources using evolving technology options.
11. Provide service during hours which best meet the needs of the community, including evening and weekend hours.
12. Regularly review library services being offered.
13. Use media and other public relations mechanisms to promote the full range of available library services.

## **VI. Responsibilities and Authorities of the Library Board of Trustees**

See the Connecticut Public Library Trustee Handbook for a detailed description.

## **VII. Volunteers and Friends**

The Library Board encourages individuals and groups to volunteer their time and efforts in the service of the Chester 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 communities it serves.

A library Friends group is a formal association of people who unite to plan and execute, in conjunction with library goals and the needs of the Library Director, programs and events to benefit the library. A Friends group is often heavily involved in fundraising for the library and often oversees periodic book sales. Friends' groups 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.

The [Chester Library Friends](#) is a registered 501c3 and is the fundraising arm of the LBT.

## **VIII. Personnel Policy**

### **A. Management Policy**

The duly appointed Library Board of Trustees shall have all management rights, authorities, and responsibilities as stated in Connecticut Statutes and Town of Chester Personnel Policies, including:

1. Selection, appointment, and, when necessary, for valid reasons, dismissal of the Library Director.
2. Establishment of all other staff positions.
3. Provision of effective orientation for new directors.
4. Annual appraisals of the Library Director's performances, at which time personnel 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 as per job description.

### **C. Meetings, Conventions, and Workshops:**

Chester Library staff members are encouraged to participate in education and professional activities at the director's discretion. Travel expenses to these programs shall be reimbursed in accordance with Town of Chester policy.

## **IX. Materials Selection/Collection Development Policy**

### **D. Objectives**

The purpose of the Chester 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, research, and the creative use of leisure time.

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

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

The *Library Bill of Rights* and *The Freedom to Read Statement* have been endorsed by the Chester Public Library Board of Trustees and are integral parts of the policy. They are included and can be found at the end of the policy manual (Appendix B and C respectively).

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

### **E. Responsibility for Selection**

The responsibility for selection of new library materials rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of the policies by the Chester Public Library Board of Trustees.

### **F. Criteria for Selection**

1. The main points considered in the selection of materials are:
  - Individual merit of each item
  - Popular appeal/demand
  - Suitability of material for the patrons
  - Existing library holdings
  - Budget
  - Local interest
2. Third party reviews are a major basis of information about new materials. The primary foundations of reviews are professionally recognized sources.
3. Requests from patrons for specific titles or subject requests will be considered. Whenever there is enough demand or interests in a title or subject, and item with unfavorable reviews may be purchased unless it is completely without literary or social value, or the subject in question is already adequately covered by materials held by the library.

### **G. 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 Chester Public Library's collection.

In return for utilizing interlibrary loan to satisfy the needs of our patrons, the Chester Public Library lends its materials to other libraries through the same interlibrary loan network and tries to have its current holdings listed in a tool that is assessable by other libraries throughout the state.

## **H. 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 acquisitions, and availability of newer editions. This ongoing process of weeding is the responsibility of the Library Director and is authorized by the Library Board of Trustees. Withdrawn materials will be handled in a similar manner and under the same authorities as donated materials.

## **I. Potential Problems or Challenges**

The Chester 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 based on the principles stated in this policy.

Responsibility for the reading, viewing, and listening materials 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.

## **J. Challenged Materials**

The community served by this library represents diverse interest, beliefs, educational backgrounds, and social consciousness. The library, therefore, exerts every effort to obtain and make available a well-balanced collection of materials of interest to individuals while recognizing that some works may be objectionable on moral, political, or religious grounds to other organizations within the community.

Any individual is free to reject for himself/herself materials which are found to be objectionable; however, one cannot restrict the rights of others by means of censorship. To this end, the Library Board of Trustees adheres to and supports the "Library Bill of Rights" and "Freedom to Read Statement" (see Appendices B and C respectively) and makes them a part of this statement.

