



Library Program Policy

Mission Statement

The East Haven Library Inc., colloquially known as the Hagaman Memorial Library, is a center for community enrichment and, as such, seeks to provide information, resources and programs for lifelong learning, and to improve to the quality of life of local residents through access to an excellent collection of materials in multiple formats, current technology, and cultural and other programming opportunities.

Purpose of the Library Program Policy

This policy of the Hagaman Memorial Library (the “Library”) provides librarians and library staff members with guidance on the selection of programs and informs members of the public of the principles on which programming is selected as an integral component of Library services, to both promote and complement the Library’s other services and collections. The Library presents programs that provide information, education, enrichment, and entertainment; these programs support the Library's role as the center of the community. Programs are provided for the interest, information, entertainment, and enrichment of all residents and aim to represent a wide range of varied diverging viewpoints and to provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, culture, lifestyle, or educational needs of residents.

The Library recognizes the importance of displays and programs as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas, and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. This policy provides guidelines for the development, management, and oversight of programs presented by the Library.

Key Definitions

“Library program” means an event planned and implemented by library staff for the benefit of those members of the public who opt to attend or participate. It may involve outside presenters, facilitators, performers, or other collaborators, and may be presented in cooperation with other entities. Note that use of a public meeting room by an organization or individual to hold a public event does not constitute a Library program.

“Library and other educational material” means any material belonging to, on loan to, or otherwise in the custody of a public library, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books, magazines, reference books, supplementary titles, multimedia and digital material and software. It is the assemblage of all materials owned or licensed or otherwise in the custody of a public library in both physical and digital formats, and made available to the public at no cost.

“Public library staff member” means a staff member of a public library, a public librarian, any staff member whose assignment is in the public library or any individual carrying out or assisting with the functions of a public library. This includes all professional staff, nonprofessional staff,



and the Library Director.

“Individual with a vested interest” means any individual residing in the town in which the public library is located or the town in which the contract library is located at the time a reconsideration form is filed.

“Remove” means deliberately taking library material out of a library's collection. “Remove” does not include the process of clearing such collection of any materials that are no longer useful.

Scope

This policy applies to all library programs.

Roles & Responsibilities

The Library Board of Trustees delegates the oversight and management of the Library and library displays and programs, within the guidelines of this policy, to the Library Director. The final responsibility for library displays and programs is held by the Library Director, but the day-to-day responsibility of oversight, management, development, and administration of displays and programs is shared by trained public library staff members. Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop displays and programs; their education and experience prepare them for these important duties, under the overall direction of the Library Director.

The Library may partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored displays and programs. Co-sponsored displays and programs will be provided under the supervision of a designated library staff member.

Attendees are responsible for complying with the Library’s Behavior Policy.

Procedures

1. Program Selection & Criteria

- A. Library programs provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of residents. They provide entertainment, enlightenment, and education. The Library considers the following general criteria when evaluating programs:
 1. Informational, educational, entertainment, enrichment, cultural, or recreational value to the community
 2. Public demand, interest, and needs of the individual and the community, both expressed and unexpressed
 3. The accuracy, effectiveness, prominence, and credibility of the program and presenter
 4. Favorable references from reputable critics, libraries, or other organizations



5. Relationship to the library collection, library and other educational material, and other existing library programming
 6. Timeliness and importance of program; current or historical significance of subject
 7. Suitability of style for intended audience
 8. Availability and affordability
 9. Compatibility of program to schedule and available space
 10. Local origination, significance, or particular relevance to East Haven and the region
 11. Historical, cultural, or educational significance
 12. Connection to other community or national programs or events
 13. Relation to library collections, resources, exhibits, and programs
 14. Public's ability to view the program from alternative sources
- B. The Library strives to present programs that provide information, education, entertainment, enrichment, cultural opportunities, and recreation, and avoids programs that do not meet these standards. Topics, content, and timing of Library programs are developed with consideration of available resources and keeping community needs and interests in mind.
- C. A program will not be excluded or removed because its topic may be regarded by some as controversial. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the content or of the presenter.
- D. Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be approved or offered by the Library. However, educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates, may be offered.
- E. Programs that support or oppose a specific religion will not be approved or offered. Programs are planned to be inclusive of all cultures and of all religions and no religion. Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe, or proselytize a particular religious conviction. Holiday programs and displays may be offered for the entertainment of Library patrons.
- F. Selection of programs is based on the professional knowledge and judgment of Library staff whose expertise includes knowledge regarding programming in a public library setting and awareness of the needs and interests of the community. Suggestions from patrons are welcome and are given serious consideration. However, library staff will determine which suggestions will be acted upon. Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards as adopted in the Collection Development & Maintenance Policy, Display Policy, or Program Policy. Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this policy 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.
- A. Note that there is a difference between library displays and programs that are created or



curated by librarians and those created by members of the public or community. In addition to providing programs or displays created or curated by public library staff members, the Library may allow programs and displays created by members of the public or community groups to be exhibited in the public library, when time and space allow. Acceptance of a display or program by the Library does not constitute an endorsement by the Library of the content of the display or exhibit, or of the views expressed in the materials on display.

- G. 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.

2. Program Development, Coordination & Supervision

The library provides programs created or curated by designated public library staff members who are professionally trained to develop, plan, schedule, and implement library programs. Library programs should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. Library programs should represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints. Library programs may originate from library staff, or may include programs provided by partnering institutions or members of the public, as selected, curated, and overseen by a designated member of library staff. All programs must be selected by a designated member of library staff.

In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization, depending upon the timing and venue of the program, in coordination with and reporting to a designated library staff member. All programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library must abide by this policy regardless of where they are hosted.

