



LIBRARY MATERIAL REVIEW AND RECONSIDERATION POLICY

OUR MISSION

Provide free and equal access to information, ideas, books and technology to educate, engage, and enrich the Stamford community.

OUR VISION

The Ferguson Library helps individuals and organizations achieve success in an effort to build a strong, vibrant, and inclusive community.

OUR FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Intellectual Freedom

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Underlying the Ferguson Library's mission and vision is our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as the belief that intellectual freedom is the cornerstone of our democracy. Our values are reflected in how we serve the community and how we work together.

The Ferguson Library, December 2022, became a book sanctuary library in response to the rising number of book challenges and bans. A book sanctuary provides opportunities to expand access to banned and challenged books as well as provides support and protection for the freedom to read.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

A request for reconsideration and removal of items in the collection, materials, displays or program is limited to individuals residing in Stamford, and submit a **Request for Reconsideration form**, which is available at any library location and on the library's website. This form will also be used to request the removal of a display or a cancellation of a program.

No library material, display or program shall be removed, or will a program be cancelled, 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 of such material, display or program.

Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the display and program policies.

The library prohibits the removal, exclusion or censoring of any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive.

The materials review and reconsideration process for any library material, display or program shall never favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics.

The individual completing a reconsideration form must include specific information about which portion or portions of such material they object to and provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection. The Request for Reconsideration form must include the individual's full legal name, address and telephone number. The CEO reserves the right to consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenged library material.

Reconsideration requests are not confidential patron records under section 11-25 of the general statutes.

Any library material being challenged will remain available in the library according to its catalog record and be available for a resident to reserve, check out or access until a final decision is made by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The library has established a process for individuals with a vested interest to challenge any library and other educational material, display or program. 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 shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the display and program policies.

REVIEW PROCESS

The library CEO, along with appropriate staff, will evaluate the request for reconsideration and will read the challenged material in its entirety, evaluate the challenged material against the collection development and maintenance policy and make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material not later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request. The library CEO shall provide a copy of the library's decision and report to the individual who submitted the form.

The final authority regarding the removal or retention of library materials ultimately resides with the Library Board of Trustees. Any appeal of the decision of the library CEO should be directed in writing to the Library Board of Trustees.

The Library Board of Trustees, after evaluating the challenged material under the collection development and maintenance policy, shall:

(A) consult with (i) the CEO, (ii) the State Librarian, or the State Librarian's designee, (iii) a representative of the cooperating library service unit, as defined in section 11-9e of the general statutes, (iv) the president of the Connecticut Library Association, or the president's designee, and (v) the president of the Association of Connecticut Library Boards, or the president's designee,

(B) deliberate on such request for reconsideration,

(C) provide a written statement of the reasons for the reconsideration or refusal to reconsider the library material, and

(D) provide any final decision that is contrary to the decision of the library CEO.

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 Library CEO shall summarize the previous decision in response to any new request for reconsideration during that three-year period.

Any library employee who, in good faith, implements the policies and procedures described in the 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.

This policy is in accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323 Ferguson Library abides by the following statutory requirements.