Compliant Procedure



1. Whenever a patron objects to the presence or absence of any library material, the complaint will be given a hearing. All complaints to staff members will be referred to the Library Director who will discuss the matter with the complainant.
2. Complaints of a minor nature which can be settled by talking with the Library Director are considered closed at the end of the discussion if the patron says that he/she is satisfied.
3. If the complaint is of a more serious nature in which the patron requests removal of materials from the library, the patron will be asked to fill out a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form (Appendix D).
4. Upon receiving the complaint form, the Library Board of Trustees will meet with the Library Director to discuss it.
5. The Board will acknowledge the complaint to the patron.
6. The Board and the Library Director will review the material in question and report its decision to the complainant.
7. If the complainant refuses to accept the decision of the Board regarding the material in question, threatens to take the matter to court or institute court proceedings, the Board will follow specific procedures outlined in the Intellectual Freedom Handbook. The Board will also contact the Connecticut State Library Intellectual Freedom Committee for advice and support.

## **X. Circulation Policy**

### **K. Registration**

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

Patrons must fill out an application form to register for a new library card. In doing so, patrons will accept responsibility for materials borrowed on their card.

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

Applicants under 14 years of age must have a parent or guardian give his/her consent on the application form before a new card can be issued. This 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 3 years. To renew a library card, patrons may be asked to produce identification and must clear all outstanding fines and bills.

## **L. Lost or forgotten cards**

If a patron loses his/her library card, he/she should notify the library as soon as possible and request a replacement.

All patrons, adult and juvenile, are encouraged to bring their library cards with them if they intend to check out items.

## **M. Loan Periods**

1. 3 weeks for books, compact discs, and recorded books.
2. Generally, reference books do not circulate. Upon request, some reference materials may be checked out overnight.
3. Books may be renewed unless there is a reserve on the title.
4. Periodicals may be checked out for 2 weeks and may be renewed.
5. DVD's can be checked out for 1 week and are limited to 6 items per patron, renewable once.
6. Overdrive checkouts range from 1-3 weeks and are user specific.

The Library Director may establish the loan period and the number of items to be borrowed 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.

## **N. Reserves**

Reserves may be placed by patrons in person, over the phone or online. Patrons will be notified by telephone, email, or text message when the materials are available. There is no charge to the patron for placing a reserve or for interlibrary loan services within Connecticut. Patrons may be asked to reimburse the library for out-of-state library loans.

## **O. Fines and Charges**

There are fines for overdue materials. Fines are established by the Library Board of Trustees. Patrons will be notified of overdue materials and may be denied borrowing privileges until those overdue materials are returned or paid for if lost and/or damaged.

Revenues from fines are turned over to the Town.

## **P. Damaged or lost materials**

If materials are damaged to be judged by the library as being unsuitable for the collection, or lost, the patron must pay the replacement cost. Borrowers will be notified of the replacement cost. At the discretion of the Library Director, patrons may purchase a replacement with the identical ISBN number.

## **Q. Confidentiality**

Public libraries in Connecticut must comply with the confidentiality requirements in state statutes.

In 2007, Public Act 07-227 expanded the confidentiality of library records to include any library record regardless of format that can be used to identify a library user or link a user to a library transaction. These confidentiality requirements do not apply to records maintained by schools or college libraries. The full statute reads:

### **Sec. 11-25. Reports by libraries. Confidentiality of records.**

(a) The libraries established under the provisions of this chapter, and any free public library receiving a state appropriation, shall annually make a report to the State Library Board. (b)(1) Notwithstanding section 1-210, records maintained by libraries that can be used to identify any library user, or link any user to a library transaction, regardless of format, shall be kept confidential, except that the records may be disclosed to officers, employees, and agents of the library, as necessary for operation of the library. (2) Information contained in such records shall not be released to any third party, except (A) pursuant to a court order, or (B) with the written permission of the library user whose personal information is contained in the records. (3) For purposes of this subsection, "library" includes any library regularly open to the public, whether public or private, maintained by any industrial, commercial, or other group or association, or by any governmental agency, but does not include libraries maintained by schools and institutions of higher education. (4) No provision of this subsection shall be construed to prevent a library from publishing or making available to the public statistical reports regarding library registration and use of library materials, if such reports do not contain personally identifying information."

[The Chester Public Library adheres strictly to all sections of this Statute regarding the protection of the confidentiality of its users.](#)

## **XI. Reference Service Policy**

The Chester 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 online.
- Will assist patrons in the use of the library and each research methodology, when appropriate.

- Will provide bibliographic verification of items in the library and not owned by the library and will assist patrons in obtaining materials through interlibrary loan, when appropriate; and
- May refer library users to other agencies and libraries in pursuit of needed information.

