



Central Rappahannock Regional  
**Library**

INSPIRING LIFELONG LEARNING  
FOR EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Proudly serving Fredericksburg, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland

# Policy Manual

CRRL  
NEWS:



**librarypoint.org**

540-372-1144

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# **DISCLAIMER**

This Policy Manual contains information and guidelines. It is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. It is not possible to explain every company policy, rule, practice or benefit in this Manual.

You should use it as a first step toward answering questions you have about your position. Should you have any further questions, please seek the guidance of your supervisor or the Director of Human Resources to address any concerns.

This Policy Manual supersedes and replaces all previous policy statements. Therefore, you should understand that you are working under the policies in this current Manual as well as any changes or additions made to it at a later date.

Nothing in this Manual should be considered as creating an express or implied contract or promise concerning the policies or practices that CRRL has implemented or will implement in the future. This Manual is not intended to create any enforceable employee rights or benefits. This Manual is not a contract, nor is it an invitation to a contract.

No CRRL employees work under contract. All employees are employed "at will" for an indefinite period. This means that either you or CRRL may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or notice, except where prohibited by applicable federal or state law.

The procedures, practices, policies and benefits described here may be modified or discontinued by the Library Board from time to time. We will inform you of any changes as they occur.

*Added 7/26/18*

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Central Rappahannock Regional Library (CRRL) is inspiring lifelong learning for everyone in our community.

*Added 8/29/16*



## **1.0 LIBRARY SERVICES**

CRRL serves the counties of Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Westmoreland and the City of Fredericksburg—a service area of 900 square miles, encompassing urban, suburban, and rural areas. The population served is quite varied and expects and requires a wide array of library services. Provision of effective library service to such a diverse population requires careful monitoring of the multiplicity of needs and desires of the residents in the area.

The Library makes recommendations regarding the establishment and the location of stationary outlets based on area demographics, library use patterns, and Virginia's state library standards. Library staff work with jurisdictional staff in identifying appropriate locations. While the jurisdiction is responsible for providing the facility, acceptance of location, layout, design, and square footage rests with the Library Board.

Lobby stops are established based on demographic patterns, professional recommendations, and Virginia standards. Priority is given to childcare and senior sites and to those without ready access to a stationary library outlet, and to the economically, mentally, and physically challenged. Deposit collections may be provided to schools as deemed necessary in case-by-case situations.

Library service is provided during the hours which best meet the needs of the community and through service outlets located at points of maximum convenience to the public (See Appendix F). Access to library service is provided at all times from CRRL's Web site at [LibraryPoint.org](http://LibraryPoint.org).

The Library has a responsibility to inform its constituency of library services available through CRRL. It is CRRL's policy to maintain open,

two-way communication between the Library and the various publics the Library serves. Resources will be committed to so inform library users, non-users, staff, volunteers, and area officials and agencies and to promote all citizens' use of the Library.

## **1.1 ACCESS**

CRRL is dedicated to making information, classes, events, and facilities accessible to everyone. No CRRL employee shall unlawfully discriminate against a customer or a fellow employee because of sex, age, disability, perceived disability, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic.

Information is provided equally to all members of the community regardless of the implied or stated purpose of the request. Users of all ages and circumstances will be treated with equal attention and sensitivity to their particular needs. The Library strives to provide educational and instructional opportunities without charge to the community.

## **1. 2 PUBLIC INPUT**

CRRL encourages the public to express opinions about library services. CRRL conducts surveys (e.g., American Library Association Output Measures) as a means of obtaining opinions about library services.

## **1.21 Public Participation At Board Meetings**

The Library Board welcomes citizen participation concerning library service and provides an opportunity for such involvement during regular meetings of the Board. Citizens may request to address the Board at the appropriate time allowed on the agenda for public comment.

Comment is limited to three (3) minutes per citizen, and if a leader or representative of an organization they are limited to five (5) minutes. Board members may ask questions of the speakers. Citizens offering comment must be residents of or own property within the CRRL service area. Comment must be on legitimate matters of library business. Opportunity for citizen comment should be used to improve delivery of library service in a positive way. No citizen may engage in political statements, personal attacks on members of the Library Board, staff, or any other person; nor is any person entitled to use abusive language or discuss matters outside the purview of the authority of the Library Board.

Matters brought before the Board will be taken under advisement to allow time for due deliberation. Action on such matters is not taken at the time of presentation to the Board. Speakers will be notified of the Board's decision within seventy-five (75) days. If a matter requires a longer period of time for resolution, the speaker will be notified of the interim status. Written statements may be submitted for consideration by the Board.

*Updated 8/13/18*

## **1.3 RULES OF CONDUCT FOR LIBRARY CUSTOMERS**

CRRL is committed to maintaining an environment that is conducive to all users' exercise of their constitutionally protected right to receive information. The use of the Library or its services may be denied for due cause. Such causes include but are not limited to failure to return materials or to pay penalties, destruction of library property, disturbance of other customers, or any other objectionable conduct on library premises.

If library staff on reasonable grounds believe that library property has not been properly checked out, customers shall allow upon request a CRRL employee or agent to inspect their belongings.

It is the policy of CRRL to maintain a safe and healthy environment in which library users and staff can be free from harassment, intimidation, and threats to their safety and well being. Customers shall not exhibit rude or disorderly behavior while on CRRL premises by making undue noise, physical disruption, being intoxicated, being verbally abusive, engaging in sexual misconduct or harassment, stalking, voyeurism, or otherwise interfering with another's use and enjoyment of the Library.

Customers shall not enter unauthorized areas on library premises and shall not enter library premises when banned.

All customers of the Library shall comply with applicable public health codes and regulations.

In accordance with regulations established by the fire marshall, smoking and use of any electronic cigarettes and vaporizers, or physical tobacco products are prohibited within CRRL facilities and on the grounds.

The Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, or any professional staff member has the authority and responsibility to deny library use for any such cause. The following steps may be taken: Staff may issue a verbal warning, with the statement that the person(s) will be asked to leave if the behavior in question does not cease; staff may request that the person(s) leave the Library.

Any time a staff member feels that a customer's behavior is threatening to the safety of other customers or staff members, the staff member in charge will call the police immediately.

*Updated 2/13/17*

### **1.31 Juvenile Customers**

In the case of a juvenile causing a disruption which interferes with customers or staff members, staff may elect to call a parent or caregiver and/or bar the juvenile from the Library unless accompanied by a parent. A staff member may intervene with a child in order to prevent injury or property damage.

CRRL encourages caregivers to remain with young children and to pick up children promptly when the Library closes. The Library assumes no responsibility for children left unattended on library premises.

If young children are left unattended at the Library for long periods of time while the Library is open, and in the judgment of library staff there is harm or risk of harm to the child's health or safety, staff will attempt to reach a caregiver. If no caregiver can be reached, library staff will contact local law enforcement personnel.

When young children are left unattended after library hours, library staff will attempt to reach a caregiver and will remain with the child for up to thirty minutes. After thirty minutes, library staff may contact local law enforcement personnel.



### **1.32 Possession Of Weapons**

CRRL, in order to achieve a safe and productive environment for library customers and staff, strongly urges that firearms or other weapons [as designated in subsection A of § 18.2-308, Code of Virginia] or other dangerous articles not be carried on any library property. The provisions of this section shall not apply to persons who carry such weapons or weapons as part of the individual's employment or as part of a CRRL-sponsored class.

## **1.4 USE OF COMPUTER RESOURCES**

Central Rappahannock Regional Library provides access to computer equipment, classes, events, databases, and the Internet, giving the opportunity to become acquainted with state-of-the-art technology to access the broadest range of information, information available only through this medium, and time-sensitive information for a community of diverse individuals. CRRL provides access to global information resources to promote cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities for every member of the community, and to provide for an open exchange of ideas by all members of the community. Not all sources provide accurate, complete, or current information. Users are urged to be good information consumers, critically evaluating all information found on the Internet.

Because electronic networks and equipment encompass factors which may be beyond the Library's control, CRRL assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from the use of its Web server or from its connections to other Internet services. If customers experience problems, CRRL staff will make every effort to troubleshoot or retrieve information.

All users of the Library's computer resources are expected to use these resources responsibly. Parents and legal guardians are urged to provide guidance to their own children. Children's librarians are trained and eager to advise parents who request help in finding appropriate sites or designing search strategies to locate materials for their children.

CRRL provides an Internet filtering tool on computers accessible to the public. Customers may enable unfiltered access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Computer resources may not be used for the following purposes:

- Violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws, ordinances, rules, or regulations
- Viewing or possession of obscenity or child pornography
- For customers under the age of 18, viewing material that is harmful to juveniles
- Destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the Library
- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to any computing, information, or communications devices or resources
- Disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications
- Unauthorized reproduction of copyrighted material or materials protected in other ways such as trademarks, licenses, or brand names
- Violation of any computer systems security
- Unauthorized use of computer accounts, access codes, or network identification numbers assigned to others
- Violation of software license agreements
- Violation of another person's or party's privacy
- Any and all other matters which the Library, in its sole discretion and in consideration of the best interests of the public, determines to be unacceptable purposes

Failure to comply with this policy and these regulations may result in denial of access to the Library's computers and/or the Library as follows:

- Initial warning
- Denial of access to computers
- Denial of access to the Library

## **1.5 COLLECTION MANAGEMENT**

### **1.51 Purpose Of Selection**

Library materials are chosen to serve the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the entire community. The primary goal is to provide the best possible collection with the financial resources available. The Library strives to create an attractive, up to date, balanced collection representing all fields of knowledge and all sides of issues in a neutral, unbiased manner, as budgets, availability of materials, and space permit.

Library staff select materials covering a wide range of ideas, issues, and lifestyles, in a variety of formats. Due to this diversity, there will always be some materials that appeal or do not appeal to specific individuals. The existence of a particular viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the Library's policy of intellectual freedom, not an endorsement of that particular point of view.

The Library encourages free expression and free access to ideas, both essential elements in a democratic society, and does not knowingly discriminate in its material selection regarding age, race, beliefs, or affiliations of the author or producer. CRRL has adopted the American Library Association statements on these principles. (Appendices A–C.)

## **1.52 Responsibility For Selection (Legal And Delegated)**

The Executive Director operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Library Board and in turn delegates to the professional staff the responsibility for selection of books, for the development of the collection, and for access to information in electronic format. Every member of the professional staff participates in the selection process so that the community may benefit from a variety of subject expertises. The Library welcomes from the public recommendations for purchase, but cannot guarantee purchase of any suggestion.

## **1.53 Criteria For Selection**

The following factors will be taken into consideration when selecting items for the collection:

- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Current and projected demand
- Availability and suitability of physical format for library purposes
- Relevance to existing subject coverage in the collection
- Reviews from library professional journals, subject-specific sources, and popular publications
- Clarity, readability, and ease of use
- Timeliness or permanence of material
- Accuracy and authenticity
- Literary merit and inclusion in standard bibliographies and indices
- Current and historical significance
- Authority and reputation of the author, publisher, and/or producer
- Local authorship or production
- Initial and ongoing costs
- Overall quality
- Technical aspects of audiovisual materials
- Regional availability and accessibility
- Space and maintenance requirements
- User interface and content of electronic products
- Online, network, and remote access capabilities

- System resource demands (hardware and personnel)
- Vendor training, support guides, and technical support
- Lease or ownership of electronic products

An item need not meet all criteria to be included in the collection.

Selection of materials and information is not restricted by the possibility that children or adolescents may obtain material their parents consider inappropriate.

Because of the volume of material produced today, librarians cannot read, review, or purchase all material or information. Although the selection of material is most commonly made on the basis of reviews and standard bibliographies, many valuable works are never reviewed; therefore, librarians sometimes select material or information using their professional judgment to assess the quality of work and its importance for the community.

## **1.54 Materials Requiring Additional Criteria**

### **A. Materials for Children or Adolescents**

Materials must be available on a wide range of reading and interest levels appropriate for the wide age range of the juvenile and adolescent audiences. Responsibility for the reading, listening or viewing of library materials by minors rests with the parents or legal guardians, and not with the library staff.

### **B. Curriculum-Related Materials**

CRRL accepts responsibility, within space and budgetary constraints, for providing supplementary reading and research materials for students. Textbooks may be added to the collection in areas in which they may be the best source of information on the subject. They are not selected for CRRL collections to satisfy the requirements of a specific school course.

### **C. Special Collections**

The Library is committed to developing certain special collections in response to identified community needs. Among these are the Virginiana, Large Print, Juvenile Literature, Adult Literacy, Law, and Subregional Library collections.

#### **Virginiana Collection**

CRRL develops a non-circulating collection of materials as a means of preserving the local history and the community heritage of the service area. Genealogical materials collected are intended to aid in researching families with connections to the region.



The Library will facilitate use of this collection for those without easy access to the Headquarters facility by photocopying articles and by placing circulating copies of current Virginiana material at the branches when budget considerations allow. Librarians will rely on interlibrary loan to respond to customers' requests to borrow items CRRL does not circulate or include in the Virginiana collection.

### **Large Print Collection**

The Library offers large print materials as a means of extending library service to individuals with low vision. Selection is based on broad appeal as well as standing order plans of newly released titles.

### **Juvenile Literature Collection**

The Library maintains a non-circulating collection of juvenile books to support children's classes and events.

### **Adult Literacy Collection**

Cognizant of the continuing adult illiteracy problem in the service area, the Library maintains and develops a collection of high-interest, low-reading-level materials for adult new readers.

## **Law Collection**

The law collection is supported by the imposition of an assessment fee placed on each civil action filed in the circuit and general district courts of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, and Stafford in accordance with §42.1-70, Code of Virginia. The collection reflects research needs of local attorneys, as well as the general public. It includes electronic resources, as well as a collection of standard and popular works for the general reader on such topics as divorce, landlord-tenant law, and small business law.

## **Subregional Library for the Visually and Physically Impaired**

CRRL operates a subregional library for the visually and physically impaired to facilitate library service to all customers. Materials are selected by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) on the basis of broad general appeal. Materials consist mainly of biographies, best sellers, and general fiction and include some juvenile and young adult titles. CRRL automatically receives one copy of each new release from the NLS. (Braille materials are available through ILL.) Retention and withdrawal of these materials from the collection is prescribed by NLS.

## **D. Periodicals**

The Library purchases periodicals in print and electronic formats and in searchable databases of periodical articles in electronic format to

provide current material not yet available in book form, to supplement the book collection, to provide recreational reading, to use as research tools by staff and public, to serve as collection development tools, and to provide a collection of professional literature for staff continuing education.

Criteria used in the selection of periodicals include reputation for authoritativeness, access through standard indices, local interest, and demand.

