

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY POLICIES

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Approved:

Amended

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Vermont Dept. of Libraries, January 2016

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MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

GENERAL LIBRARY POLICIES

GENERAL LIBRARY GOALS:

1. To make available a variety of up-to-date quality materials, information, resources, and services, which will fulfill the educational, informational, cultural, and entertainment needs of the residents of our community and surrounding area in a convenient, welcoming, and respectful way.
2. To identify community needs and interests and provide relevant materials.
3. To collaborate with other organizations, agencies, and institutions within the community in order to meet community needs.
4. To ensure that the library responds earnestly to the pace of technological innovation and provide the community with best-in-class services.
5. The American Library Association Library Bill of Rights and Code of Ethics are incorporated in the Montgomery Town Library's Policies and attached hereto.

GENERAL OPERATION OF THE LIBRARY

1. Anyone may use the library without charge.
2. The library will be open at least twenty-four hours per week and the book drop will be accessible at all times.
3. Assistance will be provided as necessary to ensure all patrons have access to all materials.
4. The library will be closed for the following holidays:
 - New Year's Day
 - Martin Luther King Day
 - Town Meeting Day
 - President's Day
 - Memorial Day
 - Juneteenth Day
 - Independence Day
 - Labor Day
 - Thanksgiving Day
 - Friday after Thanksgiving
 - Christmas Day
 - New Year's Day

When the library is closed, borrowed materials may be dropped off in the book drop outside the library entrance.
5. The library may be used as a meeting place for individuals and community groups at the discretion of the Library Board of Trustees and the librarian. The request must comply with the guidelines in the Building Usage Policy.
6. The library normally will not provide personnel to assist groups using the library as a meeting place. This includes opening and closing the library.
7. The library will close due to inclement weather or other emergencies at the discretion of the librarian. The librarian should contact the Board of Trustees and the Town Clerk when the library is closed. All closures will be posted on the library website and social media.

MATERIAL LOANS

1. Library cards are available at no charge to residents and secondary homeowners of the Town of Montgomery and surrounding communities.
2. All materials, except DVDs and museum/park passes, are loaned for three weeks with the privilege of two renewals. DVDs are loaned for one week. Museum/park passes are loaned for three days. Renewal requests may be denied if a prior request for the material is on file with the librarian or if the librarian deems the loan period to be excessive.
3. Circulation limit per patron is 40 for books and 5 for DVDs. The computer system will automatically time out after that limit has been reached.
4. Misuse of library materials, negligence in returning materials, or failure to make proper restitution for missing or damaged materials may cause library privileges to be suspended.
5. The replacement cost of lost or damaged materials will be decided by the librarian.

SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

1. Selection of materials for the library is the responsibility of the librarian.
2. Books, magazines, recordings, movies, and other materials are selected to provide education, enlightenment, and recreation for the community.
3. In selecting materials, the librarian will consult professional reviews and consider recommendations from professional sources, the interests of the community, and the collection as a whole.
4. No materials shall be excluded because of the author's race, gender identity, age, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, or political views.

WEEDING THE LIBRARY COLLECTION

1. Weeding will be conducted periodically at the discretion of the librarian.
2. The criteria used in selection will also apply to the removal or replacement of materials.

GIFTS

1. The library may receive materials or funds as gift donations.
2. The library accepts these gifts on the condition that their use is at the complete discretion of the Board of Trustees and/or the librarian. All donations become the property of the Montgomery Public Library.

EXHIBITS AND DISPLAYS

1. All materials to be displayed must be approved by the librarian. The librarian may choose to submit the material to the Board of Trustees for approval.
2. The bulletin boards in the foyer are maintained by the librarian.
3. The display of brochures and other materials for non-profit events and educational opportunities will be in a designated area.
4. Local artists displaying their work are responsible for the hanging and takedown of their pieces. All artists must sign the Gallery Exhibitor Agreement.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN POLICY