In addition, as space and time allows, the Library may allow displays and programs created by members of the public or community groups to be exhibited in the public library, utilizing the library's meeting rooms; these do not constitute library events or displays.

3. Program Access

Library programs are open to the public on a first-come first-serve basis. Registration may be in advance online or at the door. For programs targeted to a specific audience, e.g. children or teens, and promoted as such, preferential admission may be offered to those groups on a first-come first-serve basis, or may be limited to those individuals as the Library deems appropriate. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a Library program should contact the Library Director two weeks prior to the program using the Accessibility Accommodation Request Form.

4. Virtual Programs

Some programs may be offered virtually on a Library-approved virtual meeting platform, which patrons can use to access programs from their own internet-enabled devices. This may



include programs that are simultaneously run at the physical Library as well as programs that are offered only virtually. While hosting the virtual program, Library staff, partnering organizations, and program facilitators will follow industry standard best practices for virtual events. Patrons attending virtual programs are expected to adhere to the Library's Behavior Policy and failure to do so may result in immediate consequences, including removal from the program or exclusion from future programs and services.

Some virtual programs may be pre-recorded and broadcast via the internet or recorded as presented for later viewing. In the event an interactive program is being recorded, attendees will be informed at the start of the program. Some virtual programs may require advance registration. Registered participants will receive a link via email to join the program. Information collected during the registration process will be used only to communicate information about that program or to confirm eligibility to participate in that program.

The Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of virtual events, however attendees should be aware that all online activity carries some degree of risk. Patrons are required to provide their own equipment and internet connection to attend virtual programs. The Library will make a good faith effort to utilize platforms that will be compatible with the widest array of hardware and software, but makes no guarantee that every patron will be capable of accessing every program successfully. Nor can the Library guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees.

5. Non-Solicitation & Program Materials

Non-solicitation: Programs of a purely commercial nature by outside organizations or those designed for the solicitation of business will not be offered by the Library. Presenters may not use a speaking engagement to market or sell outside commercial products or services. The Library may, at library staff's discretion, opt to offer sales of Books, CDs, DVDs or other ancillary program materials related to the content of a program at a Library event as a convenience to attendees. Fundraising at library events is limited to the Library and the Friends of the Library. Donations received through co-sponsored programs may be used to offset the cost of a program or may be split with another organization, at the discretion of the Library Director.

6. Gifts & Donations

Accepting gifts and donations is an important way for the library to benefit from the generosity of our community. Donations to enrich the library are welcome! This may include the donation of physical items, services, programs, or funds. The Library applies to these donations the same standards of selection that govern all other purchases, as outlined in the Library's Collection Development & Maintenance Policy, Display Policy, and Program Policy.

Gifts are accepted with the understanding that no conditions may be placed on any gift by the donor. This is essential in ensuring that the public library staff members designated to make



these decisions continue to select materials and services independently from outside influences, and ensure that the donation of physical items, services, or funds do not interfere with the Library providing a collection and services which meet a diverse range of interests, tastes, viewpoints, values, and ability levels, in order to serve the greatest number of library users and potential library users possible.

Gift materials that are deemed to have met the Library's selection criteria by designated staff may be retained and those that do not may be otherwise used by the Library, given to the Friends of the Library Book Sale, or disposed of by other means. Funds donated for material or programs purposes are allocated, under the supervision of the Director, to purchases selected by designated Library staff to meet the requirements outlined in the Library's Collection Development & Maintenance Policy, Display Policy, and Program Policy. The library reserves the right to make the final decision on the use or disposition of all gifts and donations.

7. Intellectual Freedom & Censorship

The library recognizes that not all users will respond to all programs with the same degree of enthusiasm and regard; some programs may be controversial or offensive to an individual, but the Library maintains that individuals can apply their values only to themselves. It is the right of the individual not to attend a program that the individual considers objectionable. It is not the right of any library user or users to deny access to library programs to others. The selection of library programs is predicated on the right of access to information and freedom from censorship. Selections will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the program itself. The freedom to choose from a wide range of informational and artistic programs will not be abridged.

8. Program Evaluation

To provide the highest quality and most useful programming, Library staff may gather information about program results to guide future programming decisions. Outputs, such as the number of attendees at a program, will be gathered for all or almost all programs. Outcomes, such as how well the content of a program helped attendees learn about the program's topic, will be gathered at times when such data is required for grant reporting or would be helpful in evaluating a new program topic or format.

9. Library Program Attendance Policy

Selection of programs will not be inhibited by the possibility that a program may inadvertently be seen by minors. No one can exercise censorship to restrict access to library programs by others. It is the parents' or guardians' responsibility to determine which library programs are appropriate for their children. The Library supports intellectual freedom and endorses the American Library Association (ALA) Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, the Library Bill of Rights and all relevant interpretations.



10. Library Program Review & Reconsideration Procedure

The Hagaman Library Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of hearing from the public regarding the selection of materials, displays, and programs. The Library administration and staff seriously consider suggestions made by East Haven residents. The completion of the Request for Reconsideration form does not guarantee accession to the collection or removal from the collection, but does ensure the attention of Library Staff to user opinion, interests, and concerns. The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays, or programs to individual residents of East Haven who are current Hagaman Library Card holders. Please see our Material Review & Reconsideration Policy for further information on this process.

11. Location

This policy is in accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323. This policy will be housed and maintained on the Hagaman Library website: www.hagamanlibrary.org/policies. A copy is also maintained in the Library Director's Office. The Library neither approves nor disapproves of the views expressed in materials included in the collection.

Approved by the Hagaman Memorial Library Board of Trustees November 20, 2025.