## **XII. Programming Policy**

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

Programming includes such activities in response to community interest.

The Board, in conjunction with the Library Director, establishes goals for programming.

## **XIII. Public Relations Policy**

**A.** Public relations goals of the Chester Public Library are:

- To promote a good understanding of the library’s objectives and services among general public, governing officials, and civic leaders.
- To promote active participants in the various services offered by the library to people of all ages.

**B.** The Board recognizes that public relations involve 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 Library 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 the media will be approved by the director.

**D.** The Board will support public relations and will seek necessary funding.

## **XIV. Gifts**

**A. Gifts and Donations**

As a rule, the library accepts gifts without commitment as to the final disposition.

Gift materials will be subject to the same standards for inclusion, classification, circulation and weeding as are purchased materials.

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

Donations of monetary value as well as memorial monies, will be deposited into the Friends of the Library 501c3 account to be used at the discretion of the Library Director and Friends of the Library Board unless specified by the donor.

## **B. Policy on Outside Fundraising**

Requests to hold fundraising activities in the library will be evaluated by the Library Director and/or Library Board of Trustees and based on individual merit. Typically, approval will be limited to those activities that

- Benefit local, not for profit organizations
- Involve the collection of materials, not cash

## **XV. Equipment Use Policy**

Computers are available to patrons on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no charge for use of a computer; however, 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 when another patron is waiting. Library staff is available for general assistance in using the computer.

A printer is available. Print pages cost \$.15 per sheet for black and white, \$.25 per sheet for colored copies and must be paid for at the conclusion of the session.

A photocopy machine is available to patrons who wish to copy materials at the rate of \$.15 per page for black and white, \$.25 per for colored copies.

A fax machine is available for outgoing transmission only at the rate of \$1.00 per page.

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

Revenue from the photocopier, fax transmissions and the printer are turned over to the Town.

Users shall not deliberately or willfully cause damage to computer equipment, programs, or parameters

## **XVI. Internet Safety Policy**

The Chester 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.

It is the policy of Chester Public Library to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

### **Access to Inappropriate Material:**

Internet filters shall be used to block or filter inappropriate information, specifically visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors, on all library provided internet enabled computers.

As required by CIPA and subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults 18 or older only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

### **Inappropriate Network Usage:**

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

### **Education, Supervision and Monitoring:**

It shall be the responsibility of all library staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act. 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.

## **XVII. Meeting Space Policy**

Meeting space is available to individuals or organized groups in the library service area. Exceptions may be made by the Library Board if the Board deems extenuating circumstances are involved.

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.

It is understood that library programming will have priority in meeting space use.

There will be no charge for use of the meeting space.

No admission may be charged by the group.

Refreshments may be served and shall be provided by the group. All library policies must be abided by.

The people using the room shall leave it in neat, clean, orderly condition; if not, the group/individual will be given notice that continued offense will result in denied access to the meeting space.

The library is not responsible for any equipment, supplies, materials, clothing, or other items brought to the library by any group or individual attending a meeting.

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

## **XVIII. Displays and Exhibits Policy**

As an educational and cultural institution, the Chester 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 Library Director shall accept or reject material offered for display based on its suitability and availability within the building's space constraints.

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.

## **XIX. 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 staff 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. Unless otherwise arranged, items will be removed and discarded when the event is over. The library will not be responsible for returning materials.

## **XX. Disasters Policy**

### **Fire**

In the event of a fire or smoke in the building follow these instructions.

#### **DO NOT PANIC, CALMLY:**

1. Evacuate the building
2. Dial 911 to report what you see or smell
3. If it is a small fire, extinguish with a fire extinguisher and (have dialed 911 to notify the fire department)
4. If source of smoke is unknown still evacuate and (have dialed 911 to notify the fire department)
5. Person familiar with the building meet the first arriving Fire Officer on scene with the situation

#### **STAFF/VOLUNTEERS**

#### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

1. Post Building Evacuation Directions upstairs and downstairs
2. Be familiar with location of fire extinguishers
3. Care of Fire Extinguishers\* Regardless of what the gauge shows
  - a. Monthly inspection and signed on the tag
  - b. Must be serviced annually.
  - c. At 6 years, must be hydro tested\*\*

\* Public Building NFPA Rule 10.