1. The library will participate in ILL (Inter Library Loan) according to the Vermont Department of Libraries rules and regulations.
2. The library makes no guarantees about whether a particular ILL item will be located nor does the library make guarantees about when the ILL item will arrive.
3. The use of ILL materials is governed by the rules and procedures of the lending library.
4. Patrons with restricted library privileges may not request ILL items.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Under Sec 1. 22 V.S.A. Chapter 4, Library Patron Records, records relating to the identity of library patrons or the identity of library patrons in regard to transaction records are not public record and are strictly confidential.
2. No records shall be made available to any individual or agency of the government, whether local, state, or federal, except pursuant to the exemptions listed in Sec 1. 22 V.S.A. Chapter 4 §172.
3. Upon receipt of such process, order, or subpoena, the library's officers will consult with their legal counsel to determine if such process, order, or subpoena is in proper form and if there is a showing of good cause for its issuance; if the process, order, or subpoena is not in proper form or if good cause has not been shown, they will insist that such defects be cured.
4. An alphanumeric system for registering borrowers will be used to ensure privacy.

CENSORSHIP

1. Materials chosen based on accepted collection criteria will not be removed from the collection because of pressure by groups or individuals expressing disapproval.
2. Children have free access to all library materials. It is deemed the responsibility of parents/guardians to determine what their children, and only their children, may access.
3. The selection of materials will not be restricted by the possibility that young people may obtain materials that their parents/guardians consider inappropriate.

PROCEDURES FOR A PATRON'S COMPLAINT ON SELECTIONS

1. A patron's complaint will be treated with courtesy and respect.
2. The patron will be asked to fill out an item reconsideration form, which will be submitted to the Board of Trustees.
3. The librarian and the Board will then reexamine the challenged material and answer the complaint with reasons cited. Materials under consideration will remain in circulation.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

1. The Montgomery Town Library follows the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read statement. The Montgomery Town Library does not promote particular beliefs or views, nor is the selection of any material equivalent to the endorsement of the viewpoint of the author expressed therein. It does provide material representing all approaches to public issues of a controversial nature.
2. The library is aware that one or more persons may take issue with the selection of a specific item, and welcomes any expression of opinion by patrons, but does not undertake the task of pleasing all patrons by the elimination of items purchased after due deliberation under the guidance of the policies expressed herein.
3. To provide a resource where an individual can examine many points of view and make personal decisions is one of the essential purposes of the library.
4. Each reader is privileged to select among the materials of the library and no one is obligated to borrow personally offensive material.

REVIEW AND REVISION OF POLICIES

1. The policy will be reviewed periodically by the Board of Trustees and the librarian.
2. The policy may be revised at any regular meeting by a majority of the Board members, as long as a quorum of five is present.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery Town Library on October 9, 2023.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

1. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
2. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
3. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
4. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
5. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
6. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
7. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
8. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.
9. We affirm the inherent dignity and rights of every person. We work to recognize and dismantle systemic and individual biases; to confront inequity and oppression; to enhance diversity and inclusion; and to advance racial and social justice in our libraries, communities, profession, and associations through awareness, advocacy, education, collaboration, services, and allocation of resources and spaces.

Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; January 22, 2008; and June 29, 2021.

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

CIRCULATION OVERDUE POLICY

There is no age limit for anyone who would like to apply for a library card; however, if a child is under 16 years of age, a parent/guardian must sign the application.

1. In order to apply for a library card, a patron must fill out an application.
2. Patrons with overdue items by one (1) month will be restricted to check out additional materials until the overdue items are returned, renewed or paid for in case of loss or damage. Furthermore, an overdue status will affect the ability to borrow e-books or audio books through Libby.
3. Patrons may renew materials provided no one is waiting for the items. Materials may be renewed a maximum of two times. Attraction passes may not be renewed.
4. All materials, except DVDs and attraction passes, have a three-week checkout period. DVDs are due one week after checkout. Attraction passes circulate for three days.
5. Patrons have one week to pick up a reserved item or an item that has been ordered through interlibrary loan. If the item has not been picked up in a week, and the patron has made no special arrangements, the item will be placed back in regular circulation or returned to the lending library.
6. If a patron has reserved an item that is overdue, the patron who has the item will be called and asked to return it. There is no fine for overdue books, however, the library has a conscience jar for those who wish to donate money when their items are overdue.
7. Patrons may sign up to receive email notification of overdue materials. Overdue notices will be mailed to patrons who do not receive email notification. Patrons may have their borrowing privileges suspended in the event of repeated long overdue items.
8. The first overdue notice will be mailed or emailed two weeks after the materials are due. If necessary, two more notices will be sent, each at two-week intervals.
9. If an item is four (4) weeks overdue the overdue notice will include a bill and letter revoking borrowing privileges. Privileges will remain revoked until the bill has been settled or materials have been returned.
10. If a bill is sent, the charges will reflect the current publisher's list price (or a predetermined amount set by the librarian) for each item that has not been returned.