## **E. Formats**

Library materials may be purchased in a variety of formats. Popular titles may be selected in both hardback and paperback editions, as well as spoken word, or as digital resources. The physical formats can be lost and are susceptible to damage from high circulation; digital resources cannot be damaged or lost by customers and do not incur any overdue fees.

*Updated 5/15/17*

## **F. Musical Recordings**

The Library maintains a collection of recorded music for adults, young adults, and children. Factors to be considered in the selection of recordings include popular demand, composition, performance, reputation of the artist, quality of interpretation, and quality of recording.

## **G. Films**

The Library is committed to the development of a circulating film collection in the appropriate format. Films with anticipated demand and value to the collection are acquired for adults, young adults, and children. When available, closed-caption films or descriptive videos are purchased to meet the Library's commitment to serve the visually and hearing impaired.

Customer requests for specific titles and donations will be considered if the film is appropriate to the collection, as funding allows. The collection will be developed according to the standards stated in the general materials policy. Titles are considered for addition on their merit and are neither purchased nor excluded because of their MPAA rating. Any rating information included on the packaging is left as is. The Library does not add any other type of rating labels, nor does the Library monitor access to audiovisual materials. The Library subscribes to the philosophy outlined in the American Library Association *Freedom to View* and *Library Bill of Rights* documents. (Appendices C and A)

The Library collects a limited number of films with public performance rights to support library programming.

## **H. Spoken-Word Recordings**

The Library maintains a collection of unabridged spoken word recordings, such as CD audiobooks, as well as a downloadable audio collection. Book-CD packages are purchased for the juvenile and young adult collections based on quality of the title, previous purchase in book form, and quality of recording.

*Updated 5/15/17*

## **I. Gift Books**

The Library accepts unsolicited materials with the understanding that they become the permanent property of the Library, and their disposition is at the discretion of the Library. For inclusion in the collection, gift materials must meet the same selection criteria as purchased material. If gift material of marginal value is offered, processing costs and optimum use of shelf space are considered before material is accepted. While the Library will not set a value on gifts, it will issue, for tax purposes, a receipt indicating the number and kinds of materials received. Materials not selected for the collection will be placed in the FOL booksale.

Cash gifts will be accepted and spent in the general areas indicated by the donor, but the actual selection of titles will be made by CRRL librarians.

## **J. Technology**

The decision to purchase technology is made on the basis of such factors as appropriateness of format, availability and relationship of subject matter to the existing collection, demand by the public, and budget considerations.

*Updated 5/15/17*

## **K. Electronic Information Resources**

CRRL collects material in electronic format that meets the Library's criteria for authoritativeness, currency, and demand. Additional criteria for selecting electronic resources include appropriateness of the electronic format to the information provided, ease of use, and price. CRRL will apply its selection criteria to information, databases, and applications chosen for inclusion on CRRL's networked PCs and Web site. Many selected resources enable direct connectivity to the Internet; therefore, some information accessed electronically may not meet CRRL's selection criteria.

## **1.55 Free Distribution Of Multiple Copies**

Information presented to the Library for distribution must conform to CRRL materials selection criteria. CRRL distributes free brochures as a public service to disseminate current information of popular interest, not readily available in other forms or from other sources.

The following priorities will serve as guidelines:

- Information generated by local, state, and federal government agencies
- Civic, educational, historical, and cultural ephemera, such as tax forms, campaign literature, calendars, and adult education and performing arts announcements and schedules
- Health and welfare information
- High-interest consumer information
- Travel, leisure, and recreational brochures

The availability of an item does not constitute a CRRL endorsement of any theory, idea, or policy contained therein. Varying and opposing viewpoints on issues are welcomed for distribution as space permits. Quality of writing style and format may also be considered in accepting materials for distribution.

Ultimate responsibility for accepting items rests with the Executive Director.

## **1.56 Maintenance Of Collection**

Evaluation of the materials already in the Library collection is as important to collection development as the selection of new materials. Library collections are not static; the collections date quickly in many subject areas; and the shelf and storage space available in any library is finite and new items are being added continually.

In addition to assessing materials for their physical condition and their use, collection management staff use community input, as well as statistical tools such as circulation reports, collection turnover rates, statistical samplings, collection analysis software, and new materials counts to determine how the collection is being used and how it should be modified to best respond to customer needs.

Through ongoing quantitative and qualitative assessments, the Library monitors the collection to ensure that it is serving its public.

Continual review of collections supports the needs of library users, providing accurate and current materials for information seekers. Weeding appropriately frees shelf space for actively circulating titles and encourages the browsing customer to perceive the Library as a source of relevant, up-to-date materials.

The Library Administration Center includes a distribution and processing facility that allows the Library to maintain appealing branch collections by housing less frequently used materials, such as holiday collections and older backlist titles, in this offsite location. Daily courier service makes these materials available to fill requests. The public branch spaces are dedicated to popular and current materials, displays, and feature appealing, user-friendly layouts.

*Updated 6/10/24*



## **A. System-wide Collection and Duplication**

CRRL develops a single collection for use by all customers, shared among all of its branches. All circulating materials are available for use by all branches, moving to fill customer holds, or by staff transfers which place items in the branch collections where data indicates they are most needed. Decisions are frequently made to purchase multiple copies of a popular item, or to ensure that copies are readily available in several branches at the same time. As demand lessens, excess copies are withdrawn.

Works may be purchased in multiple formats, in response to reader demand. These formats may include print hardback, ebook, audiobook, downloadable audio, large print, and paperback.

*Updated 5/15/17*

## **B. Replacement**

Materials withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear may be considered for replacement, based on demand for the specific title. Additional or other titles on the subject may be purchased if more current information is available.

*Updated 5/15/17*

## **C. Periodicals Retention**

The Library maintains back files of print periodicals deemed to have demonstrated potential for circulation or research value. The Library provides access to comprehensive databases of periodicals articles

which include extensive back files in electronic format. The digital magazine collection, purchased in conjunction with the Library of Virginia, also includes backfile issues.

*Updated 5/15/17*

#### **D. Withdrawals**

Material may be withdrawn from the collection for one or more of the following reasons:

- Irreparable damage
- Obsolescence
- Insufficient use
- Space availability

It is the policy of the Library to offer discarded materials that are not irreparably damaged to the Friends of the Library to be included in their book sales. Withdrawn materials may occasionally be offered to community organizations to be distributed for reuse, upon request. Obsolete and damaged materials are donated for recycling.

#### **E. Reconsideration**

Once material has been accepted for the collection, it will not be removed at the request of those who disagree with it unless it can be shown to be in violation of CRRL selection policies.

A request for reconsideration of any material included in the Library's collection may be made following Library procedures. Requests may

only be made by a customer of CRRL with an active library account, who is a resident in CRRL's service area.

The Collection Services Coordinator will research the title in question, relying on reviews, their expertise, and the expertise of other librarians. The requestor will be notified in writing of the Library's decision to keep or to discard the title in question. The process may take up to six weeks, and the item will remain available during this time. Any appeal of this decision must be made in writing to the Library Board within 14 days.

*Updated 6/10/24*

## **1.57 Area Resources**

CRRL service area is rich in library resources. The proximity of the University of Mary Washington, Germanna Community College, National Park Service, and Mary Washington Hospital libraries afford CRRL customers access to specialized and scholarly collections which are beyond the scope and budget of CRRL.

CRRL actively seeks collaborative partnerships and reciprocal borrowing agreements with other libraries. CRRL remains committed to networking with all libraries throughout the Commonwealth.

Interlibrary loan services are provided to all library users following standard library procedures. Interlibrary loan is provided, regardless of the requesting customer's age or purpose, in the shortest possible response time. The customer is responsible for return postage, any additional fees that the lending library may charge including those for loss and damage, and any insurance coverage.

*Updated 6/10/24*

## **1.6 CIRCULATION**

### **1.61 Registrations**

Central Rappahannock Regional Library serves the counties of Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland and the City of Fredericksburg. Citizens residing in or owning a business and/or property in these jurisdictions may apply for a library card. Students and teachers who live outside the service area are eligible to receive cards if they are affiliated with a school within CRRL region. All library cards to the above-mentioned are free of charge.

Applicants for a library card must provide identification according to library procedure and must agree to abide by all library rules and regulations and to give immediate notification of any change of address. No one is denied a library card on the basis of race, creed, national origin, handicapping condition, political affiliation, marital status, age, sex, or sexual orientation.

## **1.62 Non-Resident Borrower**

Persons not residents of the area served by CRRL may purchase CRRL cards at the yearly [from the month of application] rate of \$30.00 per family. Senior citizens (65 years or older) will be charged a \$15.00 out-of-region fee.

CRRL maintains reciprocal borrowing agreements with Caroline, Culpeper, Fauquier, Orange, and Prince William counties.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **1.63 Loan Period**

All materials [except videos and DVDs] are loaned for a 2-week period. Videos and DVDs are loaned for a 7-day period. Most library materials may be renewed if other customers are not waiting for them.

## **1.64 Number of Items Loaned**

There is no restriction on the total number of items that an individual may borrow, although restrictions may be placed on any materials in high demand so as to meet the needs of the greatest number of users.



## **1.65 Overdue Materials**

Central Rappahannock Regional Library notifies customers in writing of overdue materials. This notice is sent when library materials are 14 days past due.

The Library does not charge overdue fees for library materials. If a customer fails to renew or return materials within 90 days after the due date, they will receive a bill for replacement costs of materials still outstanding and will be encouraged to clear their borrowing records.

Borrowing privileges are suspended for customers owing \$100.00 or more until records are cleared. In an effort to recover materials, CRRL may refer delinquent accounts to a collection agency. Any processing fees will be charged in the event of such referrals. The Executive Director also may, in consultation with the Commonwealth's Attorneys, take appropriate legal action to recover overdue materials from customers.

*Updated 12/12/22  
(Implemented 1/1/23)*

## **1.66 Lost or Damaged Materials**

Customers are required to make restitution based on the replacement cost of lost or damaged material. CRRL is not responsible for damage to any equipment which may occur while using library material. Parents/Guardians/Custodians are responsible for lost or damaged material checked out by their child.

*Updated 12/12/22*

## **1.67 Equipment Loans**

Borrowers of all library equipment are required to fill out borrowing forms and to verify all information with identification.

## **1.7 CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

Library circulation records, registration records, and any other records identifying library users are confidential in nature per Virginia Code § 2.2-3705.7. Library service records are for the sole purpose of maintaining and conserving public property and are not to be used for identifying the titles or kinds of material or equipment used by individual library customers.

## **1.71 Receipt And Response To Judicial Process**

CRRL complies with all Constitutional judicial process while preserving customer confidentiality to the extent allowed by law. Any form of judicial process will be provided immediately to the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, and library counsel for action. No other staff member, except as specifically authorized by the Executive Director, should release library or customer information.

No member of the library staff is authorized to respond substantively to any form of judicial process or to provide any customer-specific or library business information, in writing or in oral form, to a law enforcement officer or other person.

## **1.8 ELECTRONIC MONITORING AND VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE**

While it is the policy of the Library to respect the privacy of customers pursuant to this state's library confidentiality statute, it is also the responsibility of the Library to protect its electronic systems from unauthorized or criminal use and to make appropriate referrals to federal, state and local law enforcement authorities.

CRRL monitors its system for management purposes but does not monitor on a routine basis the use of the Library's electronic system by customers or staff. Voluntary disclosures of content and other information may be made in limited circumstances. The Library reserves the right to:

- Monitor as necessary to manage and to protect its systems from unauthorized or criminal use, and
- Make voluntary disclosures to federal, state and local law enforcement and national security authorities as deemed appropriate by library management and counsel.

## **1.9 FAX SERVICES**

Fax machines are provided at CRRL branches for use by the public and for the purpose of providing equal access of library materials in the most timely manner possible to library customers throughout the system. No fee will be charged to customers requesting service. Library staff will determine the appropriateness and necessity of faxing materials.

While CRRL attempts to guard customers' privacy, it cannot guarantee privacy of faxed materials received and is not responsible for faxed materials not received.

## **1.10 NOTARY SERVICE**

Library staff commissioned as notaries public are available during designated hours at CRRL branches at no charge to the general public. For-profit businesses will be charged the maximum allowable rate pursuant to Virginia Code § 47.1-19 and § 47.1-20, as amended from time-to-time.

*Updated 6/9/2025*

*Implemented 9/3/2025*



## **1.11 RESEARCH SERVICE**

Providing research service in a library is a critical responsibility. The Library monitors the information needs of the community to provide appropriate resources and services. CRRL evaluates the effectiveness of its research resources and services in meeting the information needs of users and potential users.

Materials and resources in the research collection reflect demonstrated and anticipated needs. It is library policy to provide the public with access to current, authoritative information using the most appropriate means.

Research services consist of personal assistance provided to a user in pursuit of information through appropriate formats. This service is to ensure the optimum use of information resources through interaction with the user.

Information is provided equally to all members of the community regardless of the implied or stated purpose of the request. Users of all ages and circumstances will be treated with equal attention and sensitivity to their particular needs.

Customers may request research service in person at Library outlets during all hours that the Library is open, by telephone, by postal mail, or via e-mail and/or live chat through the Ask-A-Librarian service on the Library's Web site. Staffing patterns are to reflect the needs of the users.

## **1.12 MATERIALS SECURITY**

CRRL reserves the right to inspect all parcels. CRRL also reserves the right to check and hold customer identification for the purpose of enhancing materials' security.

## **1.13 RESEARCH**

The librarian may request to hold user identification (driver's license or other photo ID or valid library card) if a customer wishes to use items from the ready-research shelves which the research staff has judged from past experience to be at high risk for theft or other loss. Librarians may also request an ID if a customer wishes to remove a research item from the immediate vicinity of the ref desk to another part of the Library.

If the customer is unable to provide an ID, the customer may, at the discretion of the librarian, leave their name and phone number.

Items in high demand may have a time limit placed on their use at the discretion of the research librarian.

## **1.14 VIRGINIANA**

Customers wishing to enter the Virginiana Room may be required to provide the research librarian with their names and phone numbers or with identification acceptable to the librarian.

## **1.15 EQUIPMENT**

The librarian may request a customer's ID to be held while the customer uses headphones or other equipment in the Library.

## **1.16 MEETING ROOMS**

### **1.161 Availability**

Designated library meeting rooms are available for not-for-profit gatherings of educational, civic, cultural, and charitable purpose, as well as governmental groups and organizations, artistic performances and community members, on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliation of the individual or groups requesting use. Additionally, meeting rooms are available to for-profit businesses on a limited basis, and a usage fee may be charged by the Library.

The Library makes these facilities available to promote cultural and educational opportunities and to promote an open exchange of ideas in the community. The fact that an individual/group is permitted to use a room does not in any way constitute an endorsement by the Library of the individual/group's policies or beliefs. All meetings and events held in our meeting rooms are open to the general public.

