

**Raleigh County Public Library**

# Public Policy

Directors Office  
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# Raleigh County Public Library

## Public Policy

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## **Raleigh County Public Library**

### **Public Policy**

**The Raleigh County Public Library system, established in 1924, provides free services and material to individual citizens, to governmental and social agencies, to businesses and industries and to community organizations of Raleigh County. Its resources and services are available to the entire population regardless of age, gender, national origin, disability, economic, ethnic, religious or political status.**

### **Library Mission Statement**

The mission of the Raleigh County Public Library is to assemble, preserve, organize and provide access to educational, recreational and informational material in a variety of formats and technologies. The Library provides a place where inquiring minds may encounter the original, sometimes, unorthodox, and often critical ideas so necessary to a society that depends upon the free circulation of ideas for its health and survival.

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#### **Code of Patron Behavior**

It is the policy of the Board of Trustees of Raleigh County Public Library that all necessary steps will be taken to assure patrons and staff that they will find the facilities of Raleigh County Public Library peaceful, comfortable and safe places in which to read, study, browse and work. To implement this policy, the following Code of Patron Behavior is adopted and shall remain in force until modified by the RCPL Board of Trustees.

1. Respect for the rights of other library users shall prevail at all times. This is the keystone of the Code of Patron Behavior.
2. All library materials must be properly checked out.
3. All briefcases, handbags, carryalls, luggage and backpacks are subject to inspection before the patron leaves the building when the security alarm sounds.
4. Disruptive behavior is prohibited, including, but not limited to the following:
  - a. Destruction or theft of library materials or property.
  - b. Engaging in any activity in violation of federal, state, local, or other applicable law, or library policy.
  - c. Soliciting, canvassing, distributing literature, selling, or begging in the library.
  - d. Threatening, harassing or intimidating language or behavior.
  - e. Weapons.
  - f. A pattern of sleeping.
  - g. Disorderly, disruptive or boisterous conduct.
  - h. Sexual activity, harassment of staff and patrons in the library buildings and on library grounds.
  - i. Use of alcohol or illegal drugs.
  - j. Entry to non-public areas except by invitation or approval of library personnel.
  - k. Loitering: Entrances, doorways and stairs must be kept clear at all times.
  - l. Shaving, bathing, washing and drying clothes in restrooms.
  - m. Use of library equipment to access material that is illegal, i.e. child pornography.
5. Patrons shall not consume food or beverages within the building except in designated areas or while attending special events hosted by the library.
6. Animals may not enter the library except for service animals or for library-sponsored events.
7. Smoking is not permitted inside the Library nor is it permitted within 25 feet of library entrances. Chewing tobacco is not prohibited on library property.
8. Shirt, pants and shoes are required.
9. Patrons carrying cellular telephones in the library are expected to turn the phones off or set to silent or vibrate.
10. Persons whose personal hygiene is a source of disturbance to other patrons or staff and/or interferes with other patrons' use and enjoyment of the library shall be barred from the library building until the source of disturbance is removed.
11. Recreational use of bicycles, skateboards, roller skates, roller blades or any personal vehicle is not allowed on library property. These items may not be brought into the library. The main library does provide a location for bicycle parking.

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Failure to comply with the library's established rules and policies could result in removal from the premises and expulsion from the library for a period of one day to one year, or in arrest or prosecution. Violations could also result in the restriction or termination of library privileges, including the use of library computers and other equipment.

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#### Children in the Library

The Raleigh County Public Library encourages people of all ages to use the Library to take advantage of the available resources, and wishes to make their visit a warm and welcoming experience. For the protection and well being of children and young people who use our library the following policy has been established.

It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians to evaluate any materials accessed by their children. This includes the Internet, books, videos and other resources. Parents should be aware that there may be resources they judge inappropriate for their children and it is the parents' responsibility to evaluate these resources. We encourage parents to accompany their children and work with the Library staff to foster a safe environment.

