

NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY RECONSIDERATION POLICY

The Library welcomes feedback from New Britain residents who have a particular concern about collection materials, displays or programs. Individuals with objections to a specific item, display or program are asked to complete and submit a Request for Reconsideration Form.

In accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323, the New Britain Public Library abides by the following statutory requirements:

- All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.
- Materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Collection Development, Display, and Programming policies. No library material or displays will be removed, nor programs be canceled, based upon:
 - i. the origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material,
 - ii. the origin, background or viewpoints of the creator of the work,
 - iii. the sole basis that an individual finds such material offensive.
- The process for petitioners to challenge any material, display or program shall neither favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics.
- Individuals completing a Request for Reconsideration Form must detail the specific portion(s) of the material, display or program that they object to and provide a clear explanation of their reasoning for the objection.
- The Request for Reconsideration Form may only be filled out and submitted by New Britain residents, and must include the resident's full legal name, address and telephone number, and be filled out in its entirety. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
- Only one reconsideration form per patron may be active at any given time.
- Reconsideration requests are not considered confidential patron records under section 11-25 of the general statutes.

- Any library items, displays or programs being challenged shall remain in the library, unaltered and fully accessible to all patrons, until a final decision is made by the library director.
- The director may consolidate multiple requests for reconsideration submitted for the same item, display or program.
- Once a decision has been made by the library director or the Board of Trustees on the reconsideration of any library material, display or program, such material cannot be subject to a new request for a period of three years. Any resident submitting a Request for Reconsideration Form during that three-year time period will be provided with a summary of the previous decision.
- Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

Request for Reconsideration Process

The choice to consume a library item, display or program lies with the individual, or for children, with the parent or legal guardian. While each person is welcome to restrict which library items, displays or programs they personally consume, they never have the right to restrict the access of others.

If it is believed that there is a valid reason to exclude an item, display or program, New Britain residents are welcome to discuss their concerns with library management and read in full the policy most relevant to the material they are objecting to (either the Collection Development, Display, or Programming Policy). If, after this step, there is still need to pursue a formal objection, patrons may initiate the following process:

- Individuals who recommend the review or removal of a particular item, display or program are asked to first review the item, display or program in its entirety, and may then obtain a Request for Reconsideration form. Along with the form, patrons will receive a packet of documents that includes the library's Collection Development policy, the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read, and the Freedom to View statements from the American Library Association. The form and packet must be picked up in-person from the Information Desk at either the main library or Jefferson branch.

- After reviewing the documents, patrons may fill out and submit the Request for Reconsideration Form. The library director will evaluate the form, and take the following actions:
 - For items in the library collection, the director will:
 - i. read the challenged material in its entirety,
 - ii. evaluate the challenged material against the Collection Development policy, and
 - iii. make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material no later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request.
 - For items on display, the director will:
 - i. consult with the staff or community member who created the display,
 - ii. evaluate the display against the Display policy, and
 - iii. make a written decision on whether or not to remove or alter the challenged display no later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request.
 - For programs, the director will:
 - i. consult with the staff or community member who are presenting the program,
 - ii. evaluate the program against the Programming policy, and
 - iii. make a written decision on whether or not to cancel or alter the challenged program no later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request.
- If the individual submitting the form does not agree with the library director's decision, they have the right to submit an appeal, in writing, to the Library Board of Trustees within 30 days.
- The board, after evaluating the challenged material, display, or program in conjunction with the corresponding policy, shall:
 - i. Consult with the library director, State Librarian, or State Librarian's designee, a representative of the cooperating library service unit as defined in section 11-9e of the general statutes, the president of the Connecticut Library Association, or the president's designee, and the president of the Association of Connecticut Library Boards, or the president's designee,
 - ii. deliberate on such a request for reconsideration,
 - iii. provide a written statement of the reasons for the reconsideration or refusal to reconsider the library material, and
 - iv. provide any final decision that is contrary to the decision of the library director