The Library strives to comply with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act by making all buildings, classes and events accessible. If any aids are needed, groups must make arrangements with CRRL in advance of any scheduled meeting.

Programs and projects sponsored by the Library, Library Board or the Friends of Central Rappahannock Regional Library for the benefit of the Library will have first priority. The Library reserves the right to change or cancel a reservation for such purposes.

Rooms are not available for commercial profit-making purposes and events, private parties, or where, in the judgment of the Library Director,

disorder is likely to occur. The rooms are available for non-profit fundraising programs with permission from the Library Director.

Tuition and fees may be charged for classes sponsored by an accredited educational facility. Fees to cover the cost of materials and supplies may be charged by other public agencies with the permission of the Library Director. No admission may be charged for performances without permission from the Executive Director.

The meeting rooms are available for use during those hours the Library is open. Special arrangements may be made for after-hours use of the theater at the Fredericksburg Branch. Nonprofits, non-commercial groups and organizations, and community members are not charged a fee for use of the room and bookings are made on a first-come, first-served basis. For-profit businesses are required to pay a fee to reserve specified meeting spaces (as determined by the Library) and are able to use other meeting rooms with no fee. For-profit businesses will have a reduced reservation period with an extended reservation period for performances.

Confirmation of a room reservation an individual/group constitutes acknowledgment and agreement to abide by Library policies and procedures which, if violated, could result in denial of room use. **Individuals and/or groups/organizations agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Central Rappahannock Regional Library from and against any and all claims, demands, losses, liabilities, costs, and expenses (including attorney's fees) arising out of or in connection with an individual's or group's/organization's use of the facility.**

The Library reserves the right to limit an individual's/group's regular use of a room to once a month in order to accommodate the needs of other individuals/group's. The Library reserves the right to dismiss an

individual/group from the room and from further use of the room for disorderly conduct or for failing to adhere to room use policies and regulations.

*Updated 6/10/24*

*Updated 6/9/2025*

*Implemented 9/3/2025*



## **1.162 Privileges And Responsibilities**

Depending on the nature of the activity, CRRL may require a current Certificate of Insurance (COI). CRRL will notify individual organizations of any such requirements.

Food and drinks may be served. If alcoholic beverages are planned, the required state permit must be procured and displayed during the meeting/event.

The Library will provide equitable access to and use of such library-owned equipment and cleaning supplies as are available for use by the public.

The individual/group is responsible for leaving the room in the condition in which it was found. If an individual/group fails to return a room to the condition in which it was found, the Library reserves the right to charge a clean-up fee.

Each individual/group is responsible for clean-up and disposal of all food remains after the meeting. If an event is catered, it is the individual's/group's responsibility to assure that the caterers promptly remove all food and restore the room to its appropriate condition. Individuals/groups are financially responsible for any damages to the premises or furniture incurred during use of the room.

The Library cannot assume responsibility for private property brought into the building.

The Library must be notified 48 hours in advance of cancellations so that rooms can be made available to others and failure to do so could result in future reservations being canceled.

During adverse weather conditions, individuals/group should check local resources, including the Library's website, for closing information. All

meetings scheduled during the closed times at any library outlet are canceled. In other emergencies, all efforts will be made to notify organizations scheduled to use the meeting rooms.

*Updated 6/10/24*

*Updated 6/9/2025*

*Implemented 9/3/2025*

## **1.17 LIBRARY CLASSES AND EVENTS**

CRRL offers classes and events to the community as part of its mission to enhance individual and community life and to promote community awareness of library resources and services. CRRL staff present live programming for the community and produce library classes and events in appropriate distribution formats, including, but not limited to, audio, video, Web casting, and cable casting media, in furtherance of the Library's mission to distribute information in a multiplicity of formats.

CRRL looks favorably upon requests from community groups, associations, and businesses to present programs in the Library which meet the informational, recreational, charitable, and cultural needs of the public. Presenters are selected on the basis of community interest and proven ability to conduct programs. Business may not be conducted at library classes and events although distribution of business cards is permitted. All library classes and events are provided free of charge.

Library sponsored programming will adhere to standards of quality, balance, timeliness, suitability, and relevance to community needs as expressed in CRRL's mission and its collection and programming policies.

## **1.18 COOPERATION WITH OTHER LIBRARIES**

Central Rappahannock Regional Library, in the interest of providing its customers with materials and information covering the range of educational, research, professional/work related, cultural, and recreational needs, actively pursues both formal and informal cooperative agreements with other libraries. Such agreements may include, but are not limited to, reciprocal borrowing arrangements.

The Library may also join in consortia such as Lyrasis and MALiA (Mid-Atlantic Library Alliance). Such agreements could provide for interlibrary loan, cooperative materials purchasing, jointly produced library instruction classes, continuing education, or cooperative use and procurement of new technology. Such cooperation must be based on a partnering library's being adequately funded to meet its mission to the community.

## **1.19 COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES & PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EVENTS**

In furtherance of its mission to collect and make available to the community educational, informational, cultural, charitable, and recreational resources that will enhance the quality of life of area residents—and to increase public awareness of those resources—the Library actively seeks opportunities to partner with other agencies and organizations to participate in community events. The Library will cooperate as fully as possible with other community organizations and agencies to determine and meet the needs of the community.

## **1.20 PUBLIC LIBRARY–SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS**

The Library's relationship with the school system is based on the premise that the schools and the Library are partners in education. Every effort will be made to keep the educational community informed of the Library's services and to encourage that community's full use of library resources. The Library's services available to schools include but are not limited to Classroom Carryouts, school booktalks, and in-service training for teachers. Services are offered within budget constraints, after consultation with school personnel, and as deemed appropriate by the Library. School curriculum needs are a factor in collection development, although the Library does not attempt to duplicate educational materials or programs. Multiple copies of a title may be borrowed by teachers if available, although the Library does not purchase multiple copies intended for classroom use.

## **1.21 DISPLAYS**

Library space for displaying educational, intellectual, artistic, cultural, and charitable materials shall be granted to individuals and groups within the Library's service area. Such displays may promote interest in the use of books or other library materials and information services, and in the area and its citizens.

Exhibit space will be made available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use. CRRL will endeavor to present a broad spectrum of opinion and a variety of viewpoints. The Library will not refuse an exhibit because of controversial content or because of the beliefs or affiliations of those whose work is represented. The extent to which and the manner in which exhibits will be publicized is at the sole discretion of the Library.

The Library reserves the right to limit the size, number of items, the schedule of any display, and the frequency with which the artist or organization may have a display. CRRL reserves the right to refuse a display which in the discretion of the Executive Director may incite hatred and/or violence within the community. Mounting a display does not constitute an endorsement by the Library. The Library assumes no responsibility for damage or theft of any exhibit or display material.

The Library retains the right to deny the space to any user whose planned use of the space does not comply with these terms. Violation of these terms may result in denial of future access to the space.

## **1.22 BULLETIN BOARD/POSTERS**

Central Rappahannock Regional Library provides a community bulletin board service at the Headquarters facility and in its stationary outlets as a means of distributing information for community awareness.

The Library, at its discretion, will provide reasonable space for announcements and notices of programs and activities sponsored by civic, cultural, educational, and other groups. Notices of interest to the community may be posted only in designated areas.



## **1.23 PETITIONING, SOLICITATION, OR DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE**

It is the policy of CRRL that petitioning, solicitation, or distribution of literature or leaflets, canvassing, or similar types of appeals by members of the public (other than on behalf of CRRL) are not allowed in the Library. Rare exceptions, under unusual circumstances only, may be made for specific projects with the express approval of the Executive Director.

Groups or individuals who wish to petition, solicit, canvass, or distribute literature to the public on library parking lots, sidewalks, or other grounds surrounding the Library buildings may do so if they do not impede access by the public to the building or interfere with use of the building, such as through excessive noise.

As part of the Library's responsibility to help inform the public, areas will be provided for the display and distribution of literature related to campaigns for public office.

## **2.0 FISCAL POLICIES**

CRRL establishes fiscal policies to ensure fiscal responsibility, appropriate use of funds in support of the Library's mission and goals, and compliance with appropriate laws.

*Updated 6/9/25*

## **2.1 AUDIT POLICY**

CRRL will have an annual audit to be completed by an external auditor. The external auditor will issue a document in compliance with all government auditing standards promulgated by the Government Accounting Standards Board and any applicable laws of the Commonwealth. The audit is filed annually with the Auditor of Public Accounts and a copy is sent to the chief administrative officer of each funding jurisdiction. It is forwarded to the Library of Virginia to meet requirements for state aid.

*Updated 6/9/25*

## **2.2 ACCOUNTING POLICY**

Accounts are organized on the basis of funds, each of which is considered to be a separate accounting entity. Requisitions, contracts, and other commitments for expenditure of monies are recorded in order to reserve that portion of the applicable appropriation.

All aspects of revenue recordation and cash receipts are made exercising proper internal controls.

Year-end financial statements are formulated based on accounting standards. Quarterly financial reports are presented to the library board.

*Updated 6/9/25*

## **2.3 FUND BALANCE POLICY**

CRRL will maintain a fund balance for the purposes of unanticipated expenditures, to provide for cash flow reserves during the fiscal year due to the timing difference between the receipt of revenues and disbursement of expenditures, and to meet desired reserves.

The fund balance may be designated for anticipated, specified purposes such as purchase of Library vehicles, technology and equipment, budget stabilization and other needs.

Recognizing that the Library's revenue is contingent on the good-will and fiscal stability of the participating jurisdictions and recognizing that the Library could face a fiscal crisis if one of the participants failed to appropriate the quarterly payment, the external auditor has recommended that CRRL have as its goal an unassigned operating fund balance which meets the recommendations of Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). A fund balance of this amount allows the Library to manage cash flow for day-to-day operations, pay for unexpected expenses, such as payouts of leave balances, and would allow the Library sufficient time to seek a remedy to a fiscal crisis.

*Updated 6/9/25*

## **2.4 INVESTMENT POLICY**

CRRL deposits funds in a local bank and transfers all funds except those needed for immediate use from the deposit account to a money market account or to the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) maintained by the Commonwealth of Virginia. These investment options offer the advantage of liquidity and safety which CRRL needs to meet daily obligations as well as special projects and other operational requirements either known or which might be reasonably anticipated. Funds are managed with the objective of obtaining a fair-value rate of return, taking into account the constraints necessary for the daily operation of the library and its cash flow pattern.

In all investment decisions, the safeguarding of principal is the foremost objective. Investment decisions will be made with the care, skill, prudence, and diligence that a knowledgeable person would use in a like situation.

*Updated 6/9/25*

## **2.5 INTERNAL CONTROLS POLICY**

CRRL maintains procedures necessary for internal controls. These procedures are documented and reviewed regularly with the objective of meeting the requirements of the Government Accounting Standards Board.

## **2.6 BUDGET POLICY**

CRRL develops an annual budget in line with the library mission statement, Strategic Plan, and current board initiatives. The annual operating budget is prepared in accordance with the contractual agreement. Following adoption, the budget is sent to the participating jurisdictions. Year-end amendments are approved by the library board with final adjustments being made by the Executive Director. Upon request or as needed by the Library, the Library formulates a plan for capital expenditures for inclusion in each jurisdiction's CIP.

*Updated 6/9/25*



## **2.7 GIFTS**

The Executive Director shall be the agent and administrator for all gifts accepted by CRRL. Any transfer made to the Library must be made unconditionally and irrevocably and all rights, title, and interest in and to the items are made absolutely and forever. The Executive Director will administer all gifts to CRRL with value up to \$15,000 and, with Board approval, gifts that exceed that value.

Every effort will be made to utilize the gift in accordance with the donor's intent. CRRL reserves all rights to sell, dispose, display, or allocate the gift in any fashion deemed appropriate by the Executive Director.

## **2.8 PROCUREMENT**

Library purchases are made in accordance with the Virginia Public Procurement Act. It is the policy of the Library always to seek the best possible price/value for any service or work rendered.

Pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-4303, as amended from time-to-time, all purchases of goods, contractual services, insurance, and capital improvements estimated to be less than \$200,000 in value shall not be subject to the requirements of competitive bidding. Purchases that are expected to exceed \$30,000 shall require the written informal solicitation of a minimum of four (4) offerers, if practicable. CRRL does not require competitive negotiation for single or term contracts for professional services not expected to exceed \$80,000. Wherever practicable, small purchasing shall provide for competition. The Library considers best value when procuring goods and services. The fixed asset inventory shall be modified to include the purchase of any equipment or furniture valued at \$5,000 or more.

The Executive Director, who shall be considered the purchasing agent for the Library, may authorize the sale, trade, transfer, or other disposition of any property which is the property of CRRL and is determined to be surplus. CRRL will dispose of any item purchased with state aid funds having a market value of more than \$5,000 in accordance with guidelines set forth by the Library of Virginia. The purchasing agent or designated library staff shall cause the fixed asset inventory to be modified as to final disposition of any surplus property.

Sales of property deemed by the purchasing agent or designated library staff and the Director of Finance to be worth more than five hundred

dollars (\$500.00) shall be by competitive bids or at public auction. The purchasing agent shall determine which method is likely to obtain the highest price in each case and the purchasing agent's decision shall be final.

When it is determined that any property is irreparable or unsalvageable and unsuitable for disposition at state surplus, and that the costs of storage are excessive, the purchasing agent or designated library staff may cause such property to be transported to the landfill for disposal.

Books withdrawn from the collection will be donated to the Friends of the Library for fundraising efforts on behalf of the Library or for other causes deemed worthwhile.

The Executive Director may promulgate additional rules governing library system transfers and trades not inconsistent with this policy.

Whenever any person acquires surplus library property the person is required to remove that property from the premises within the agreed upon time frame. Such person shall indemnify the Library and hold CRRL harmless from any and all liability which may be incurred during removal. Such person may be required to provide the purchasing agent or designated library staff with evidence of the existence of liability insurance covering the risks potentially involved and, if required by law, workers' compensation insurance.

*Updated 6/9/25*

## **3.0 HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **3.1 HIRING AND RECRUITMENT**

#### **3.11 Library Employment**

All employment with CRRL is at will and can be terminated by CRRL at any time for any reason with or without prior notice.

### **3.12 Equal Employment Opportunity**

CRRL is committed to providing an equitable, safe, and inclusive working environment for our staff. CRRL affirms a commitment to this principle for all persons without regard to race (or traits historically associated with race including hair texture, hair type, and hairstyles such as braids, locs, and twists); sex; color; national origin; religion; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; veteran status; political affiliation; disability; genetic information; and parental status (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation and conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, or lactation).