11. If a member of a family who is under 16 years old has materials that are more than 4 weeks overdue, then the parents/guardians will have privileges revoked until the matter is settled.
12. Parents/Guardians are legally responsible for debts incurred by children under 16 years of age.
13. Patrons are responsible for replacement costs for lost or damaged materials and will be billed for items returned in unusable condition as determined by the librarian.
14. In the case of overdue Interlibrary loan materials, a patron will have his or her privileges revoked after the second overdue notice (6 weeks) until the material in question is returned.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery Town Library on October 9, 2023.

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTER, WIFI, and SCANNER/COPIER POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Montgomery Town Library is committed to providing its patrons with access to computer equipment and the Internet. The Montgomery Town Library adheres to the basic principles governing information freedom and access as outlined in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The library and its patrons must observe all applicable local, state, and federal laws governing information access. In order to ensure the fair and equitable use of the library's computer equipment, patrons are asked to observe the following guidelines:

GENERAL USE

1. Be considerate of other users, and leave the computer and software as you found them.
2. Do not eat or drink near the computer stations.
3. Any computer or printer problems must be immediately reported to the librarian.
4. Users are allowed a half hour of use, and additional time if no one else has requested use. Users working on the computer in a group will count as one.
5. Patrons using their own devices to access the wireless Internet are responsible for the adequate protection of their devices and data.
6. While listening to or streaming audio patrons must use headphones at all times.

SOFTWARE

1. Users must respect the integrity of the library's computers and utilize only those programs and services already on the computer.
2. The Montgomery Town Library is not responsible for any damage or loss of data that may occur while using computers at the library.
3. Users may use only those programs and services posted on the computer; do not download other programs or save personal files onto the computer. The hard drive, most specifically the "My Documents" folder, will be deleted of all non-library files regularly.
4. In order to protect the public access computer from viruses, users cannot upload programs from devices such as CDs or flash drives. However, users may save information to an outside device such as CD or flash drive.
5. Any application used by a user must be properly exited upon completion.
6. Public access computer users must not alter settings on the computers or delete or modify any files.

SCANNER/COPIER

1. Patrons must follow posted instructions for use of machine.
2. Scanned files cannot be saved on the library's hard drive.

CHARGES

1. The cost of repairing damage to the computers or their peripherals by any library user may be charged to that library user.
2. There is a charge of 15¢ per page printed from either the computer or scanner/copier machine.

PRIVACY

1. The Montgomery Town Library is committed to the privacy of its public access computer users. However, users should be aware that use of the Internet, at this time, cannot be considered secure, and that some applications may save temporary copies of data to the hard drive. Public access computer users should therefore assume that others may be able to retrieve their work, and should take appropriate care.
2. In general, the library will treat information stored on the computer as confidential. Exceptions to this rule will only be honored when required by local, state or federal law, or when approved by the librarian.
3. As these computers are in a public area, be aware that the screen will be visible to other library users.
4. The computer's cache and temporary files, as well as Internet history will be cleaned out on a regular basis.

CHILDREN

1. All public access computer users of the Montgomery Town Library, regardless of age, have equal access to the information provided by the library.
2. The Montgomery Town Library's policy on the use of computers and access to the Internet is the same as for the borrowing of books: parents and guardians of children are responsible for the appropriate use by children of the library facilities.

SANCTIONS

Users who do not follow these rules, or other rules of the library, may have their privileges revoked. If you are unsure whether your use of the computer facilities might conflict with these rules, please ask the librarian.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery Town Library on October 9, 2023.

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

UNATTENDED MINORS POLICY

The Montgomery Town Library welcomes the use of its facilities by children of all ages. Our services and programs are offered to make the library enticing to children, to encourage them to visit the library and to develop a love of books, reading and libraries.

However, no public place, including the library, can guarantee the safety of an unattended child; Staff members are not in the position to supervise children except when in scheduled library programs. It must be understood that the library does not act in *loco parentis* (in place of the parent).