It is the policy of the Library to provide a safe and appropriate environment for library users of all ages. The Library is, however, a public building with staff trained to provide public library services. The Library is not equipped, nor is it the Library's role to provide long- or short-term daycare for children of any age. Aside from the planned programs, services, and activities designed for specific age groups, the library's staff is not responsible for supervising or tending to the needs of individual users or groups of users. Accordingly, **children under the age of twelve** must always be accompanied by a parent, guardian or responsible childcare provider while in the Library. If a child under the age of twelve is attending a Library program or activity, the parent, guardian, or responsible childcare provider must remain in the Library throughout the program.

In general, parents of any minor children should not leave them unattended for long periods at the Library. Children should be picked up no later than five minutes before closing time. Police will be notified concerning any children left after closing time.

Parents or guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children in the Library, whether or not the parents or guardians are present. The children are expected to act in accordance with the Policies established by the Raleigh County Public Library Board of Trustees. The library does not accept responsibility for the safety, care and supervision of children in the library

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#### Library Cards and Circulation Policy

The Raleigh County Public Library system will provide library services to all residents of the county, to any non-residents who have applied for a library card, and to holders of a statewide borrower's card and Mountain Library Network cards.

#### Acquiring a Card

Adult applicants are required to furnish picture identification with their current address in order to obtain a library card or two of the following:

- Piece of recently cancelled mail received by patron at their current address
- Driver's license
- Social security card (this information will not be retained in the library system however)
- Birth certificate
- Military ID
- Passport
- Check book with current address
- Voter registration card with current address

Youth from the ages of 0 to 17 may obtain a library card; however, a parent/legal guardian is required to sign the library card application accepting cardholder responsibilities for his/her child under 18 years of age. Children who are under the age of 12 will be issued a **Kids Only** card. Their account will be linked to the responsible parent/guardian library card and replacement cost for lost or damaged books will be placed on the responsible party's account. Failure to pay for items lost or damaged will restrict usage on both the **Kids Only** library card AND the adult's library card.

Library cards are issued for one year. At the end of this time, a verification of information is required for continued use.

Inactive accounts in good standing may receive a free replacement card. Customers presenting their worn or damaged card may receive a free replacement card. Patrons who have lost their library card will be charged \$1.00 for a new card (when ID is shown).

The patron, **to whom the card is issued**, is responsible for all materials checked out on the card. For this reason the card should not be loaned to anyone else. Stolen or lost cards must be reported to the Library as soon as possible after the loss.

Library cards are required in order to borrow materials or to use the computers. It is necessary for a patron to provide their card number in order to renew items over the telephone or in person.



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Guest passes may be used up to 5 times on the computers. After 5 uses, guests must provide us with the required documentation needed as outlined above to obtain a regular card.

### **Lending Periods**

New patrons are limited to two items for their first three visits until all items are returned. When all items have been returned after the third visit, the patron will enjoy full library privileges.

The Library lends materials for the following periods:

<b>3 DAYS</b>	Entertainment Digital Media (DVDs) Limit 4 per card
<b>7 DAYS</b>	Nonfiction videos and Series videos
<b>14 DAYS</b>	Books and audio books
<b>14 DAYS</b>	Magazines which circulate at the following branches: Marsh Fork, Sophia and Shady Spring
<b>38 DAYS</b>	Bookmobile materials

Checkout limit is twenty-five (25) items.

### **Renewals**

All print items may be renewed up to three (3) times provided there are no holds/requests for the title. Entertainment Digital Media may be renewed one (1) time. Renewals can be made by accessing the patron's account using their library card number and pin, in person or via the telephone. The patron will be required to provide their library card number for telephone renewals or present their card for renewals at the library.

Renewing items does not reduce or eliminate any overdue fines accrued.

### **Holds**

Ten (10) requests per patron will be taken at one time. Borrowers will be notified by phone or email when their request is available. Patrons will have five days from the date of notification to pick up the requested materials.

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Patrons who have an outstanding fine from another county in the amount of \$25.00 will be unable to place holds or check out material from Raleigh County Public Library until the fine is resolved.

### **Overdue Materials**

Borrowers will be notified via email or telephone 14 days after the due date. If the material is not returned after 28 days from the due date, the borrower is considered in violation of West Virginia Code Section 10-1-22. Borrowing privileges will be suspended until items are returned or paid.