CRRL is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to non-discrimination in recruitment, selection, hiring, pay, promotion, retention or any other personnel action affecting any of its employees or candidates for employment. Employment decisions are based on merit and the ability to perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities will be provided in all aspects of the application and employment process. CRRL complies with all applicable federal, state, and local equal employment laws.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **3.13 Statement of Non-Discrimination**

At CRRL the principles of equal opportunity are practiced. No employee of CRRL shall unlawfully discriminate against any person on the basis of race (or traits historically associated with race including hair texture, hair type, and hairstyles such as braids, locs, and twists); sex; color; national origin; religion; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; veteran status; political affiliation; disability; genetic information; and parental status (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation and conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, or lactation), or any other characteristic prohibited by state and/or federal law.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **3.14 Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires employers to reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities. CRRL will comply with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities.

CRRL will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

CRRL will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job.

An individual who can be reasonably accommodated for a job without undue hardship will be given the same consideration for that position as any other applicant.

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for implementing this policy, including resolution of reasonable accommodation, safety and undue hardship issues.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **3.15 Anti-Retaliation**

CRRRL will not tolerate any retaliation against an applicant or employee who files a complaint or institutes any proceeding under or related to a CRRRL policy, or has provided information or assisted in an investigation. Retaliation is any overt or covert act to intimidate, threaten, coerce, discriminate against, interfere with, restrain, retaliate or take adverse employment action against. If retaliation occurs, the employee(s) should report it immediately to a supervisor or the Director of Human Resources. CRRRL recognizes that false accusations can have serious effects on innocent individuals. We trust all of our employees will act responsibly to establish and maintain a pleasant and productive working environment.

*Updated 6/14/21*



### **3.16 Types Of Employees**

CRRL categories of employment include:

- Full-time personnel who work 40 hours a week and are eligible to participate in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) and to receive health care benefits
- Part-time personnel who work 30-39 hours a week and are not eligible to participate in VRS, but are eligible to receive health care benefits and pro-rated annual and sick leave
- Part-time personnel who work 20-29 hours per week and are not eligible to participate in VRS or to receive healthcare benefits, but are eligible for pro-rated annual and sick leave
- Provisional employees—personnel who are working during an initial evaluation period of 90 days
- Volunteers—unpaid staff subject to the provisions of the personnel policies, but not eligible for benefits

### **3.17 Promotions And Transfers**

Employees are encouraged to apply for position vacancies, notices of which will be posted as they become available. An employee may be considered for a vacancy if current performance, performance evaluations, and qualifications indicate ability to advance. Employees who have been laterally reassigned or who have been promoted to a new position are subject to a performance evaluation after six (6) months.

### **3.18 Succession Policy**

A change in leadership is inevitable for all organizations and can be a very challenging time. Therefore, it is the policy of CRRL to be prepared for an eventual permanent change in leadership—either planned or unplanned—to ensure the stability of the library.

It is library policy to assess the leadership needs of CRRL to help ensure the selection of a qualified and capable leader and staff who are good fits for the library's mission, vision, values, goals and objectives, and who have the necessary skills for CRRL.

CRRL management shall continuously seek to develop and maintain strengths and capabilities in library staff that will contribute to the sustainability of the library and its mission. It is the policy of CRRL to encourage professional development and advancement of its employees. CRRL affirms its commitment to seek resources, time, and money necessary to do so. The library will identify, develop, and utilize both external and internal growth opportunities. Library staff is encouraged to participate in professional organizations to gain information and to have opportunities to demonstrate and practice leadership goals. Staff is given responsibilities to gain confidence and to demonstrate ability to handle administrative tasks.

The end result of a succession plan is the continued effective operation of the library as consideration is given to selecting a new Executive Director/administrative staff. To that end, CRRL maintains current job descriptions, identifying key tasks and responsibilities for its staff. Records of all training are compiled and monitored to guide staff development. All plans and policies are reviewed at regular intervals. Consideration is given to keeping CRRL salary scales competitive.

In the absence of a permanent Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director shall be designated by the Library Board as interim Executive Director and shall ensure that CRRL continues to operate without disruption and that all library commitments are executed.

### **3.19 Volunteers**

Central Rappahannock Regional Library maintains a volunteer program to augment library service to the public.

The use of volunteers is meant to supplement, not replace, Central Rappahannock Regional Library staff. Volunteers are not used to present ongoing classes and events to the public, but may be invited to present special programs in conjunction with library staff. The inclusion of volunteers in the Library service program is meant to enhance service and to involve the community in library activities.

Volunteers are considered unpaid staff and are hired and work under the same policies and procedures, but are not eligible for benefits. The volunteer coordinators may search the application file, contact appropriate community sources, or advertise as needed. Service of volunteers may be accepted or declined based on the needs of the Library as determined by the Executive Director. The Library may annually acknowledge the service of volunteers in a manner deemed appropriate by the Executive Director.

Potential volunteers must complete the volunteer application form and be interviewed. References are checked. Volunteers are offered opportunities at the sole discretion of the Library.

Any individual, without regard to sex, age, disability, perceived disability, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic is eligible to be considered for participation in the volunteer program. All volunteer applications will be kept on file for a period of six (6) months.

Volunteers shall be instructed that all library records are privileged information and must be kept confidential.

CRRL works with community diversion programs to place individuals who are required to volunteer in the community. CRRL will not place individuals guilty of violent crimes and accepts no liability for court-assigned volunteers.

## **3.2 GENERAL EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

### **3.21 Work Hours**

Full-time employees work forty (40) hours per week. The full-time workweek runs from Saturday through Friday. A normal full-time workday is 8:30–5:30 OR 12:00–9:00 (includes 1 unpaid lunch hour), although alternate schedules may be determined by the employee and their immediate supervisor.

The part-time workweek runs from Thursday through Wednesday and is not to exceed thirty-nine (39) hours per week. A part-time workday is to be determined by the employee and immediate supervisor, but does not normally exceed 8 hours per day.

Employees may take a fifteen (15) minute break for every four (4) hours worked consecutively. Breaks are scheduled in consultation with the immediate supervisor and may be denied if operational needs of CRRL necessitate. Breaks are not to be used to shorten the workday without approval from the Deputy Executive Director.

CRRL actively supports Flex-Time where it is reasonable and practical to do so and where operational needs will not be adversely affected.

### **3.22 Attendance And Punctuality**

Attendance and punctuality are important factors for success with CRRL. All employees are required to arrive to work at their scheduled times. Unavoidable tardiness should be reported immediately to the supervisor. The employee should make up the time that day. If this is not possible, the supervisor may allow the employee to make up the time at a later date or use annual/compensatory or holiday leave.

A written medical excuse for any absence may be requested by CRRL from the employee's doctor, at CRRL's discretion.

Chronic, habitual, or excessive absenteeism or lateness, as judged by CRRL at its discretion, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, in circumstances including but not limited to:

- Absence from work for two (2) consecutive scheduled workdays without notifying CRRL during the absence of an illness or accident preventing the employee from working (as evidenced by written certification of a medical doctor if requested by CRRL), or other satisfactory reason for such absence, as determined by CRRL
- Failure to return to work within two (2) consecutive scheduled workdays after being released for duty by a doctor, unless specifically requested not to do so by the Executive Director, or after being notified of recall from layoff status by CRRL
- Subject to CRRL policy on family and medical leave, absence from work for any reason, including but not limited to illness, on- or off-the-job injury, layoff, or leave of absence, for a period in excess of twelve (12) consecutive months since the last day



worked for CRRL, or for a period exceeding the length of continuous service with CRRL, whichever is shorter

### **3.23 Telecommuting/Alternate Duty Station**

Telecommuting is defined as an arrangement in which a library employee is permitted to perform usual job duties away from the central workplace, in accordance with the same performance expectations and in compliance with other agreed upon terms.

Telecommuting allows gains in productivity, greater workforce satisfaction, and more flexibility in the use of existing workplace space. In an effort to achieve these benefits, CRRL will allow alternate work locations for some employees at the discretion of the Executive Director. Every attempt will be made so that telecommuting assignments are mutually agreeable, but CRRL reserves the right to require such an arrangement in the event that the Executive Director deems it necessary. Alternate work locations can include an employee's home or another approved remote work location. The Library will continue to be every employee's usual place of work.

All policies and procedures of CRRL's usual workplace remain the same. Telecommuting arrangements do not change the conditions of employment or the required compliance with policies. Compensation and benefits remain in effect in accordance with CRRL norm. Telecommuting arrangements can be temporarily suspended in the event that work priorities require the individual's presence in the usual workplace. Telecommuting arrangements may be terminated at the Library's discretion at any time. In the event of termination, every effort will be made to give two weeks' notice.

The number of hours to be worked does not change when an employee works from an alternate location. The employee must adhere to the agreed upon work schedule and be accessible by telephone to the supervisor during that time. The employee will seek prior approval for

leave as per CRRL policy. In the event of an emergency leave situation, the employee must notify the supervisor as soon as possible. The employee is responsible for completing all work and for meeting all deadlines. It is required that telecommuters report to the usual workplace as needed for work-related meetings, training, and other events.

### **3.24 Emergencies In The Library**

CRRL cooperates with public safety departments to ensure the safest environment feasible for the public, staff, materials, and facility. Each branch is supplied with a branch-specific and systemwide Emergency Procedures Manual to be periodically reviewed. Appropriate action in the event of an emergency will be updated as necessary and may be modified in accordance with local/state/national recommendations.

CRRL follows recommendations by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Homeland Security regarding the threat of terrorist attacks.

Every effort will be made to return quickly to or to continue public service in the wake of an emergency.

### **3.25 Emergency Closings**

During periods of inclement weather, CRRL will endeavor to maintain regular schedules. When CRRL has an emergency closing, full and part-time employees who are scheduled to work will be paid for those hours. The decision regarding library closings is at the discretion of the Executive Director.

During periods of inclement weather, CRRL has an unscheduled leave policy. Employees may arrive late to work or leave early as individual safety warrants. Employees who choose to take unscheduled leave must notify their supervisors as soon as possible. Employees taking unscheduled leave must arrange with their supervisors to make up hours missed or count the hours missed against earned leave.

Generally, the couriers, Grow a Reader Outreach and Lobby Stops do not operate on days when schools are closed due to inclement weather. These personnel are expected to work their scheduled hours in the Library on days that runs are cancelled, but the Library is open.

### **3.26 Staff Development**

It is the policy of the Library to encourage consistent quality service to the public through a formal program of in-service training and continuing education. Through attendance at workshops, conferences, professional meetings, job-related courses, and regularly scheduled in-house staff development programs, the staff acquires skills and knowledge necessary to provide effective levels of service to the public.

Employees may receive leave with pay to attend professional meetings, informational seminars, or training classes. Application is made in advance through appropriate channels to the Deputy Executive Director who gives final approval. The decision is based on budget considerations, work schedule, the relationship of the subject to job responsibilities, membership in the organization sponsoring the event, participation in the program, attendance at other meetings or workshops, and/or committee responsibility. Financial assistance may be available according to established procedure within library budget constraints.

It is the Executive Director's prerogative to require attendance at workshops deemed appropriate to an employee's staff development.

### **3.27 Employee Assistance Program**

CRRL recognizes that a wide range of personal problems not directly associated with the workplace can interfere with an employee's health and/or performance on the job. Almost any personal problem can be successfully treated if it is identified early and referral made to appropriate care. This applies to problems of marital or family distress, mental illness, emotional distress, and alcohol or drug dependency. CRRL reserves the right to refer an employee to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in the event of perceived impaired job effectiveness or dependability.

CRRL will provide EAP information and referral services for various personal problems. Employees are assured that their jobs or promotional opportunities will not be jeopardized by using the program and that all contact will be confidential. Employees may receive referral information from the human resources office or from postings in the staff lounge.

## **3.3 GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

### **3.31 Performance Management**

Performance evaluations are completed annually in each following year by the employee's immediate supervisor. Evaluations are designed to encourage the positive development of each individual staff member. The employee and supervisor discuss the previous 12 months performance and set goals for the coming year. During the evaluation process, the performance standards will be reviewed for any amendments. Unsatisfactory evaluations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including loss of merit increases and/or termination of employment.

*Updated 6/14/21*



### **3.32 Workplace Safety/Loss Control**

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 requires employers to provide a safe place to work, a place free from hazards that might cause injury, disability, or even death.

It is the policy of CRRL that every employee be entitled to work under the safest conditions feasible. To this end, every reasonable effort will be made to promote accident prevention for protection and health preservation.

In order to achieve a safe working environment, all members of this organization must be committed to safety through good attitudes and involvement. Accidents which injure people, damage equipment or property, or destroy materials cause needless personal suffering, inconvenience, and expense.

CRRL will endeavor to maintain a safe and healthful workplace. Employees are required to follow proscribed safety policies and procedures, including wearing seat belts at all times in all library vehicles. The Library will provide safe working equipment and first aid in the case of injury.

Cognizant of the large number of activities in progress at one time, the varied nature of the work, and the widespread location of such activities, CRRL has implemented a safety program that includes training, inspections, written reports, and records. Through the safety program, CRRL will attempt to achieve maximum effectiveness of loss control. CRRL attempts compliance with local, state, and federal safety and health regulations.

The Director of Human Resources heads CRRL's occupational safety and health program and communicates pertinent information to Safety Management Team members. CRRL's safety management team is

comprised of all coordinators, branch managers, accounts manager, and the headquarters' facility manager. This program will be evaluated for effectiveness annually to insure that injuries and losses are minimized.

### **3.33 Vehicle Use**

Library vehicles are to be used exclusively for library business. Any other use could result in disciplinary action or termination of employment.

Applicants for positions which require the operation of a library vehicle will be required to request a driving record transcript from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The transcript will be obtained to verify driving records prior to offering the position to the applicant. Driving records must be in compliance with state law and the insurance carrier's requirements. The record will be filed in the Human Resources office with employee records.

Successful completion of a library-designated safe driving course may be required periodically. Periodic review of driving records of employees who routinely operate a CRRL motor vehicle may be required.

In the event that an employee is involved in an accident or receives a traffic violation citation, CRRL will follow state law and the insurance carrier's requirements regarding that employee's ability to operate a library vehicle. If an employee is unable to operate a vehicle they may be assigned to non-driving duties for that period to the extent that there is a need for services.

In the event that a vehicle in excess of 26,000 lbs. is added to the fleet, employees who would routinely operate that vehicle will be required to upgrade their license classification.