Therefore, for the protection and well-being of children who enjoy our library, for the general welfare of all persons using the library, and for the prevention of undue disruption of normal library activities, the following rules and regulations apply:

1. Children under the age of 9 shall, at all times, be attended and adequately supervised by a parent or caregiver.
2. Children age 9 and above may use the library unattended for appropriate activities, subject to rules and regulations concerning behavior, conduct, and demeanor.
 - Appropriate activities include: doing homework, writing reports, researching, browsing for books, quiet talking, enjoying the library's games and crafts, participating in a library program, using computers or personal electronics, thinking, daydreaming, and reading.
 - Inappropriate activities include: running, throwing, loud or abusive talking, fighting, wandering through the building or any other activities which disrupt the library. Vandalism will not be tolerated. Adult supervision will be required for continuously disruptive children of any age.
3. The library assumes no responsibility for children of any age left unattended at the library. Parents or guardians assume all liability for personal injury and/or damage done by their children to the library facility.
4. If a child is injured, library staff will make their best effort to contact a parent or caregiver. If the staff is unable to reach a parent or caregiver, staff will seek emergency medical assistance at the parent's/guardian's expense. Staff will notify the parent/guardian or caregiver as soon as possible.
5. As closing time approaches, library staff will encourage unattended children to arrange for transportation. If a child is left unattended at closing time, the child will be requested to contact his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) to arrange safe transportation home. If these contact efforts are unsuccessful, the library staff member will seek assistance from local authorities. Library staff will not transport children. The parent/guardian may, at the Director's discretion, be charged for staff time.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery Town Library on October 9, 2023.

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

BUILDING USAGE PROCEDURE

Many outside groups use the Montgomery Town Library as a meeting place. All groups wishing to use the library building must fill out a Building Use Application form at least one week prior to the scheduled usage, and must notify either the Librarian or a Trustee no less than 24 hours in advance if the activity is canceled.

On the application, the applicant must indicate in detail the purpose for which the facilities are to be used, and the application must be signed by the individual who will be responsible for any damage or loss of property arising from the use of the facilities. Building users must comply with the Building Usage Policy and are responsible for leaving the building as they found it (i.e., put chairs back, sweep/wipe areas where food has been served, etc.)

The application will be reviewed and approved by the Librarian and/or Trustees. Approval considerations include adequate parking, adequate space (including legal capacity), safety considerations, and building suitability. Personnel fees to cover any associated extra costs may be assessed by the Board of Trustees. The application may also be given to the Town Clerk's office for informational purposes.

For insurance and security purposes, applicants who wish to use the library must obtain the key from the librarian or town clerk during normal business hours. This key must be returned immediately after use. Long-term keys will not be given to building users except under exceptional circumstances that must be approved by the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery Town Library on October 9, 2023.

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

Library Card and Lending Policy

Benefits of Card - All Montgomery Town Library cardholders enjoy the benefits of access to a broad and diverse collection of print and audiovisual materials, e-books and digital audiobook holdings, nontraditional items, and online resources that collectively enrich lives, inspire curiosity, and support lifelong learning.

Card Eligibility - A Montgomery Town Library card is available at no cost to anyone who lives, works, and pays taxes in the Town of Montgomery; this includes secondary Montgomery Town homeowners and renters with a proof of home ownership/rental agreement.

Patrons aged 12-17 and their right to privacy*:

Patrons can fall into four categories; Juvenile Local/No Home (age 0-11); Teen Local/ No Home (12-17); Local Adult/No Home & Also Non-Resident Adult (ages 18-125).

All patrons under the age of 18 will have to include their entire birthdate. This ensures that should a patron moves from 11 to 12, we will be able to comply with the law and protect their privacy in a timely fashion. Once a patron moves from 17-18, we will be able to change their card designation and will remove their guarantor information.

Teen Local /No Home (Age 12-17) - These patrons will need a guarantor. The patron will need to use their own email address, unless they check a box on their patron application giving their parent consent to see their circulation information. Should they have an overdue book and their parent's email address is currently on file, by default the parent would see items currently checked out to their child.

Juvenile Local/No Home (age 0-11) - These patrons will need a guarantor. The patron will use their guardians email address and unless directed by the guardian, the minor patron's items checked out can be shared with the guarantor on file.

Non-residents:

Non-residents may be eligible for a card at a \$30.00 annual fee or \$20 for seniors ages 62 and older; fee is per household and payable on a voluntary basis.