### **Fines**

The library charges fines for overdue materials at the following rates per day: \$1.00  
per day for Entertainment Digital media  
\$.10 per day for all other material

Since book drops are available at all library locations, there is no grace period. Fines for all other library material will accumulate to a maximum of \$3.00 per item. When total fines accumulate to \$3.00, borrowing privileges will be suspended until the fines are paid.

Raleigh County Libraries will check in and return books owned by other MLN libraries, but RCPL is unable to collect fines for other libraries. RCPL reserves the right to refuse to check out items to patrons who owe fines or have overdue items at other MLN libraries.

### **Damaged Materials**

Patrons who return items damaged will be charged the replacement cost of the item.

### **Lost Materials**

Patrons will be charged the full retail price of the missing items.

### **Copy Machine**

For the convenience of RCPL patrons, a copy machine is available at each library location. Copies are 20 cents per page.

### **Printing**

Printing and copying is 20 cents per page.

### **Faxing**

Faxing items will be \$2.00 for the first page and \$1.00 for each subsequent page. There will be no charge for the cover page. For receipt of faxes, the charge will be \$1.00 for the first page and 50 cents for each subsequent page.

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#### Internet Use Policy

The Raleigh County Public Library provides access to information in many formats including printed material, audio-visual items, electronic databases and the Internet. The library does not limit access to materials or attempt to prevent users from viewing materials some individuals may find offensive, however security filters are in place on all computers. The following are not permitted on library computers:

- Viewing of any graphic material considered obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors(US Code 61-8A, WV Code 18-1460 and 18-2256)
- Interactive internet games, FTP or Telnet
- Downloading files or installing software

#### Internet Access and Use

The use of library terminals for the transmission, dissemination and /or duplication of information is regulated by state and federal laws. All library users must comply with these laws. Library policy forbids the access of illegal material on its terminals.

#### Internet Use by Minors

As with other library materials, supervision of a child's use of the Internet is the responsibility of a parent or legal guardian.

#### Computer Workstations at RCPL

1. All library facilities offer the public different types of computer workstations:
  - Kids and Teen computers: 1 Hour Internet and Word Processing computer, available for a maximum of twice a day. A library card is required.
  - Online Public Access Catalog computers. There is no time limit on these and no library card needed.
  - Adult 1 Hour Internet and Word Processing computers, available for a maximum of twice a day. A library card is required.
2. To reserve a 1 Hour Internet and Word Processing computer you must have and use a valid Mountain Library Network card issued in your name.
  - A free library card is available with proper identification at any circulation desk, as is a paid temporary deposit card for out of state visitors.
  - A 15 minute in-state guest pass and 1 hour out of state guest pass will be made available if no card can be obtained. The guest pass may only be used a limited number of times before a library card is required. The guest pass is intended for patrons who are passing through the area, such as tourists, business travelers and military personnel who wish to use the library computers. Guest passes are issued at the reference desk of the main branch.

### Guidelines for Use of Computer Workstations

1. Printouts are .20 cents per page
2. Library staff may limit the number of patrons using the same terminal.
3. Patrons must:
  - not save files on hard drives or C drives;
  - not disconnect any computer cables;
  - not shut off computers;
  - not damage computer equipment or software;
  - not use terminals for illegal activity.
4. Violation of these guidelines may result in the loss of computer access. Unlawful activities will be reported and dealt with in an appropriate manner.

### Wireless Laptop Access

Wireless access is available to users at all library facilities.

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#### Meeting Room Policy

This policy for meeting rooms at Raleigh County Public Library applies to all organized groups, regardless of race, creed, color, disability, sex, political, or religious affiliation. Since the Library is a public institution, meetings should be generally open to the public, except for reasons presented in writing beforehand, provided those reasons are made public and are agreeable to the library. The Library and the Board of Directors neither endorses, approves, nor disapproves the viewpoints of groups meeting in the library.