### **3.34 Drugs, Alcohol, And Related Behavior**

CRRL is firmly committed to maintaining a workplace free from the adverse effects of alcohol and other drugs, and to promoting safety in the workplace, employee health and well-being, customer confidence and a work environment that is conducive to attaining high work standards. No employee shall work, or report to work, at CRRL workplace while impaired by alcohol, marijuana or any controlled substances. Employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale, or use of alcohol or other drugs in CRRL workplace. The workplace includes offices, public areas, work locations, parking lots, and vehicles owned and operated by CRRL. Any employee found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Employees must notify the Director of Human Resources if they are convicted of violating any criminal drug law, based on conduct occurring in or outside of the workplace; or an alcohol beverage control law or law that governs driving while intoxicated, based on conduct occurring in the workplace. Notification must be made in writing and delivered no later than five calendar days after such conviction. An employee's appeal of a conviction does not affect the employee's obligation to report the conviction.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **3.35 Code Of Conduct**

Whenever groups of people work together, there must be standards of conduct and attendance for common guidance and efficiency. It is impossible to define in detail every standard for every circumstance, and CRRL tries to keep rules to a necessary minimum. The specific expectations listed below should not be regarded as an all-inclusive list of expectations or standards. Any questions about standards of conduct and attendance, or about what to do or not to do in a situation, should be addressed to the employee's supervisor.

Obviously, when employee misconduct occurs, measures must be undertaken to correct the situation and to curtail further occurrences, for the good of all. The approach taken to discipline may vary, at CRRL discretion, depending on, among other things, the gravity of the offense, the circumstances under which it occurred, the employee's duties, length of service (seniority) with CRRL, and overall work record, including any prior misconduct. In order of severity, discipline can take one of the following forms:

- Verbal counseling
- A written warning or reprimand
- Probation
- Suspension from work without pay (non-exempt employees only)
- Suspension, subject to discharge
- Discharge

Employees who receive the benefit of any of these methods of constructive counseling are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and improve.

CRRL has no obligation to use any one or more of these forms of discipline prior to discharging an employee. Any or all of these steps can be omitted, as CRRL deems appropriate. The use of progressive discipline as a pre-condition to termination thus is discretionary, in the Executive Director's judgment. The Executive Director's decision in every case is final and binding on all concerned, including the disciplined employee and all other persons or entities involved in any way, directly or indirectly. Moreover, by establishing this disciplinary procedure CRRL is not relinquishing or limiting its managerial right to discharge for any or no reason at all, at any time, with or without notice.

### **3.351 Major Offenses**

Employees should be aware that there are certain major offenses that may result in an immediate penalty of probation, or suspension subject to discharge, or discharge, without any prior counseling, at CRRL's discretion. Such major offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failure or refusal to carry out orders or instructions
- Unsatisfactory work performance
- Failure to fulfill the responsibilities of the job to an extent that might or does cause injury to a person or damage to or loss of product, machinery, equipment, facilities, or other property of CRRL
- Violation of a safety, fire prevention, health, or security rule, policy or practice
- False, fraudulent, misleading, or harmful statement, action, or omission involving another employee, a customer, CRRL, or relations with CRRL; or any action disloyal to CRRL
- False, fraudulent, misleading, or harmful statement, action, or omission related to an employment application or any other information provided to or requested by CRRL, whether oral or written; or refusal or failure to timely provide such information
- Unauthorized use of, removal of, theft of, or damage to the property of CRRL, an employee, an independent contractor, or a customer
- Threatened or actual physical violence
- The use of abusive language

- Carrying any weapon while on CRRL business, jobsite, premises, or property without authorization from CRRL
- Violation of any of the provisions of CRRL's drug and alcohol abuse policy
- Violation of CRRL's standards of attendance
- Harassment of another employee of a sexual nature or otherwise, including but not limited to verbal or physical conduct, or unwelcome advances with regard to or on the basis of sex, age, disability, perceived disability, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic
- An arrest, criminal complaint, summons to answer a criminal charge, statement of charges, indictment, criminal information, or any other criminal charge or conviction of an employee, depending on the particular circumstances and the offense charged, including but not limited to CRRL's judgment as to the potential risk to safety or health of employees, the security of library premises and property, and/or CRRL's reputation



### **3.36 Conflicts Of Interest**

CRRL expects that all employees will observe the highest moral and ethical standards in any dealings in which they represent the Library. Employees are required to avoid activities which may create a conflict of interest with their responsibilities to CRRL. Failure to do so will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The following are some examples, but not the only situations, giving rise to personal conflicts of interest:

- Legal Requirements. No employee will do anything in the conduct of business which would violate any local, state, or federal law.
- Awards of Contracts. Employees in a position to award contracts on behalf of CRRL must disclose any interest held in a company seeking to do business with the Library and, at the discretion of the Executive Director, may be disqualified from the contract award decision.
- Accepting gifts/entertainment. No employee shall accept gifts of more than a nominal value from any individual or company who does business or seeks to do business with CRRL.

All CRRL resources are to be used appropriately in accordance with applicable laws.

### **3.37 Employee Complaints**

CRRL recognizes that sometimes differences in opinion or personal beliefs can result in workplace conflicts. When possible, employees are encouraged to resolve complaints informally through discussions with their supervisors. Human Resources can also assist if you and another employee (co-worker, supervisor, or subordinate) are having difficulty communicating or working together.

However, in accordance with Virginia Code §15.3-1507, CRRL has a formal grievance process as part of the Employee Handbook that may be implemented if a concern is unable to be resolved informally. The grievance procedure is a process through which an employee can bring a workplace concern or management action to upper levels of management. This process is formal and requires that rules be followed strictly. Human Resources will work with the employee and management to ensure that grievances are handled in a timely manner by all parties.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **3.38 Harassment**

CRRL believes all employees are entitled to a workplace free of harassment, and expects that all employees will treat each other and library customers with courtesy, dignity, and respect. Harassment is a form of discrimination and has the effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

CRRL has adopted a zero-tolerance policy toward discrimination and all forms of unlawful harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment. No form of unlawful discriminatory or harassing conduct toward any person in our workplace will be tolerated. No employment decision may be made based on any form of unlawful harassment or discrimination. CRRL will take action to enforce professional conduct and absolutely prohibits discrimination and or harassment of an employee.

This policy prohibiting harassment, whether sexual or of another nature, is not limited to relationships between and among employees and prospective employees but also extends to interactions with customers. Furthermore, no employee will be required to suffer sexual harassment by any customer or vendor.

CRRL encourages reporting of all incidents of discrimination, sexual or other harassment, regardless of the identity of the offender. CRRL encourages individuals who believe they are being harassed to firmly and promptly notify the offender that their behavior is unwelcome, CRRL also recognizes that power and status disparities between the offender and the recipient of the offensive conduct may make such a confrontation impossible. Consequently, such direct communication is not a requirement or prerequisite to filing a complaint.

Any employee who feels that they are or have been the victim of illegal discrimination or harassment in violation of this policy should immediately notify a supervisor or the Director of Human Resources. CRRL will fully investigate all complaints and will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible given CRRL's duty to investigate the complaint. Anyone who is found to have engaged in illegal discrimination or harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment, depending on the circumstances. No employee will be retaliated against for making a complaint or assisting with the investigation of a complaint.

CRRL is strongly committed to maintaining a workplace free of impermissible harassment or intimidation, including sexual harassment. All complaints will be taken seriously.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **3.381 Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment has been defined generally, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances (verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, whenever:

- submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment;
- an employee's reaction to the conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting that employee; or
- the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

No employee or applicant should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures, nor should any employee or applicant be led to believe that an employment opportunity or benefit will in any way depend upon "cooperation" of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment is not limited to demands for sexual favors. It may also include such actions as:

- sex-oriented verbal "kidding," "teasing," or jokes;
- repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions;
- continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- graphic or degrading comments about an individual or their appearance;
- the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
- subtle pressure for sexual activity; and
- inappropriate physical contact

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or consensual personal and social relationships without a discriminatory employment effect. It refers to behavior that is not welcome and that is personally intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **3.382 Other Unlawful Harassment**

Other unlawful harassment based on race (or traits historically associated with race including hair texture, hair type, and and hairstyles such as braids, locs, and twists); sex; color; national origin; religion; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; veteran status; political affiliation; disability; genetic information; and parental status (including

pregnancy, childbirth, lactation and conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, or lactation) consists of physical or verbal conduct when the conduct:

- creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment; or
- substantially or unreasonably interferes with an employee's work; or
- otherwise is sufficiently serious to limit an employee's work performance.

Examples of conduct which may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- jokes, degrading comments, verbal abuse, epithets and rumors;
- the display of offensive objects and pictures;
- written or graphic material which is posted or circulated and which intimidates or threatens individuals
- Bullying, hostile acts or physical acts of aggression against an individual or their property; and
- other conduct that the individual might reasonably find to be offensive.

*Updated 6/14/21*

### **3.39 Whistle Blower Policy**

A whistle blower is defined as an employee who reports an activity that they considered to be illegal or dishonest to one or more of the parties specified in this Policy. The whistle blower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities. Examples of illegal or dishonest activities are violations of federal, state or local laws; billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered; and other fraudulent financial reporting.

If an employee has knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the employee is to contact a supervisor or the Director of Human Resources. The employee must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

All reports of illegal and dishonest activities will be promptly submitted to the Director of Human Resources who is responsible for investigating and coordinating corrective action. Employees with any questions regarding this policy should contact the Director of Human Resources.

Whistle blower protections are provided in two important areas -- confidentiality and against retaliation. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistle blower will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal

rights of defense. CRRL will not retaliate against a whistle blower. This includes, but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm. Any whistle blower who believes they are being retaliated against must contact the Director of Human Resources immediately. The right of a whistle blower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

This Policy is in accordance with The Fraud and Abuse Whistle Blower Protection Act as set forth in Virginia Code § 2.2-3009 through § 2.2-3014.

*Added 6/14/21*



## **3.4 LEAVE**

### **3.41 Leave With Pay Programs**

#### **3.411 Paid Time Off (PTO)**

Employees can use Paid Time Off (PTO) for personal needs such as vacation, appointments, and illness for themselves or others.

Full-time employees and regular part-time employees (not substitute or temporary) who work a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week earn paid time off (PTO). PTO rates vary depending upon length of service and number of regular hours worked and is updated each pay period as detailed in the PTO rate chart in [Appendix G](#).

An employee wishing to take 2 weeks or less of PTO for vacation time should submit a leave request at least two (2) weeks prior to the requested leave date(s). An employee wishing to take PTO for more than 2 consecutive weeks or more for vacation time should submit a leave request to the Director of Human Resources for approval at least 1 month prior to the requested leave date(s).

Employees wishing to use leave on a regularly recurring basis for a period of more than six weeks must receive Executive Director's Office (defined as the Director of Human Resources and the Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director) approval if they plan to use more than 2 hours a week.

Employees cannot use more than one year of PTO accrual in a single calendar year unless there are extenuating circumstances and they have received prior Administrative approval. If there is a medical need, PTO, Personal Leave Bank and the Shared Leave Bank (6 weeks only) can be

combined for use for a one year period with Executive Director's office approval.

At the end of the calendar year, any unused leave beyond one year of PTO accrual will roll into Personal Leave Bank up to one year's worth of the weekly work hours for their accrual level. Please see [Appendix H](#) for maximum hours of leave reserves allowed in an employee's Personal Leave Bank. Once an employee has one year's worth of work time in their Personal Leave Bank reserves, any unused leave will be relinquished.

In the event of illness, employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor by the start of the work day on each day absent unless other arrangements are made with the supervisor. In the event of a long-term absence due to a serious health condition or surgery, the employee, or supervisor if they are unable, must notify the Director of Human Resources as soon as the need is known, or as much advance notice as possible, if the leave is not foreseeable. Upon returning to work, employees must submit PTO leave in the library's payroll system.

With prior approval of the Executive Director's Office an employee can borrow against future PTO accruals. A signed statement authorizing CRRL to collect the value of any unearned leave from an employee's final paycheck will be required.

At the time of termination an employee will be paid for no more than six months accumulation of leave at their current PTO accrual rate using their current salary at the time of separation.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.412 Holidays**

CRRL observes the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, George Washington Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. The Executive Director's Office may adjust holiday schedules in accordance with state holidays. When CRRL is closed in observance of a holiday, all full-time employees receive the day off with pay. If a holiday falls on a full-time employee's normal day off, excluding Easter Sunday, the employee will receive PTO up to eight hours. Part-time employees who would normally work on the day on which the holiday falls receive pay for the hours normally worked.

CRRL remains open on Columbus/Yorktown Victory Day, Election Day (with the exception of branches that are polling places for national elections,) and Veterans Day. Employees scheduled to work receive PTO equal to the number of working hours in the day.

The Library closes early on Thanksgiving Eve and New Year's Eve, and on other holiday eves as deemed appropriate.

*Updated 3/8/21*

### **3.413 Bereavement**

All employees may be absent up to three (3) regularly scheduled work days without loss of pay or using their PTO in case of death in the immediate family as defined in Employee Handbook. If the employee needs or wishes more bereavement time, they can request to use earned leave or leave without pay. Bereavement leave may also be granted in the event of the death of an employee at the discretion of the Executive Director's Office.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.414 Civic Duties**

Leave with pay will be granted for jury duty and library-related court appearances for which a subpoena has been received. Employees who are serving on a jury for more than four (4) hours, including travel time, are not required to return to work that same day. Employees who are serving for less than four (4) hours, including travel time, are required to return to work that same day or use PTO for the remaining time. If your jury duties extend beyond two work weeks, your court-awarded stipend must be submitted to the Director of Finance. Verification must be submitted to the Director of Human Resources for all court related appearances for which leave with pay will be used. If an employee receives a subpoena for a personal or non-library related matter they may use PTO.

All employees entitled to vote shall be allowed sufficient time off with pay to exercise this right.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.415 Military Leave**

#### **Reserves**

Employees who are members of a reserve force of the United States or the Commonwealth of Virginia and who are ordered by the appropriate authorities to attend a training program, or who are called into emergency active duty for the purpose of aiding civil authority under the supervision of the United States or the Commonwealth of Virginia shall be granted a leave of absence with full pay during the period of such activity for up to 15 days annually. Employees who are required to serve for more than 15 days annually may be eligible to use PTO or their Personal Leave Bank.

*Updated 7/26/18*

#### **Active Duty**

The library fully complies with all obligations required by USERRA. An employee who leaves the employ of CRRL to join the military forces of the United States during the time of war or other declared national emergency, who is called to service in the Virginia Militia by order of the Governor shall be placed on military leave without pay commencing on the first business day following the last day of active employment with CRRL. The employee on such leave is entitled to be restored to the position vacated provided the employee makes application to the Executive Director's Office in accordance with the provisions of USERRA after the date of honorable discharge or separation under honorable conditions. Job restoration is further conditioned on the position still existing and the employee being physically and mentally capable of performing the work of the vacated position.