Expiration:

Library cards expire every three years and can be renewed in-person.

Temporary card:

Individuals can apply for a temporary card at a cost of \$20.00 in lieu of the required documents listed above. These temporary cards are valid for 3 months and may be renewed at the discretion of the Library Director or designee.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery Town Library on July 8, 2024

*Source: Vermont Act 150 (S220)

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

GRANTS RESOLUTION

That the Board of Trustees acknowledges its responsibility for the application and administration of all grants which are applied for, or which are granted, in the name of the Library, and it hereby adopts, pursuant to that responsibility, the following procedure to be followed in the application for and administration of such grants:

RESPONSIBILITY:

The final authority for and administration of grants shall rest with the Library Director subject to these procedures and to any action by the Board. The Town Treasurer will report the expenditure of grant funds and completion of grants on a monthly basis in the monthly budget status report to the Board of Library Trustees.

Any special grants applied for by the Board of Trustees shall be the sole responsibility of the Board. Administration and Disbursement will follow the hereinafter described procedures.

APPLICATION:

Applications for grants shall be prepared by the Library Director. Any grants requiring matching funds need to be approved by the Board of Library Trustees.

ADMINISTRATION:

Grants shall be administered by the Library Director within the guidelines of the grant and the policies and procedures of the Board.

DISBURSEMENTS:

The Library Director shall approve all disbursements of grant monies and shall promptly provide records of such disbursements to the Town Treasurer. The Director shall retain copies for reconciling expenditures should the need arise. The Director shall be the grant fiscal officer depending on the requirements of the grant. In addition, the Director shall obtain prior approval of the Board of Trustees for disbursements exceeding \$5,000.

RECEIPTS:

Upon receiving grant monies, the Town Treasurer shall record and track them as Miscellaneous Grants in the financial statements.

Grant monies received through applications by the Board of Trustees shall be recorded and tracked as Capital Improvement Funds unless otherwise specified.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery Town Library on July 8, 2024.

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

Service and Therapy Animals in the Library

Purpose:

To determine the conditions under which animals will be permitted in the library.

Statement of Policy:

- Pets are not allowed in the library.
- Animals that are necessary for a library program are allowed in the library.
- Service animals or service animals in training are allowed in the library.
 - Library staff may ask only the following two questions:
 - (1) is the animal a service animal required because of a disability? and
 - (2) what work or task has the animal been trained to perform?
 - Library staff may not request any documentation for the animal, require that the animal demonstrate its task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.
 - The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that service animals must be under the control of the handler at all times.
 - The service animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered unless either of these devices interferes with the animal's work or the person's disability prevents the use of these devices.
 - A service animals must generally stay on the floor or be carried by the person using it. Service animals are not permitted on library furniture.
 - If a service animal is out of control, barks repeatedly, or is not housebroken, the animal must be removed from the library.
 - When a service animal must be removed, library staff will offer the person with the disability an opportunity to obtain materials or services without the animal's presence.

Definitions:

Service Animal: The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a service animal as “a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person’s disability.

Emotional Support/Therapy/Comfort/Companion Animal: These terms are used to describe animals that provide comfort just by being with a person. Because they have not been trained to perform a specific job or task, they do not qualify as a service animal under the ADA.

Adopted by the Montgomery Town Library Board of Trustees on ____July 8____, 2024

Sources:

Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Regulations: Part 35 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services <http://www.https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/regulations/title-ii-2010-regulations>

U.S. Department of Justice revised regulations implementing Title II (state and local government services) of the Americans with Disabilities Act
<https://www.ada.gov/topics/service-animals>

U.S. Department of Justice's publication "Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA"
<https://www.ada.gov/resources/service-animals-faqs>

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

How to Respond to Challenges and Concerns Policy

WHAT IS INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM? Intellectual freedom is the right of unrestricted access to information and ideas, protected by the First Amendment. The First Amendment applies to government entities, not private entities. The library board trustees have to set policies within government rules and regulations.

CENSORSHIP is the effort to ban, prohibit, remove, label or restrict library materials, based on the belief that the materials will corrupt children, offend the unwary reader, or undermine moral values.