Meeting rooms for the public shall be reserved on a “first come, first served basis” with priority given to library meetings or programs. No group shall be denied its place to meet once reserved, except for reasons of personal safety or security, or for mutually overriding reasons. Rooms can be reserved for a series of meetings but cannot be reserved for indefinite time periods and are limited to twelve (12) days in a calendar year. The meeting room must be vacated 30 minutes prior to the library’s scheduled closing time.

The groups shall be responsible for any use of library equipment used during a meeting. Cost of any damages must be borne by the group. The group shall request the use of this equipment when they request the room. The kitchen and equipment must be left clean; failure to do so shall be grounds for future denial of meeting room privileges.

Groups wishing to display or use items of historical, antique, artistic, or other item or items of unusual value, shall hold the library blameless for any loss or damage. If such items are used, groups must show proof of proper insurance or other identification. Failure to do so shall be grounds for denying meeting room use.

Publicity for any and all meetings shall be the responsibility of the group. Library staff must approve any publicity material used within the library beforehand.

Programs for minors must have responsible adult sponsors. Cancellations should be made 24 hours in advance.

Groups will adhere to general library policy with regard to parking, alcoholic beverage, soliciting smoking, etc. The Director is authorized to deny permission to use the library rooms to any group that is disorderly, objectionable in any way, or violates these regulations.

Anyone wishing to reserve a meeting room must contact the library at 304-255-0511 x 101 or x 115 to check availability and confirm the reservation.

## **Raleigh County Public Library**

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#### **Bookmobile**

##### **Objectives**

The Raleigh County Public Library's Bookmobile will provide minimum library service to students of Raleigh County Schools and to those patrons who do not live within a reasonable distance of the Main library or one of its branches. The bookmobile will meet general, popular and informational adult reading needs. The bookmobile will provide for the educational, recreational and summertime reading needs and assist in promoting reading and an appreciation of books among school age and preschool children within Raleigh County.

##### **Bookmobile stops**

Whenever possible, bookmobile stops will be located in community centers where a maximum number of patrons may be served. These stops will not be located within two miles of the Main library or its branches or less than one mile from other stops.

Factors to be considered when selecting stops are as follows:

- Potential number of patrons to be served
- Isolation of the potential population to be served
- Potential book circulation
- Special needs of the patrons, i.e. handicapped, geographic location, health of potential patrons
- Prior demands on the bookmobile

All requests for bookmobile stops will be considered, but the Library reserves the right to make decisions based upon the above-referenced factors. An annual list of Bookmobile stops will be published on the Library's website for all interested citizens.

##### **Collection**

The bookmobile will carry sufficient books of popular interest with the emphasis on fiction for the adults who will be served. The bookmobile will carry sufficient books of fiction and non-fiction to meet the needs of the students at the schools to be visited each day. The books will meet the same high standards of quality in content, expression and format as met in the Main and Branch libraries. As continuous rotation is required to keep the collection fresh and interesting and to ensure it meets the needs of its clientele, the bookmobile may draw from the collection of the main library as needed.

##### **School Services**

Minimum service should include registering patrons, loaning materials, accepting requests, reader's advisory and answering reference questions once the bookmobile returns to the Main library.

Bookmobile patrons are subject to the same rules that govern registration, circulation and lost materials at all Raleigh County Public Libraries with the following exceptions:

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- No fines will be charged for patrons who check material out from the Bookmobile; however, fines will still accrue if that same patron checks out material from the Main library or one of the branches.
- Books will circulate for 38 days.
- Books will be renewed automatically for all bookmobile patrons when a run is cancelled because of inclement weather, school closure or mechanical problems on the bookmobile.

When changing schools students are required to notify the bookmobile staff before checking out books at the new school and present the bookmobile staff with a new registration card with their current address.

There will be a limit on the number of books per student checked out at the school. The number of books allowed will be determined by the size of the school, the return rate and the time at the school. Books on subjects in high demand (i.e. holiday books) may have a limit of one per student.

Decision on the books that students are allowed to check out will be made by the principal, teachers or parents, not Bookmobile staff.