*Updated 7/26/18*

## **3.5 PERSONAL LEAVE BANK**

CRRL allows full-time employees and regular part-time employees (not substitute or temporary) who work a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week to reserve unused PTO up to one year's worth of their weekly work hours for their PTO accrual level into a Personal Leave Bank account.

Please see [Appendix H](#) for maximum hours of leave reserves allowed in an employee's Personal Leave Bank. The Executive Director's Office has the authority to grant an employee use of the Personal Leave Bank provided that CRRL operations will not be adversely affected.

If approved by the Executive Director's Office, the Personal Leave Bank may be used for a serious health condition as defined in the FMLA section of this manual, of either an employee or an immediate family member as defined in Employee Handbook, for parental leave, for military service, or for other circumstances. In the case of a serious health condition, full-time employees enrolled in the VRS Hybrid Plan will be directed to contact VRS for short-term and long-term disability options.

Employees are required to obtain a health care provider certification for all absences related to a serious health condition for which use of the Personal Leave Bank is being requested. A chronic or long-term health condition or pregnancy does not require certification from the health care provider for each absence; however, a statement by the health care provider that the absence was due to the chronic condition or pregnancy may be requested by CRRL at its discretion.

This leave reserve can be used either separately or as part of FMLA although CRRL may designate leave as FMLA leave without a request from an employee. Employees wishing to utilize their Personal Leave Bank should submit their request to the Director of Human Resources for approval in writing at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to

commence if the need for the leave is foreseeable. In circumstances when the leave is not foreseeable thirty (30) days in advance, an employee must request the leave as soon as practicable. Personal Leave Bank use for a serious health condition (as defined in the FMLA section of this manual) of the employee or family member may be taken intermittently or on a reduced-hours basis not to extend beyond a period of one-year.

If an employee fails to return to work at the conclusion of their leave, CRRL will require pro-rated repayment of health insurance premiums, retirement cash match and/or VRS retirement and life insurance contributions that were made by CRRL on behalf of the employee during the period of the employee's leave of absence.

*Updated 7/26/18*



### **3.6 SHARED LEAVE BANK**

CRRL has established a shared leave bank to be used in the event of catastrophic or prolonged illness of an employee or immediate family member as defined in the Employee Handbook, or for other circumstances as approved by the Executive Director's office. Membership is voluntary and open to all regular employees who are regularly scheduled to work twenty hours or more per week.

An employee can become a member by contributing eight (8) hours of PTO to the bank when they become a benefits eligible employee or during the annual open enrollment period. Contributions from part-time employees are prorated. If the bank falls below a prescribed level, additional days will automatically be assessed. At the time of any additional assessment, members must notify the Director of Human Resources in writing if they wish to discontinue participation in the bank.

Requests to receive leave from the Shared Leave Bank are made to the Director of Human Resources; final approval of leave transfers rests with the Executive Director's Office.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.7 PTO DONATIONS**

Under special circumstances, PTO can be transferred from one employee to another with Executive Director's Office approval. The employee transferring the PTO leave relinquishes all rights to that leave and cannot recover the leave at a later date. A recipient of donated leave cannot transfer donated leave to another employee.

*Updated 7/26/18*

## **3.8 COMPENSATORY TIME/LEAVE**

As a political subdivision of state and local governments, CRRL has elected to provide compensatory time off in lieu of paying overtime for non-exempt employees. Compensatory time will be granted at one and one-half (1.5) time for each hour worked over forty (40) hours per workweek.

Compensatory time is earned by full-time, non-exempt employees with advance authorization from the Executive Director's Office. Any employee who works overtime without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action. Full-time, non-exempt employees must have prior approval from the Executive Director's Office to work more than forty (40) hours per workweek. They will be compensated for the additional hours with compensatory time. Full-time, exempt employees will not earn compensatory time for hours worked over forty (40) hours per workweek.

Non-exempt (part-time) employees will be compensated with compensatory time for hours over forty (40) per workweek; however, part-time staff members are not to be scheduled for more than thirty-nine (39) hours per workweek and shall not work more than their scheduled hours. Any part-time, non-exempt employees who habitually work more than thirty-nine (39) unauthorized hours per workweek will be subject to disciplinary action. Any paid time off will not be used for purposes of calculating entitlement to overtime; if you have a week where you use a combination of work hours and PTO it cannot exceed 40 hours.

Compensatory leave must be used prior to PTO and the same procedures for use apply. Breaks and lunches cannot be used to earn compensatory time. Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for the value of any unused compensatory time.

*Updated 7/26/18*

## **3.9 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY PROGRAMS**

The following are the situations for which an employee may be on leave without pay status.

- Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Military Family Leave Entitlements
- Extended Leave
- Military Leave (see Leave with Pay section)
- Disciplinary Leave

Requests for leave without pay for any reason must be submitted, in writing, to the Director of Human Resources at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to commence if the need for the leave is foreseeable. In circumstances when the leave is not foreseeable thirty days in advance, an employee must request the leave as soon as practicable. Leave without pay will affect the eligibility of employee benefits. PTO will not be accrued during leave without pay. Compensation and benefits will be continued by third party providers as allowed for full-time employees enrolled in the VRS Hybrid Plan.

Continuation in the health care plan is permitted, provided that the employee continues to pay for their share of the premiums. If the employee fails to make their premium payments, the employee will be provided written notice of this failure and will be given an additional thirty days to make payment in full. If payment is not made after this notice, health benefit coverage will cease. If an employee does not return to work after the conclusion of the leave without pay event, the employee is responsible for reimbursing CRRL for CRRL's share of the health care premiums.

The Director of Human Resources will discuss the impact on other benefits, if a leave without pay request is approved.

It is the responsibility of the employee who is on an unpaid leave of absence to notify the Executive Director's Office at least two (2) weeks in advance of the date that the employee will return to work. Upon their return to work, the employee will be credited with continuity of service for purposes of the PTO accrual schedule and any vesting schedule under the VRS plan.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.91 Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

FMLA leave may be used:

- to care for an employee's child after birth, or for the placement with an employee of a child for adoption or foster care (provided that the leave is requested and used within twelve (12) months of the birth, placement, adoption, or foster care),
- to care for an employee's spouse, child, or parent (does not include in-laws) who has a serious health condition,
- when the employee is unable to work because of their own serious health condition.
- for military family leave entitlement (as described below)

Eligible employees are entitled to participate in the benefits of the federally mandated FMLA which is unpaid leave. CRRL requires an employee to use any accumulated paid leave (PTO and Personal Leave Bank) on an hour for hour basis in conjunction with FMLA leave. To be eligible under the FMLA, an employee must have worked for CRRL for twelve (12) months and must have worked at least 1,250 hours within the twelve (12) months preceding the start of the leave. Part-time and temporary employees who meet these requirements are eligible for FMLA leave.

An eligible employee is entitled to a total of twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave during a twelve-month period measured forward from the first day FMLA leave is taken by the employee. Employees will be required to use accumulated paid leave (PTO and Personal Leave Bank) on an hour for hour basis concurrent with the FMLA leave. If FMLA leave is exhausted before the end of the twelve-month period, the employee will not be entitled to further FMLA leave during this period.

An employee is required to request FMLA leave in writing at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to commence if the need for the leave is foreseeable. In circumstances when the leave is not foreseeable thirty days in advance, an employee must request the leave as soon as practicable. CRRL may designate leave as FMLA leave without a request from an employee.

FMLA leave taken for a serious health condition (as defined in this manual) of the employee or family member may be taken intermittently or on a reduced-hours basis.

FMLA leave taken for birth, adoption, placement, or foster care cannot be taken intermittently unless approved in advance. If both spouses work for CRRL, the total FMLA leave that may be taken for this event by both employees is twelve (12) weeks, pro-rated between them as the spouses choose. FMLA leave taken for the birth, adoption, placement, or foster care of a child must be taken within the twelve (12) months following the event.

Should CRRL obtain information that the employee was not FMLA eligible or the event did not qualify under FMLA, the designation of FMLA leave previously given may be withdrawn.

*Updated 7/26/18*



### **3.92 Health Benefits During FMLA**

If paid leave is used for FMLA purposes, an employee will maintain the same benefits as if working.

If the employee is on leave without pay, continuation in the health care plan is permitted, provided that the employee continues to pay for their share of the premiums. If the employee fails to make their premium payments, the employee will be provided written notice of this failure and will be given an additional thirty days to make payment in full. If payment is not made after this notice, health benefit coverage will cease. If an employee does not return to work after the conclusion of the FMLA leave, the employee is responsible for reimbursing CRRL for CRRL's share of the health care premiums paid.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.93 Serious Health Conditions**

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, or an incapacity lasting more than three (3) consecutive days and involving continuing treatment by a health care provider. Continuing treatment involves two or more treatments (or one treatment when the condition is such that continuing follow-up is or will be required) by a healthcare provider, pregnancy, prenatal care, or other chronic or long-term serious health conditions.

To qualify for leave due to the serious health condition of a family member, the family member must be incapable of self-care. To qualify for leave due to the serious health condition of the employee, the employee must be unable to work at all or unable to perform any of the essential functions of the employee's position.

Employees are required to obtain a health care provider certification for all absences for which FMLA leave is being requested. A chronic or long-term health condition or pregnancy does not require certification from a health care provider for each absence; however, a statement by the health care provider that the absence was due to the chronic condition or pregnancy may be requested by CRRL at its discretion.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.94 Military Family Leave Entitlements**

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty, or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week FMLA leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform their duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Eligible spouses who work for the same employer are also limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks in a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness if each spouse is a parent, spouse, son or daughter, or next of kin of the servicemember (commonly referred to as "military caregiver leave"). This limitation also applies to a combination of military caregiver leave and leave for the other qualifying reasons listed above.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.95 Job Restoration after FMLA**

Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee is entitled to be restored to the same position that was held before the start of the FMLA leave, or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. If an employee is unable to return to work after the FMLA leave benefits have been exhausted, the employee should contact the Director of Human Resources within one (1) week. The Executive Director's Office will make a determination provided that CRRL's operations will not be adversely affected.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.10 EXTENDED LEAVE WITHOUT PAY**

When special circumstances require an extended leave, and the employee is not FMLA eligible, the Executive Director's Office has the authority to grant an employee leave without pay provided that CRRL's operations will not be adversely affected. If an extended leave without pay is approved, the employee will receive written notice of such grant and will require all company property to be returned to CRRL before the leave begins.

Upon return to work, CRRL will use its best efforts to restore the employee to the same, or equivalent, position held prior to the commencement of the leave of absence. If the leave of absence was taken because of the employee's own health condition, CRRL reserves the right to require the employee to present a return-to-work certificate from the employee's attending physician.

In the event that the employee's position is filled or eliminated during the employee's absence, CRRL will attempt (within one (1) year of the employee's return) to offer to the employee the same, or equivalent, position when an opening occurs, and the employee will be given priority consideration for employment.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.11 Disciplinary Leave Without Pay**

An employee who is absent from work without prior approval shall receive no pay for the duration of the absence and may be subject to disciplinary action which may include dismissal. If extenuating circumstances exist for the unauthorized absence, due consideration will be given.

*Updated 7/26/18*

## **3.5 SEPARATION**

### **3.51 Termination Of Employment**

All employees of CRRL are employed at will. CRRL has no contract or guarantee of employment, implicit or explicit, with any employee. Therefore, termination of employment can be made by the employee or by the employer at any time, for any reason.

If an employee decides to leave their employment, CRRL requests that written notification be given to the immediate supervisor. A four (4) week notice of intention to leave is requested from professional librarians. A two (2) week notice of intention to leave is requested from all other personnel.

Regardless of the circumstances of an employee's termination of employment, the employee must return to CRRL all CRRL property—computer equipment, pagers, cellular phones, tools, confidential documents, credit cards, keys, or other confidential or proprietary information that belongs to, or relates to the operations of, CRRL.

Employees who resign and who are rehired by CRRL within six (6) months of their termination date, will be reinstated as if they were never terminated and will retain their years of service prior to the termination. Employees who resign and who are rehired more than six (6) months after their termination date will be treated as new employees and will not retain their previous years of service.

When an employee terminates employment, the employee will receive their paycheck for the last period they worked on the next regularly scheduled payday. The last paycheck will include payment for any accrued salary, as well as payment for any unused earned leave that had accrued through the employee's termination date. Benefits under the VRS

retirement plan, health/dental plan, and other insurance programs will be handled in accordance with the requirements of those benefit plans.



### **3.52 Retirement**

Employees must alert the Director of Human Resources of their intent to retire with as much notice as possible. At the time of retirement, defined by meeting VRS eligibility requirements for a full-time employee OR fifty (50) years of age plus ten (10) years of continuous service for part-time staff, an employee will be paid for no more than twelve months accumulation of leave at their current PTO accrual rate using their current salary at the time of separation.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.521 Phased Retirement**

CRRL supports a Phased Retirement Plan (PRP). PRP is an opportunity for pre-retirement reduction of hours of service while gradually phasing into retirement over a period of twelve months. Phased retirement is intended to support CRRL's excellence. It permits CRRL to retain the services and contributions of staff while providing orderly transition in the workplace, and enabling the individual to transition into retirement. Staff will enter into a written agreement with CRRL to determine the length of phased retirement and the plan for use of accrued PTO. Participants must work at least one-third of their regularly scheduled hours. Any exceptions and final approval rest with the Executive Director's Office.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.522 Early Retirement**

Central Rappahannock Regional Library can offer qualified employees an early retirement incentive program (ERIP) as part of its compensation/budget management process. The Executive Director shall consider and, as needed, make an ERIP offer as part of budget management.

In order to apply for ERIP, a full-time or part-time employee

- must have been employed by CRRL for a minimum of ten years,
- and must be currently employed in good standing.

The terms of an ERIP package will be determined by CRRL for each offering period and can differ from a previously offered ERIP. An employee must apply for participation on the designated timetable and each request is subject to approval from the Executive Director's Office.

In an extenuating situation that changes the employee's life circumstances, between approval of retirement date and the benefit payment, the employee can apply to withdraw from the ERIP- planned retirement. The Executive Director's Office will consider each request on a case-by-case basis.

An employee eligible and approved for ERIP will receive a lump- sum payout based on the terms currently being offered by CRRL. In addition, full-time employees will receive all retirement benefits outlined in CRRL retirement policies. In the event of the death of an ERIP-approved employee, the estate of the participant shall be paid the entitled funds.

Participants in ERIP cannot resume full-time employment with CRRL and cannot serve as a paid independent contractor with any agency or

business providing services to CRRL unless it is in a capacity that is not comparable to the employee's pre-retirement function or role within CRRL.

*Updated 7/26/18*

### **3.53 Workforce Reduction**

The Executive Director is responsible for determining the staff size and skills inventory necessary to meet the operating level of the Library. In the event that a reduction in staffing levels is necessary, the Library's goals are to minimize impact on essential service operations and to reduce hardships for employees. The first response to a need for reduction in staffing levels will be to allow naturally occurring vacancies to go unfilled whenever possible.

