Hagaman Memorial Library

Policy on the Use of AI

Mission Statement

The East Haven Public 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 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

This policy of the Hagaman Memorial Library (the "Library") provides librarians and Library staff with guidance, and provides the public with transparency regarding the principles governing the use of Artificial Intelligence ("AI") by the Library and its staff, as well as AI-enabled vendors, services, and software used by the Library.

The Library provides programs, services, materials, displays, and advertising to inform, educate, enrich, and entertain. The Library recognizes the importance of providing information that is accurate and reliable, and respects its role as a trustworthy resource within the community. This guidance is intended to identify professional values and decision points to be used by staff when determining when and if to use AI systems, AI-enabled features, and AI vendor integrations.

Definitions

"Artificial Intelligence" (further referred to as "AI") means software systems that generate, classify, rank, recommend, summarize, predict, automate, or assist decisions, including both stand-alone AI tools and AI-enabled features embedded in other services, databases, systems, and software.

"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.

Roles & Responsibilities

The Library Board of Trustees delegates the oversight and management of the Library and the Library's use of AI, within the guidelines of this policy, to the Library Director. While the final responsibility is held by the Library Director, the day-to-day responsibility of oversight, management, development, and administration of AI use is shared by designated staff members whose education and experience prepare them for these important duties, under the overall direction of the Library Director.

The Library may also partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, vendors, or individuals who may choose to use AI in their presentation of programs, services,

materials, displays, and advertising. The Library does not take responsibility for the use of AI by outside presenters or organizations. AI-enabled products, services, or vendor integrations selected or implemented by the Library are subject to the evaluation and safeguards established by this policy, and a designated Library staff member will provide oversight and feedback for co-sponsored programs, services, materials, displays, and advertising, when applicable.

General Policies

The Hagaman Memorial Library follows the guidance of the American Library Association (ALA) in determining best use of AI in terms of both tools and integrations. Under the guidance of the ALA, the Library recognizes AI as a set of innovative tools that may be used by Library staff members, vendors, and partners when, and if, the Library has identified a clear service benefit and adequate safeguards.

Before implementing a new AI tool, AI-enabled feature, or new use of AI, Library staff members will consult with the Library Director or the Library Director's designate to ensure that the following have been identified and reviewed: a clear public-service purpose; benefits and risks; supervisor oversight; and appropriate safeguards. Staff capacity and community effects will also be taken into consideration.

Core Principles

The Library considers the following Core Principles when evaluating the use of AI:

1. **Public Good:** AI use should complement or expand existing services and staff capabilities, or reduce barriers to service rather than replacing human staff.
2. **Human Agency:** AI requires human oversight and should be used to complement, rather than replace, human judgment, artistic expression, and critical thinking.
3. **Intellectual Freedom:** AI tools should not censor or restrict information access.
4. **Privacy and Data Protection:** AI vendors should be evaluated for appropriate safeguards to protect patron data from unauthorized use.
5. **Sustainability:** AI tools should be evaluated for long-term operational, financial, and environmental impacts, including energy costs.
6. **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** AI tools should be evaluated for bias, fairness, and compliance with applicable laws.
7. **Transparency:** The Library should provide transparency regarding its use of AI. Transparency regarding routine use is disclosed through this policy. Additional disclosure may be provided through Library communications or other appropriate means, with the level and method of disclosure proportionate to the nature and significance of the AI use.

Prohibited Uses

The use of AI does not replace staff judgment or accountability; staff should maintain oversight of AI-assisted services, and all AI-generated products should be appropriately reviewed by a Library staff member. In addition, the following constitute prohibited uses of AI:

- Use with the intent to harm, misinform, deceive, or deepen social inequality.
- Entering confidential, sensitive, or legally protected information into a general-purpose AI system unless the system has been specifically approved by the Library Director for that use, following appropriate privacy and security review. This includes sensitive personally identifiable information, patron borrowing, reading, reference, search, or account records that identify or could reasonably identify an individual; passwords, authentication credentials, or other similarly sensitive personal information; and confidential records.

More Information

This policy was developed with reference to and incorporates principles and language adapted from the American Library Association's *Guidance on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Libraries*, adopted by ALA Council in 2026:
https://www.ala.org/tools/standards-and-guidelines/guidance-use-artificial-intelligence-libraries

Approved by the Hagaman Memorial Library Board of Trustees October 15, 2026.