\*\* For Historical Society building next door, we use Shoreline Fire Equipment in Old Saybrook

### **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.

First responders (911 is available) should be called immediately in the event of any serious problem.

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



## **Bomb threats**

Keep the caller on the line if 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.

## **Snowstorms**

The library will follow the recommendation and actions of the city (or village) between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Closing during other days and hours will be at the discretion of the Library Director.

## **XXI. Pandemic Policy**

The Chester Public Library has established a policy in the event of a pandemic.

1. The Chester Public Library will close due to a pandemic in the event that there is a mandate or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level.
2. At the discretion of the Library Director or the Library Board of Trustees, the Chester Public Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily (e.g., programming) in the event that there is not enough sufficient staff to maintain basic library service levels. In the event of closure, items will be checked in in amnesty mode to waive late charges once the library reopens.
3. In the event that any Chester Library school district is closed due to confirmed cases of illness, the library will remain open unless one of the aforementioned requirements for closing are met. Should school be canceled due to a pandemic, non-circulating children's materials will be removed from public areas during the duration of the school closure to minimize spread through surfaces frequently touched by children. Disinfecting and/or cleaning procedures issued by public health officials will be followed.

4. Library staff should follow the sick leave policy as outlined in the Town of Chester's personnel policy in the event of a pandemic outbreak. The level of excused absence of library staff will determine the ability to carry out services and maintain open hours. Phases may include:
  - a. Cancellation of all programs and special events
  - b. Reduction of open hours
  - c. Close of library for one or more days
5. In the event of closure necessitated by pandemic, library staff should follow the Town of Chester's emergency guidelines. Effective communication about any reduction in service is crucial and information about closures should be posted immediately on the library website, social media sites and through the towns Constant Contact.
6. In the event that shortages are anticipated, appropriate responses to such a shortage will be considered, including and up to closure of the library.
7. Library staff will be provided with Personal Protective Equipment to ensure a safe environment.
8. If, for any reason, the Library Director is unable or unavailable to perform the responsibilities and decisions outlined in this policy, administrative authority and all library operations shall fall under the guidance of the First Selectperson and Library Board of Trustees.

(Adapted from Stoughton (WI) Public Library Pandemic Policy and Lawrence Library Pandemic Policy)

## **XXII. Revision of Library Policies**

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

Adopted: By the Board of Trustees 12/20/2021

# **APPENDIX**

## **Appendix A**

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## APPENDIX A

### Chester Public Library Harassment Complaint Form

Name of the Complainant:

Phone Number:

E-mail:

Today's Date:

Name of the Accused:

Relationship of the Accused to the Complainant (manager, co-worker, client, etc.):

Phone Number:

E-mail:

**Date of Incident:**

*(If more than one event, please report each event on a separate form.)*

**Where did the specific event occur?**

**Please explain the events that occurred.**

**How did you react to the situation? Did you take any action to stop perceived inappropriate behavior?**

**Describe the harm you have suffered as a result of the event.**

**Were there any witnesses to this specific event? (If yes, please provide their names.)**

**Is there any physical evidence that supports your complaint? If so, please describe or attach copy of evidence.**

**What is your desired outcome of the investigation?**

The information provided in this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I am willing to cooperate fully in the investigation of my complaint and provide whatever evidence Chester Public Library deems relevant.

Signature

Date:

*Please return this form to the Library Director.*

## APPENIDX B

# ALA American Library Association

## Library Bill of Rights

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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.

## APPENIDX C

### **The Freedom to Read Statement**

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

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

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

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

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

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of

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

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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.

"The Freedom to Read Statement", American Library Association, July 26, 2006.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> (Accessed December 21, 2021)

Document ID: aaac95d4-2988-0024-6573-10a5ce6b21b2

## APPENIDX D

# Chester Public Library Request for Reconsideration of Material Form

The trustees of Chester Public Library have established a materials selection policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to the library director.

Chester Public Library  
21 W. Main St.  
Chester, CT 06412

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent self? \_\_\_\_ Or an organization? \_\_\_\_ Name of Organization  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

\_\_\_ Book (e-book) \_\_\_ Movie \_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_ Audio Recording  
\_\_\_ Digital Resource \_\_\_ Game \_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_ Other

Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

2. What brought this resource to your attention?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What concerns you about the resource?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest providing additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What action are you requesting the committee consider?  
\_\_\_\_\_