Reductions in force shall be based upon seniority when the following decision factors are relatively equal: work experience, work performance including performance appraisals as available, ability to perform the essential functions of the job, availability to work the required hours at the required location, attendance records, and disciplinary action. Employees laid off due to a reduction in force will be placed on a recall list for a period of one (1) year. The Library reserves the option to address reductions in force by first laying off temporary and part-time employees.

## **4.0 FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Central Rappahannock Regional Library enthusiastically supports the Friends of the Library which exists for the benefit of the Library. The Friends make it possible for the Library to provide resources to the community that would otherwise be unavailable. CRRL encourages the Friends of the Library in its fund raising and in its efforts to make library strengths and needs known to the public and to funding authorities. Funds raised by the Friends of the Library are not a substitute for adequate local funding.

The Executive Director serves as the liaison between the Library Board and the Friends of the Library. Although library staff are encouraged to support the Friends of the Library, staff may not hold office in the Friends' organization.

The Library may annually recognize the Friends in a manner deemed appropriate by the Executive Director.

## **5.0 BOARD OF TRUSTEES- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP**

### **5.1 Board Of Trustees**

The Board selects and appoints a highly qualified Executive Director. The Library Board establishes library policies by a majority vote of the members. Policy review and development shall be done in consultation with the Executive Director. Board members are not involved in day-to-day operations of the Library.

The Board shall represent the citizens of the region, shall keep them informed of library matters, and shall bring their needs to the attention of the Executive Director and Library Board as a whole.

The Board shall conduct its official communications with the counties' Boards of Supervisors and the City Council through the appropriate channels. Board members conducting informal discussions of library matters with county or city officials/staff shall keep the Board and the Executive Director informed. Federal "sunshine laws" apply to all Board of Trustee gatherings outside regular Board meetings.

The Board shall be responsible for requesting adequate financial support for the Library system from the appropriate funding bodies. In consultation with the Executive Director, the Board shall adopt an annual budget request for presentation to the jurisdictions.

Board members are encouraged to participate in the legislative process to effect change which is in the best interest of the Library.

Since any name change will directly impact the library system, the Library Board requests that any name changes should first be presented to the Library Board for discussion and their recommendation.

*Updated 2/26/18*



## **5.2 Executive-Director**

The Executive Director shall implement the policies of the Library Board and shall administer the Library by hiring, training, and directing the activities of the system's staff. The Executive Director is responsible for the formulation and administration of personnel procedures, including the assignments of duties, service standards, and staff development.

The Executive Director has the authority to hire and fire staff, make promotions and transfers, and change salaries in conformity with the classification and pay plan.

The Executive Director shall review policies, periodically making recommendations to the Board for additions or revisions.

The Executive Director shall file quarterly with the Library Board both library use and fiscal reports and reports on library projects demonstrating the Library's progress.

The Executive Director shall be the agent and administrator of all gifts to the Library with value up to \$15,000 and, with Board approval, of gifts that exceed that value.

The Executive Director shall administer the budget adopted by the Library Board. After consultation with the Board at the January–March quarterly meeting, the Executive Director shall be responsible for making additional budget line item adjustments as needed to meet year-end expenditure deadlines.

## **6.0 APPENDIX A**

### **LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- 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 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 abridgement 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 which 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.

### **Access For Children And Young People To Videotapes And Other Nonprint Formats: An Interpretation Of The *Library Bill Of Rights***

Library collections of videotapes, motion pictures, and other nonprint formats raise a number of intellectual freedom issues, especially regarding minors.

The interests of young people, like those of adults, are not limited by subject, theme, or level of sophistication. Librarians have a responsibility to ensure young people have access to materials and services that reflect diversity sufficient to meet their needs.

To guide librarians and others in resolving these issues, the American Library Association provides the following guidelines. Article V of the <http://www.ala.org/work/freedom/lbr.html> *Library Bill of Rights* says, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

*ALA's Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights* [http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/free\\_min.html](http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/free_min.html) states:

The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the Library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Parents—and only parents—have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children—and only their children—to library

resources. Parents or legal guardians who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials or facilities, should so advise their children. Librarians and governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to provide equal access to all library resources for all library users.

Policies which set minimum age limits for access to videotapes and/or other audiovisual materials and equipment, with or without parental permission, abridge library use for minors. Further, age limits based on the cost of the materials are unacceptable. Unless directly and specifically prohibited by law from circulating certain motion pictures and video productions to minors, librarians should apply the same standards to circulation of these materials as are applied to books and other materials.

Recognizing that libraries cannot act *in loco parentis*, ALA acknowledges and supports the exercise by parents of their responsibility to guide their own children's reading and viewing. Published reviews of films and videotapes and/or research works which provide information about the content, subject matter, and recommended audiences can be made available in conjunction with nonprint collections to assist parents in guiding their children without implicating the Library in censorship. This material may include information provided by video producers and distributors, promotional material on videotape packaging, and Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) ratings if they are included on the tape or in the packaging by the original publisher and/or if they appear in review sources or research works included in the Library's collection. Marking out or

removing ratings information from videotape packages constitutes expurgation or censorship.

MPAA and other rating services are private advisory codes and have no legal standing. For the Library to add such ratings to the materials if they are not already there, to post a list of such ratings with a collection, or to attempt to enforce such ratings through circulation policies or other procedures constitutes labeling, “an attempt to prejudice attitudes” about the material, and is unacceptable. The application of locally generated ratings schemes intended to provide content warnings to library users is also inconsistent with the *Library Bill of Rights*.

## **Access To Electronic Information, Services, And Networks: An Interpretation Of The *Library Bill Of Rights***

### **Introduction**

The world is in the midst of an electronic communications revolution. Based on its constitutional, ethical, and historical heritage, American librarianship is uniquely positioned to address the broad range of information issues being raised in this revolution. In particular, librarians address intellectual freedom from a strong ethical base and an abiding commitment to the preservation of the individual’s rights.

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. These rights extend to minors as well as adults. Libraries and librarians exist to facilitate the exercise of these rights by selecting, producing, providing access to,

identifying, retrieving, organizing, providing instruction in the use of, and preserving recorded expression regardless of the format or technology.

The American Library Association expresses these basic principles of librarianship in its *Code of Ethics* and in the *Library Bill of Rights* and its Interpretations. These serve to guide librarians and library governing bodies in addressing issues of intellectual freedom that arise when the Library provides access to electronic information, services, and networks. Issues arising from the still-developing technology of computer-mediated information generation, distribution, and retrieval need to be approached and regularly reviewed from a context of constitutional principles and ALA policies so that fundamental and traditional tenets of librarianship are not swept away.

Electronic information flows across boundaries and barriers despite attempts by individuals, governments, and private entities to channel or control it. Even so, many people, for reasons of technology, infrastructure, or socio-economic status do not have access to electronic information.

In making decisions about how to offer access to electronic information, each library should consider its mission, goals, objectives, cooperative agreements, and the needs of the entire community it serves.

### **The Rights Of Users**

All library system and network policies, procedures or regulations relating to electronic resources and services should be scrutinized for potential violation of user rights.

User policies should be developed according to the policies and guidelines established by the American Library Association, including *Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures affecting Access to Library Materials, Services, and Facilities*.

Users should not be restricted or denied access for expressing or receiving constitutionally protected speech. Users' access should not be changed without due process, including, but not limited to, formal notice and a means of appeal.

Although electronic systems may include distinct property rights and security concerns, such elements may not be employed as a subterfuge to deny users' access to information. Users have the right to be free of unreasonable limitations or conditions set by libraries, librarians, system administrators, vendors, network service providers, or others. Contracts, agreements, and licenses entered into by libraries on behalf of their users should not violate this right. Users also have a right to information, training and assistance necessary to operate the hardware and software provided by the Library.

Users have both the right of confidentiality and the right of privacy. The Library should uphold these rights by policy, procedure, and practice. Users should be advised, however, that because security is technically difficult to achieve, electronic transactions and files could become public. The rights of users who are minors shall in no way be abridged.

### **Equity Of Access**

Electronic information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the Library should be equally, readily and equitably accessible

to all library users. American Library Association policies oppose the charging of user fees for the provision of information services by all libraries and information services that receive their major support from public funds. It should be the goal of all libraries to develop policies concerning access to electronic resources in light of *Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights and Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures affecting Access to Library Materials, Services, and Facilities*.

### **Information Resources And Access**

Providing connections to global information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing material for a library collection. Determining the accuracy or authenticity of electronic information may present special problems. Some information accessed electronically may not meet a library's selection or collection development policy. It is, therefore, left to each user to determine what is appropriate. Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of electronic resources should provide guidance to their own children.

Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to information available via electronic resources because of its allegedly controversial content or because of the librarian's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation. Information retrieved or utilized electronically should be considered constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court with appropriate jurisdiction.

Libraries, acting within their mission and objectives, must support access to information on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of each user, regardless of the user's age or the content of the material. Libraries have an



obligation to provide access to government information available in electronic format. Libraries and librarians should not deny access to information solely on the grounds that it is perceived to lack value.

In order to prevent the loss of information, and to preserve the cultural record, libraries may need to expand their selection or collection development policies to ensure preservation, in appropriate formats, of information obtained electronically.

Electronic resources provide unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. Libraries and librarians should provide access to information presenting all points of view. The provision of access does not imply sponsorship or endorsement. These principles pertain to electronic resources no less than they do to the more traditional sources of information in libraries.

### **Questions And Answers: Access To Electronic Information, Services, And Networks: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

Following the initial adoption by the ALA Council of [\*Access to Electronic Information, Services and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights\*](#) in January, 1996, the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee produced a sample set of questions and answers to clarify the this *Interpretation's* implications and applications.

As librarians, we have a professional obligation to strive for free access to all information resources. However, many of the questions concerning electronic information will not have a single answer. ALA recognizes that each library needs to develop policies in keeping with its mission, objectives,

and users. Librarians also need to be cognizant of local legislation and judicial decisions that may affect implementation of their policies.

## **Introduction**

### **1. What are the factors that uniquely position American librarianship to provide access to electronic information?**

Electronic media offer an unprecedented forum for the sharing of information and ideas envisioned by the Founding Fathers in the U.S. Constitution. Their vision cannot be realized unless libraries provide free access to electronic information, services, and networks.

Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and others laid the basis for a government that made education, access to information, and toleration for dissent cornerstones of a great democratic experiment. With geographic expansion and the rise of a mass press, American government facilitated these constitutional principles through the creation of such innovative institutions as the public school, land grant colleges, and the Library. By the close of the 19th century, professionally trained librarians developed specialized techniques in support of their democratic mission. In the 1930's, the Library *Bill of Rights* acknowledged librarians' professional and ethical responsibilities to the Constitution's promise of access to information in all formats to all people.

### **2. What is the Library's role in facilitating freedom of expression in an electronic arena?**

Libraries are an essential part of the national information infrastructure, providing people with access and participation in the

electronic arena. They are fundamental to the informed debate demanded by the Constitution and for the provision of access to electronic information resources to those who might otherwise be excluded.

3. **Why should libraries extend access to electronic information resources to minors?**

Those libraries with a mission that includes service to minors should make available to them a full range of information necessary to become thinking adults and the informed electorate envisioned in the Constitution. The opportunity to participate responsibly in the electronic arena is also vital for nurturing the information literacy skills demanded by the Information Age. Librarians need to remember that minors also possess First Amendment rights. Only parents and legal guardians have the right and responsibility to restrict their children's—and only their own children's—access to any electronic resource.

4. **Do the policies of ALA regarding intellectual freedom and ethics apply to electronic information, services and networks in libraries?**

Yes, because information is information regardless of format. Library resources in electronic form are increasingly recognized as vital to the provision of information that is the core of the Library's role in society.

5. **Does the ALA require that libraries adopt the Library *Bill of Rights* or the ALA *Code of Ethics*?**

No. ALA has no authority to govern or regulate libraries. ALA's policies are voluntary and serve only as guidelines for local policy development.

6. **Does ALA censure libraries or librarians who do not adhere to or adopt the Library *Bill of Rights* or the ALA *Code of Ethics*?**

No, ALA does not.

7. **Do libraries need to develop policies about access to electronic information, services, and networks?**

In view of the complex issues associated with access to electronic information, the ALA strongly recommends that libraries formally adopt and periodically reexamine policies that develop from the missions and goals specific to their institutions.

### **Rights Of Users**

8. **How can libraries impact vendors/network providers/licensors when they attempt to limit or edit access to electronic information?**

Librarians have a mandate to be strong advocates of open access to information. Therefore, when purchasing electronic information resources, librarians should conduct contract negotiations with vendors/network providers/licensors to ensure the least restrictive access in current and future products.

Libraries, themselves, along with any parent institution and consortia partners, should also communicate their intellectual freedom concerns

and public responsibilities in the production of their own electronic information resources.

**9. How can libraries help to ensure library user confidentiality in regard to electronic information access?**

Librarians must be aware of customer confidentiality laws on library records for their particular state and community. In accordance with such laws and professional and ethical responsibilities, librarians should ensure and routinely review policies and procedures for maintaining confidentiality of personally identifiable use of library materials, facilities, or services. These especially include electronic circulation and online use records.

Electronic records on individual use patterns should also be strictly safeguarded. Software and protocols should be designed for the automatic and timely deletion of personal identifiers from the tracking elements within electronic databases. System access to computer terminals or other stations also should be designed to eliminate indicators of the research strategy or use patterns of any identifiable customer. For example, the efforts of the last user of a terminal or program should not remain on the monitor or be easily retrievable from a buffer or cache by subsequent users. Methods used by libraries or institutions to monitor reserving computer time and the amount of time spent in electronic information resources also must protect the confidentiality rights of customers.

Libraries and their institutions should provide physical environments that facilitate user privacy for accessing electronic information. For instance, libraries should consider placing terminals, printers, and access stations so that user privacy is enhanced. Computer accessories, such as privacy screens, offer additional protection.

Where resources are limited, libraries should consider time, place, and manner restrictions.

Finally, libraries must be sensitive to the special needs for confidential access to electronic information sources of physically challenged customers.

**10. Our library is just one of many autonomous institutions in a consortium. How can we be sure that our cooperating partners honor the confidentiality of our library users in a shared network environment?**

This is a contractual and legal matter. The importance of confidentiality of personally identifiable information about library users transcends individual institutional and type of library boundaries. Libraries should establish and regularly review interlibrary and interagency cooperative agreements to ensure clear confidentiality policies and procedures, which obligate all members of a cooperative, or all departments and branches within a parent institution.

