

Stillwater

Public Library

Policy Title: Request for Review Policy
Date adopted: 05/10/2022
Date amended: 01/10/2023; 12/12/2023; 08/06/2024
Date last reviewed: 08/06/2024

Purpose

Stillwater Public Library (the “Library”) welcomes patrons’ expressions of opinion regarding Library materials, programs, displays, exhibits, website content or related resources. If a patron has a concern about a Library resource, this policy provides the framework to request a review of the resource in question.

Definitions

Patron: Any person who uses the resources and services of a library, not necessarily a registered borrower. This definition comes from the Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science.

Library Resource: Resources include, but are not limited to, print, non-print, and electronic materials, displays, exhibits, Library social media posts, programs, and services.

Principles

The Library believes in the freedom of information and will not restrict a user’s right to read, listen to, or view library materials. The Library strives to provide access to a wide range of resources representing varying points of view, without promoting a single perspective. The Library upholds the right of the individual to secure these resources, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to some. The Library supports the American Library Association’s (the “ALA”) [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to Read](#), and [Freedom to View](#) statements.

The Library recognizes that materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only individuals can determine what is most appropriate for their needs and can define what material or information is consistent with their personal or family values. Individuals may apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. They may not restrict the freedom of others to read or access library materials. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for their children's use of library materials.

Library resources should reflect different philosophies and points of view. Inclusion of a particular resource does not constitute endorsement or advocacy of the ideas or statements found therein. Library resources are available to all; however, it is not expected that all resources will appeal to everyone.

Request for Review

Patrons who wish to request the withdrawal, reclassification, or discontinuation of a Library resource are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Library Director or a Supervisor as a first step. If the patron prefers to bypass this option or if a more detailed examination would be helpful to either party, the Library will provide the patron with information that includes the:

- Library’s Collection Development and Management Policy and/or any other applicable Library policies
- [ALA’s Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [ALA’s Freedom to Read Statement](#)
- [ALA’s Freedom to View Statement](#)
- Library’s *Request for Review* form

Review Responsibilities

Library patrons may request a review of a Library resource by submitting a written *Request for Review* form. A patron may not have more than 5 active requests under review at one time. A joint submittal by two or more patrons is still limited to a maximum of 5 active requests. Resources under review will remain accessible until a final determination has been made.

Within 30 days of receiving a written *Request for Review* form, the Library Director will review the request and resource in question with the Supervisor overseeing that area, and then the Library Director will send a written response to the patron who submitted the form, explaining the staff decision regarding the request. If a patron submits more than 5 resources for review, only 5 will be considered at one time. After the active requests are adjudicated, the patron may submit additional requests. In reviewing requests, staff follow board-approved policies in their decision-making process.

If the patron is not satisfied with the Library Director’s response, the patron will have 30 days from the date of the response to contact the Library Director and appeal the staff response to the Library Board at the earliest possible regularly scheduled board meeting, at which time trustees will publicly review the request and take final action on it. To be included on an upcoming board agenda, the appeal must be received at least seven days in advance of the next meeting, otherwise the request will be delayed until the subsequent meeting.

In making its decision, the Library Board will consider the material in question, Minnesota Statute § 134.51 “ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS AND RIGHTS PROTECTED,” the patron’s written request, the staff response, applicable policies and professional reviews, as well as the ALA’s [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to Read Statement](#), [Freedom to View Statement](#), and [Guidelines on Intellectual Freedom](#).

The final decision on appeals rests with the Library Board. The patron will be notified in writing of the Library Board’s decision. Also, per Minnesota Statute § 134.51, “Upon the completion of a content challenge or reconsideration process in accordance with the governing body’s adopted policy, the governing body must submit a report of the challenge to the commissioner of education” containing the specific information mandated by that statute.

A *Request for Review* about a particular item will not be considered by the Library Board more than once within a 60-month period, even if subsequent requests come from different people during that time. The 60-month period begins on the date the *Request for Review* form is received by the Library.

Associated Policies and Documents

- Stillwater Public Library: Circulation Policy
- Stillwater Public Library: Collection Development and Management Policy
- Stillwater Public Library: Internet Public Use Policy

- Minnesota Statute § 134.51
- ALA's Library Bill of Rights
- ALA's Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights
- ALA's Freedom to Read Statement
- ALA's Freedom to View Statement
- ALA's Guidelines on Intellectual Freedom

The most current policy supersedes any and all previous policies issued relative to this subject.