

Policy and Procedure for Reconsideration of Library Materials, eResources, Programs, Displays, or Bulletin Board Postings

Policy

Any Merrimac resident is welcome to discuss their concerns about library materials, eResources, programs, displays, or bulletin board postings, with the library director. While a library patron may have objections to certain materials, programs, or displays, the library recognizes the need to serve the entirety of the community. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for the materials selected by their children.

Should patrons choose to proceed with a formal request, they may fill out the Request for Reconsideration Form which can be found on the library website, or can be picked up at the circulation desk. Decisions concerning which materials to include in the collection, or what programs and displays to provide, are based upon the Merrimac Public Library Collection Development Policy, the Display Policy, the Display Case Policy, the Art Exhibit Policy, and the Library Bulletin Board Policy. In addition, when making their decision, the library director and the library trustees will use the library mission statement, and the guiding principles of the following documents of the American Library Association:

- The Library Bill of Rights (American Library Association Council)
- The Freedom to Read Statement (A Joint Statement by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers)

Procedure

The following steps will be used when an individual feels that informal discussions with the library director have not resolved their concern and further action is necessary. For the duration of this process, the material, display, or planned event will remain in circulation, on display, or as advertised.

1. The patron should fill out a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials, Programs, or Displays Form and return the form to the library director. The patron will be provided with the Library Collection Development Policy, the Library Bill of Rights, the American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement, and the Library Bill of Rights Interpretations.
2. The library director will notify the patron within 7 days of receipt of the request.
3. The director will review the reconsideration form and the material, program, or display in question, to consider whether its selection follows the criteria stated in the collection policy.

4. The director will make a decision concerning the request within 21 days, and will notify the patron stating the reasons for the decision.
5. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted within 10 days to the Board of Trustees.
6. The Board of Trustees shall notify the individual when and where the Board will meet to review the request. The patron and other members of the public are welcome to attend and discuss the appeal.
7. The decision of the Board is final.
8. Once a decision is made, residents must wait 2 years before filing another reconsideration for the same materials, program, or display.

When reviewing any reconsideration request, the library does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, values, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, cultural or ethnic background, physical, sensory, cognitive or learning disability, economic status, religious beliefs, or views.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees May, 2023