LIMITED PUBLIC FORUM Only the public library is a designated or limited public forum, created by the government for the sole purpose of providing access to information. According to existing court opinion, the First Amendment protects individuals' right to 1) physically access the library; and 2) read and receive information and use the resources made generally available to the public in the library (this includes meeting rooms and display cases, when the library has decided to make those spaces available to the public.) The library has the right to establish reasonable rules governing library use. A library's power to regulate patron behavior is not limited to cases of "actual disruption," but may be tied to safety, use of resources, and other reasonable concerns directed to fulfilling the library's mission. Best practice is for a public library to have content-neutral rules that apply objective standards to behavior, safety, or administrative issues that are enforced in a non-discriminatory manner. This includes our collection development policy (why we buy what we buy) and our materials reconsideration policy (protecting your right to say what you think about an item)

Informal complaints can occur at any time, and every library should have a process for handling verbal concerns. Library workers and educators who receive expressions of concern should courteously refer them to the person responsible for responding to concerns, who should take the following steps:

Acknowledge that every person has the right to question library resources. A library user with a complaint should feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously. Listen thoughtfully and respectfully. Try to elicit the specific reason for their concern, whether they have read the entire work or only parts, and the specific action they would like the library to take.

Only current library card holders are allowed to make a formal challenge. This will help prevent outside groups from coming in to make demands from all over the state as well as the country.

Patrons who file a formal challenge shall be required to complete a Request for Reconsideration form provided by the Montgomery Town Library

Do not promise to act or appear to agree with the individual. Instead, offer assistance in finding something else that would better meet the person's needs.

If the person requests the item be removed from the library's collection, explain that although the individual may be offended by the library resource, others may not have the same perspective. Describe how library materials are selected. Libraries have diverse collections with resources from many points of view, and a library's mission is to provide access to information for all users.

All library users have the First Amendment right to borrow, read, view, and listen to library resources.

If the individual is concerned about a children's or young adult resource, explain that parents and guardians play a major role in guiding their child's reading and library use. Often a person's concern about a children's or young adult book involves a desire to "protect all children" by removing that item from the collection or restricting access to it. Explain that each family has the right to determine which library resources are acceptable for its children and must accord the same right to other parents.

Many expressions of concern end after the individual has had an opportunity to express personal feelings about a library resource. The person only wanted to be heard and have his opinions acknowledged. No further action is needed. If this is the case, thank the person for their interest, make notes about the conversation, and file them for future reference. Additionally, report the conversation to the library director or principal.

If the concerned individual is not satisfied during the discussion and wants the item removed, explain the formal reconsideration process and its timeline. Often people who have a concern would like immediate action and are not aware of the length of time this procedure takes. State what your policy says about the availability of the material during the reconsideration process. Best practice is that the resource under reconsideration will not be removed from use or have access restricted pending completion of the process.

Provide a copy of the library's collection development policy and resource reconsideration form. Stress that no action is taken unless the form is fully completed by the concerned individual. Explain that the submission of a completed form will trigger the formal reconsideration process, and that the document will become part of the public record.

After the conversation, make notes, date them, and retain the information to provide background in the event that a request for formal reconsideration form is filed. Remember that all such notes become part of the record of the reconsideration process and may become public records.

Keep your director informed of any concerns expressed, whether you feel they have been successfully resolved or not. Knowing that a concern was expressed helps that individual respond knowledgeably if the concerned person contacts them.

REVIEW AND ACTION After a complaint or concern has been submitted to the Library, a committee consisting of the Library Director, a Library Board Trustee and 2 non-library associated town residents shall review the complaint and take the appropriate action and inform the complainant accordingly. At all times the action shall be executed in a respectful manner.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery Town Library on July 8, 2024.

MONTGOMERY TOWN LIBRARY

Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Request initiated by (name) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Complainant represents

_____ himself/herself

_____ (name organization) _____

_____ (identify other group) _____

1. To what in the book or material do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages)

2. What do you feel might be the result of reading this material?

3. For what age group would you recommend this book or material?

4. Is there anything good about this material?

5. Did you read the entire book or material? Yes ____/No ____

If not, what parts did you read?

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this book by literary critics?

Yes ____/No ____

7. What do you believe is the theme of this book?

8. What would you like the library to do about this book or material?
- a) Withdraw it from the library shelves? Yes ____/No ____
 - b) Send it back for revaluation or reclassification? Yes ____/No ____
9. In its place, what book of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization?

Signature of Complainant _____

Library card # _____

Date _____