Bookmobile staff will send disruptive students back to the classroom or to the principal's office. All discipline problems will be handled by the school.

All students and school personnel using the Bookmobile must have a valid library card to check out material from the Bookmobile.

It will be the school's responsibility to notify Bookmobile staff if there is a conflicting school activity scheduled. If at all possible, the Bookmobile will reschedule the visit.

Time and class schedule will be prepared by the school and submitted to the bookmobile staff prior to the first Bookmobile visit of the school year.

A copy of the Bookmobile policy will be sent to the school in the fall of each year with a supply of library card applications for the new students.

### **Adult Services**

All stops will be scheduled on a three-week basis. Each stop will be a minimum of 15 minutes for house stops and 30 minutes for community stops.

Adult patrons will enjoy a circulation period of 38 days. Adult patrons of the bookmobile will not be subject to fines; however, fines will still accrue if that same patron checks out material from the Main library or one of the branches. If a run is not made due to inclement weather or mechanical failure of the bus, books will be renewed automatically.

For security and safety purposes, as well as quality service, the Bookmobile is operated by two (2) staff members at all times.

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#### **Administration**

The Bookmobile operates under the direct supervision of the Library Director. The Bookmobile operates under the same policy as the rest of the Raleigh County Public Library systems with the exceptions noted in the Bookmobile portion of this policy.



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#### **Collection Development Policy**

The collection development policy is intended to provide guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials which meet the needs of the Raleigh County community. As the community changes, the library will need to reassess and adapt its collection to reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern and newly developed media. The collection development policy will be periodically evaluated and revised as necessary to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

The Raleigh County Public Library supports the objectives outlined in the American Library Association (ALA) standards for public libraries. The library supports the right of an individual to secure information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Materials available in the library present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy. More specifically the objectives are:

- To provide material that will cover the scope of interest, abilities and maturity levels of the community;
- To provide materials that will facilitate growth in functional knowledge, aesthetic values and personal fulfillment;
- To provide background information that will enable patrons to make informed decisions in their daily living in a democratic society.
- To provide information on both sides of opposing issues so that patrons may be more fully informed;
- To provide material representative of various religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their unique contributions to our American experience;
- To provide materials representative with principles above personal opinion, and reason above prejudice; and
- To constantly strive for the selection of materials of the best quality in order to assure a useful collection appropriate for the patrons of this library.

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The Raleigh County Public Library Board of Trustees believes that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy and hereby adopts these two basic documents as official library policy.

### **Library Bill of Rights**

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

### **Freedom to Read Statement**

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

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These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of

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weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

- 2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

- 3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

- 4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

- 5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

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6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

## **Raleigh County Public Library**

### **Public Policy**

#### **Responsibility for Selection of Materials**

The Raleigh County Public Library Board of Trustees is legally responsible for all materials relating to the operation of Raleigh County Public Library. The authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials rests ultimately with the Library Director. Under his/her direction, selection is delegated to the professional library staff. All staff members and the general public are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration.

#### **Criteria for Selection of Materials**

##### **Scope of the Central Library**

The Central Library serves the Beckley community as a whole, in addition to serving as a resource for the three branch libraries. The Central Library places major emphasis on the provision of information. It offers a strong reference collection that supports an extensive and in-depth reference service. A broad choice of circulating print and non-print materials is selected to accommodate the diversity of tastes, reading levels, languages and interests of users of all ages. Scholarly and highly technical or specialized materials are not acquired, but are made available through the Mountain Library Network and Interlibrary Loan.

##### **Scope of the Branch Libraries**

The branch libraries serve specific neighborhoods in the county. The interests and needs of the actual and potential users of the branch are continually evaluated so that each library has a collection reflecting the community that it serves. While each branch serves basic reference needs of its neighborhood with a core of reference materials, it does not duplicate the in-depth sources or special collections of Central. Budget and space limit the branch collection to materials of high interest to its patrons.

##### **Selection Criteria**

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection.

