

### 3.3 MATERIAL REVIEW AND RECONSIDERATION POLICY

In support of the North Branford Public Libraries' ("NBPL" or "the Library") mission to promote literacy, encourage lifelong learning, inspire curiosity and connect users to ideas, the Library is committed to making material and information accessible in a variety of formats that represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, expressions, opinions, and interests.

This policy establishes a process for individuals with a vested interest to challenge any Library and other educational material, display, or program. In accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323, NBPL abides by the following statutory requirements.

NBPL endorses the principles documented in the American Library Association's *Freedom to Read Statement*, *Freedom to View Statement*, and the *Library Bill of Rights*, all of which are integral to this policy. The Library will not restrict a user's right to read, listen to, or view Library materials. No Library material or display shall be removed, and no program shall be canceled, because of the origin, background, or viewpoints expressed in such material, display, or program—or because of the origin, background, or viewpoints of the creator.

The Library prohibits the removal, exclusion, or censorship of any book on the sole basis that an individual finds the content offensive.

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. Library materials, displays, and programs shall only be excluded based on legitimate, professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices, as adopted in the *Collection Development and Maintenance Policy*, the *Display Policy*, or *Programming Policy*.

If a North Branford resident objects to the appropriateness of a particular item in the collection, a program, or a display, they are encouraged to discuss their concerns with a Librarian. A *Request for Reconsideration* form must be submitted in writing to the Library Director for any formal review to take place. The Library limits consideration of such requests to residents of North Branford. Once a decision has been made by the Library Director or the Board of Trustees or other governing board on the reconsideration of any Library material, such material cannot be subject to a new request for reconsideration for a period of three years. The review and reconsideration process shall neither favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics. Any Library material being challenged will remain accessible according to its catalog record and available for residents to reserve, check out, or access until a final decision is rendered by the Library Director.

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**Reconsideration of Library Material, Program, or Display Procedures:**

**1. Initial Contact:**

Patrons who wish to request the withdrawal or reclassification of materials currently owned by the Library, or who have concerns about a display or program, are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Library Director.

**2. Formal Submission:**

If the patron is not satisfied with the Director's response, the Director will provide this policy and a *Request for Reconsideration* form. If the patron wishes to pursue the matter, they must complete and submit the signed form to the Library Director.

**3. Review Process:**

Upon receipt of the completed form, the Library Director will convene a Review Committee composed of professional staff, including but not limited to the Library Director, Assistant Director, and the selector(s) responsible for the subject, genre, and/or age range of the item or program. The Committee will:

- a. Review the *Request for Reconsideration* form. The Library Director is permitted to consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenged Library material.
- b. Read, view, or listen to the material in its entirety and determine whether it meets the criteria outlined in the *Collection Development and Maintenance Policy*.
- c. Research and compile professional reviews of the work.

**4. Written Response:**

The Committee will complete a report and the Library Director will communicate the decision in writing, including the rationale, to the requester within sixty (60) days of receiving the request. The Library Board will be informed of all requests.

**5. Appeal to the Library Board:**

If the patron is not satisfied with the Committee's decision, they may submit a written appeal within ten (10) business days of receiving the response. The appeal will be reviewed by the Library Board. The patron may provide written and/or verbal arguments and will be invited to attend the meeting if desired.

**6. Board Review and Final Decision:**

After evaluating the challenged material under the *Collection Development and Maintenance Policy*, the Library Board 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 who shall deliberate on such a request for reconsideration.
- ii. Provide a written statement of the reasons for the reconsideration or refusal to reconsider the library material.
- iii. Provide any final decision that is contrary to the decision of the Library Director.

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.

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## **Request for Reconsideration Form**

By completing and submitting this form, you are initiating a formal complaint process. Your personal information will be associated with the complaint and is not considered a confidential patron record under Section 11-25 of the General Statutes. Only completed and signed forms will be reviewed.

**Work of Concern** (Book, Audiobook, DVD, Game, Display, Program, etc.):

**Title of Material/Program/Display:**

**Author/Producer** (if applicable):

**Date and Location of Program or Display:**

**Have you read, viewed, or listened to the material in its entirety?**

**If a program or display, did you attend or view it in full?**

1. What concerns you about this material/program/display? Please explain:
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2. What specific pages/portions/scenes illustrate your concerns?
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3. What brought this material/program/display to your attention?
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4. Have you read NBPL's *Collection Development and Maintenance Policy*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Have you read any professional reviews of this title or program? If so, please cite or attach:
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6. What action do you recommend the Library consider regarding this material/program/display?

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7. Are there other titles you recommend the Library include that provide alternative viewpoints or additional information?
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**Contact Information**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Approved by the Library Board: September 10, 2025*