- Popular interest
- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Currency of information
- Accuracy
- Local emphasis
- Readability or ability to sustain interest
- Treatment of subject to age of intended audience
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer or illustrator
- Creative, literary or technical quality
- Critical assessments in a variety of journals
- Format and ease of use
- Circulation as monitored through the automated system
- Cost and availability
- Relationship to existing materials in collection
- Relationship to materials in other area libraries

## **Raleigh County Public Library**

### **Public Policy**

#### **Procedure for Selection**

In selecting materials for purchase, the professional staff evaluates the existing collection and consults professional journals including, but not limited to, Library Journal, School Library Journal, Horn Book and Publisher's Weekly. Multiple copies of in demand new releases are leased through a book leasing plan.

#### **Suggestions for Purchases**

The library encourages input from the community concerning the collection. A suggestion for purchase enables patrons to request that a particular item or subject be purchased by the library. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically added to the collection. It is the library's intent that suggestions for purchase be used to help the library in developing collections which serve the interests and needs of the community.

#### **Weeding**

In order to maintain an active working collection of high quality materials, the library will periodically examine the collection for items that should be withdrawn. Library materials are withdrawn for one or more of the following reasons:

- Obsolescence: subject matter is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
- Damage or poor condition
- Space limitations
- Insufficient use

The last copy of a work is evaluated in terms of its value to the community, with consideration to the following:

- Local interest
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer, illustrator
- Significance as identified in standard bibliographies
- Quality of graphics
- Uniqueness of information for research

Items withdrawn from the collection will be offered first for sale at the Friends of the Library book sales. Proceeds from these sales benefit the Raleigh County Public Library. Items considered too damaged for donation to the Friends book sales will be disposed of or recycled. Items that fail to sell at the Friends book sales will be offered as donation to local charities and organizations such as the Women's Resource Center, child care facilities, etc.

#### **Replacement**

Replacement of materials withdrawn is not automatic. The decision to replace is influenced by:

- Availability of copies in the system
- Popular interest
- Adequacy of coverage in the subject area
- Significance in subject area

## **Raleigh County Public Library**

### **Public Policy**

- Cost and availability

### **Donations**

The library encourages and accepts donations of materials with the understanding that only items that meet the same selection criteria for new material and that fall within the needed subject categories will be added as determined by the professional staff. The library makes the final decision on the use or other disposition of the donation. If the donation is not included in the collection, it will be offered for sale in the Friends of the Library book sales.

Monetary gifts to the collection are welcome and may be designated as memorials. Donations of money designated for the periodicals and newspapers collection are accepted in lieu of actual subscriptions. These contributions offset the high cost of periodical subscriptions and maintain the continuity of subscriptions from year to year. Donors of the funds may suggest subjects or titles to be acquired with their donation, but the library reserves the right of final decision.

The Raleigh County Public Library will provide a letter of receipt to persons making donations to the library; however, the Library is unable to place a monetary value on the donated items. The Library will designate how many of each type of item (i.e. hardcover, paperback, etc.) was donated.



## **Raleigh County Public Library**

### **Public Policy**

#### **Challenging Materials**

The Raleigh County Public Library and the Board of Trustees support the principles of the ALA's Freedom to Read and the Library Bill of Rights. Patrons who find materials in the collection which they consider objectionable are encouraged to make their concerns known to the Library Director, either through informal discussion, or in a more formal manner, by completing a Patron's Request for Review of Library Material.

In cases where the complaint is not satisfied by the initial review process, the Library Director will appoint an ad hoc committee comprised of him/herself, the person responsible for the area and one member of the Board of Trustees will review the work in question, and submit a report on the matter within 30 days to the Library's Board of Trustees with a copy provided to the complainant.

**Raleigh County Public Library**

**Public Policy**

**Patron's Request for Review of Materials**

**Title(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Author(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Publisher** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Did you read/view the title in its entirety?** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Cite the exact section, chapters or passages causing your objection.** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Reasons for objections (be specific).** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Have you read reviews of this material by literary/film/music critics?** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. What do you believe is the theme/purpose of this book?** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Patron Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Patron's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail form to:**

**Director  
Raleigh County Public Library  
221 North Kanawha St.  
Beckley, WV 25801**