**11. Do libraries need a use policy for electronic information access? If so, what elements should be considered for inclusion?**

Access questions are rooted in Constitutional mandates and a *Library Bill of Rights* that reach across all media. These should be professionally interpreted through general service policies that also relate to the specific mission and objectives of the institution. Such general policies can benefit from the legacy and precedents within the *ALA's Intellectual Freedom Manual*, including new interpretations for electronic resources.

Reasonable restrictions placed on the time, place, and manner of library access should be used only when necessary to achieve substantial library managerial objectives and only in the least restrictive manner possible. Libraries should focus on developing policies that ensure broad access to information resources of all kinds. Policies should not limit the kinds of information accessed by which customers and in what manner.

**12. Why shouldn't parental permission be required for minor access to electronic information?**

As with any other information format, parents are responsible for determining what they wish their own children to access electronically. Libraries may need to help parents understand their options during the evolving information revolution, but should not be in the policing position of enforcing parental restrictions within the Library. In addition, libraries cannot use children as an excuse to violate their Constitutional duty to help provide for an educated adult electorate.

The Library *Bill of Rights*—its various *Interpretations* (especially *Free Access to Libraries for Minors*; *Access for Children and Young People to Videotapes and Other Nonprint Formats*), and ALA's *Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities*—also endorse the rights of youth to library resources and information as part of their inalienable rights and the passage to informed adulthood. Electronic information access is no different in these regards.

**13. Does our library have to make provisions for customers with disabilities to access electronic information?**

Yes. The Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal and state laws forbid providers of public services, whether publicly or privately governed, from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. All library information services, including access to electronic information, should be accessible to customers regardless of disability.

Many methods are available and under development to make electronic information universally accessible, including adaptive devices, software, and human assistance. Libraries must consider such tools in trying to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in the design or provision of electronic information services.

### **Equity Of Access**

#### **14. My library recognizes different classes of users. Is this a problem?**

The mission and objectives of some libraries recognizes distinctions between classes of users. For example, academic libraries may have different categories of users (e.g., faculty, students, others). Public libraries may distinguish between residents and non-residents.

School library media centers embrace curricular support as their primary mission; some have further expanded access to their collections. Special libraries vary their access policies, depending on their definition of primary clientele. Establishing different levels of users should not automatically assume the need for different levels of access.

#### **15. Does the statement that “electronic information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the Library should be equally, readily, and equitably available to all library users”**



**mean that exactly the same service must be available to anyone who wants to use the Library?**

No. It means that access to services should not be denied on the basis of an arbitrary classification; for example, age or physical ability to use the equipment. This phrase, from *Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, clarifies that simply making printed information sources available to those unable to pay while charging for electronic information sources abridges the principles of equality and equity.

**16. Which is a higher priority: To offer more information or not to charge fees? Does this mean my library cannot charge fees?**

The higher priority is free services. Charging fees creates barriers to access. That is why ALA has urged librarians, in *Economic Barriers to Information Access*, to “resist the temptation to impose user fees to alleviate financial pressures, at long-term cost to institutional integrity and public confidence in libraries.”

**17. Does “provision of information services” include printouts?**

Whenever possible, all services should be without fees. In any case, fees should not create a barrier to access. Translated to the electronic environment, this means that some libraries will provide the text on the screen at no charge, but might charge for printouts.

**18. If my library has no “major support from public funds,” can we then charge fees?**

Yes, but ALA advocates achieving equitable access and avoiding and eliminating barriers to information and ideas whenever possible.

**19. What do you do if one person monopolizes the equipment?**

Libraries should address this issue in their use policies. Time, place, and manner restrictions should be applied equitably to all users.

**Information Resources And Access**

**20. How does providing connections to “global information, services, and networks” differ from selecting and purchasing material for an individual library?**

Selection begins with the institution’s mission and objectives. The librarian performs an initial selection from available resources, and then the user makes a choice from that collection. Many electronic resources, such as CDs, are acquired for the Library’s collection in this traditional manner. Collections consist of fixed discrete items.

When libraries provide Internet access, they provide a means for people to use the wealth of information stored on computers throughout the world, whose ever-changing contents are created, maintained and made available beyond the Library. The Library also provides a means for the individual user to choose for him- or herself the resources accessed and to interact electronically with other computer users throughout the world.

**21. How can libraries use their selection expertise to help customers use the Internet?**

Libraries should play a proactive role in guiding users, especially parents and their children, to the most effective locations and answers. Library Web sites are one starting place to the vast resources of the

Internet. All libraries are encouraged to develop Web sites, including links, to Internet resources to meet the information needs of their users. These links should be made within the existing mission, collection development policy, and selection criteria of the Library.

**22. Should the Library deny access to Constitutionally protected speech on the Internet in order to protect its users or reflect community values?**

No. The Library should not deny access to constitutionally protected speech. People have a right to receive constitutionally protected speech, and any restriction of those rights imposed by a library violates the U.S. Constitution. Only a court of law can judge speech to be outside of the protection of the First Amendment.

**23. Does using software that filters or blocks access to electronic information resources on the Internet violate *Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*?**

This interpretation states that libraries and librarians should not deny access to constitutionally protected information. The use of filters presents a number of complex legal, technical and ethical issues. For a discussion of these problems, librarians need to review information located on the Office for Intellectual Freedom Web page, "Filters and Filtering."

**24. Why do libraries have an obligation to provide government information in electronic format?**

The role of libraries is to provide ideas and information across the spectrum of social and political thought and to make these ideas and

this information available to anyone who needs or wants it. In a democracy, libraries have a particular obligation to provide library users with information necessary for participation in self-governance. Because access to government information is rapidly shifting to electronic format only, libraries should plan to continue to provide access to information in this format, as well.

**25. What is the Library's role in the preservation of information in electronic formats?**

The online electronic medium is ephemeral and information may disappear without efforts to save it. Libraries may need to preserve and archive electronic information critical to their mission.

**26. Does "must support access to information on all subjects" mean a library must provide material on all subjects for all users, even if those users are not part of the Library's community of users or the material is not appropriate for the Library?**

The institution's mission and objectives will drive these decisions.

**27. The Interpretation states that libraries should not deny access to resources, solely because they are perceived to lack value. Does this mean the Library must buy or obtain every electronic resource available?**

No. The institution's mission and objectives will drive these decisions.

**28. How can the Library avoid becoming a game room and still provide access to this material?**

Libraries need to develop policies that address time, place, or manner restrictions when determining the use of electronic equipment and resources. Such restrictions should not be based on content.

**29. Do copyright laws apply to electronic information?**

Yes. Librarians have professional and ethical responsibilities to keep abreast of copyright and fair use rights. This responsibility applies to the Library's own online publications, contractual obligations with authors and publishers, and informing library users of copyright laws that apply to their use of electronic information.

**Access To Library Resources And Services Regardless Of Gender Or Sexual Orientation: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

American libraries exist and function within the context of a body of laws derived from the United States Constitution and the [First Amendment](#). The [Library Bill of Rights](#) embodies the basic policies which guide libraries in the provision of services, materials, and programs.

In the preamble to its *Library Bill of Rights*, the American Library Association affirms that all [emphasis added] libraries are forums for information and ideas. This concept of forum and its accompanying principle of inclusiveness pervade all six Articles of the Library Bill of Rights.

The American Library Association stringently and unequivocally maintains that libraries and librarians have an obligation to resist efforts that

systematically exclude materials dealing with any subject matter, including gender or sexual orientation:

- Article I of the Library *Bill of Rights* states that “Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.” The Association affirms that books and other materials coming from gay presses, gay, lesbian, or bisexual authors or other creators, and materials regardless of format or services dealing with gay lifestyles are protected by the Library *Bill of Rights*. Librarians are obligated by the Library *Bill of Rights* to endeavor to select materials without regard to the gender or sexual orientation of their creators by using the criteria identified in their written, approved selection policies.
- Article II maintains that “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.” Library services, materials, and programs representing diverse points of view on gender or sexual orientation should be considered for purchase and inclusion in library collections and programs. The Association affirms that attempts to proscribe or remove materials dealing with gay or lesbian life without regard to the written, approved selection policy violate this tenet and constitute censorship.
- Articles III and IV mandate that libraries “challenge censorship” and cooperate with those “resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.”
- Article V holds that “A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background or views.” In the Library *Bill of Rights* and all its *Interpretations*, it is intended that:

“origin” encompasses all the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in the circumstances of their birth; “age” encompasses all the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in their levels of development and maturity; “background” encompasses all the characteristics of individuals that are a result of their life experiences; and “views” encompasses all the opinions and beliefs held and expressed by individuals.

Therefore, Article V of the Library *Bill of Rights* mandates that library services, materials, and programs be available to all members of the community the Library serves, without regard to gender or sexual orientation. This includes providing youth with comprehensive sex education literature.

- Article VI maintains that “Libraries which 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.” This protection extends to all groups and members of the community the Library serves, without regard to gender or sexual orientation.

The American Library Association holds that any attempt, be it legal or extra-legal, to regulate or suppress library services, materials, or programs must be resisted in order that protected expression is not abridged.

Librarians have a professional obligation to ensure that all library users have free and equal access to the entire range of library services, materials, and programs. Therefore, the Association strongly opposes any effort to limit access to information and ideas. The Association also encourages librarians to proactively support the First Amendment rights of all library users, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

## **Diversity In Collection Development: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

Throughout history, the focus of censorship has fluctuated from generation to generation. Books and other materials have not been selected or have been removed from library collections for many reasons, among which are prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, sexual forms of expression, and other topics of a potentially controversial nature.

Some examples of censorship may include removing or not selecting materials because they are considered by some as racist or sexist; not purchasing conservative religious materials; not selecting materials about or by minorities because it is thought these groups or interests are not represented in a community; or not providing information on or materials from non-mainstream political entities.

Librarians may seek to increase user awareness of materials on various social concerns by many means, including, but not limited to, issuing bibliographies and presenting exhibits and programs.

Librarians have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan. Access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the user, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if they are offensive to the librarian or the user. Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article II of the [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#): "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.” A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers. Collection development responsibilities include selecting materials in the languages in common use in the community which the Library serves. Collection development and the selection of materials should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures.

There are many complex facets to any issue, and variations of context in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be fair, just, and equitable and to give all library users equal protection in guarding against violation of the Library customer’s right to read, view, or listen to materials and resources protected by the [First Amendment](#), no matter what the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector. Librarians have an obligation to protect library collections from removal of materials based on personal bias or prejudice, and to select and support the access to materials on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs and interests of all persons in the community which the Library serves. This includes materials that reflect political, economic, religious, social, minority, and sexual issues.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Toleration is meaningless without tolerance for what some may consider detestable. Librarians cannot justly permit their own presearches to limit their degree of tolerance in collection development, because freedom is indivisible.

## **Economic Barriers To Information Access: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

A democracy presupposes an informed citizenry. The [First Amendment](#) mandates the right of all persons to free expression, and the corollary right to receive the constitutionally protected expression of others. The publicly supported library provides free and equal access to information for all people of the community the Library serves. While the roles, goals and objectives of publicly supported libraries may differ, they share this common mission.

The Library's essential mission must remain the first consideration for librarians and governing bodies faced with economic pressures and competition for funding.

In support of this mission, the American Library Association has enumerated certain principles of library services in the Library Bill of Rights.

### **Principles Governing Fines, Fees, And User Charges**

Article I of the Library *Bill of Rights* states:

Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the Library serves.

Article V of the Library *Bill of Rights* states:

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

The American Library Association opposes the charging of user fees for the provision of information by all libraries and information services that receive

their major support from public funds. All information resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the Library, regardless of technology, format, or methods of delivery, should be readily, equally and equitably accessible to all library users.

Libraries that adhere to these principles systematically monitor their programs of service for potential barriers to access and strive to eliminate such barriers when they occur. All library policies and procedures, particularly those involving fines, fees, or other user charges, should be scrutinized for potential barriers to access. All services should be designed and implemented with care, so as not to infringe on or interfere with the provision or delivery of information and resources for all users. Services should be re-evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that the Library's basic mission remains uncompromised.

Librarians and governing bodies should look for alternative models and methods of library administration that minimize distinctions among users based on their economic status or financial condition. They should resist the temptation to impose user fees to alleviate financial pressures, at long term cost to institutional integrity and public confidence in libraries.

Library services that involve the provision of information, regardless of format, technology, or method of delivery, should be made available to all library users on an equal and equitable basis. Charging fees for the use of library collections, services, programs, or facilities that were purchased with public funds raises barriers to access. Such fees effectively abridge or deny access for some members of the community because they reinforce distinctions among users based on their ability and willingness to pay.

## **Principles Governing Conditions Of Funding**

Article II of the Library *Bill of Rights* states:

Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Article III of the Library *Bill of Rights* states:

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

Article IV of the Library *Bill of Rights* states:

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

The American Library Association opposes any legislative or regulatory attempt to impose content restrictions on library resources, or to limit user access to information, as a condition of funding for publicly supported libraries and information services.

The First Amendment guarantee of freedom of expression is violated when the right to receive that expression is subject to arbitrary restrictions based on content.

Librarians and governing bodies should examine carefully any terms or conditions attached to library funding and should oppose attempts to limit through such conditions full and equal access to information because of content. This principle applies equally to private gifts or bequests and to public funds. In particular, librarians and governing bodies have an obligation to reject such restrictions when the effect of the restriction is to limit equal and equitable access to information.

Librarians and governing bodies should cooperate with all efforts to create a community consensus that publicly supported libraries require funding unfettered by restrictions. Such a consensus supports the Library mission to provide the free and unrestricted exchange of information and ideas necessary to a functioning democracy.

## **Exhibit Spaces And Bulletin Boards: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

Libraries often provide exhibit spaces and bulletin boards. The uses made of these spaces should conform to the [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#): Article I states, "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation." Article II states, "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Article VI maintains that exhibit space should be made available "on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use."

In developing library exhibits, staff members should endeavor to present a broad spectrum of opinion and a variety of viewpoints. Libraries should not shrink from developing exhibits because of controversial content or because of the beliefs or affiliations of those whose work is represented. Just as libraries do not endorse the viewpoints of those whose works are represented in their collections, libraries also do not endorse the beliefs or viewpoints of topics which may be the subject of library exhibits.

Exhibit areas often are made available for use by community groups. Libraries should formulate a written policy for the use of these exhibit areas

to assure that space is provided on an equitable basis to all groups which request it.

Written policies for exhibit space use should be stated in inclusive rather than exclusive terms. For example, a policy that the Library's exhibit space is open "to organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, or charitable activities" is an inclusive statement of the limited uses of the exhibit space. This defined limitation would permit religious groups to use the exhibit space because they engage in intellectual activities, but would exclude most commercial uses of the exhibit space.

A publicly supported library may limit use of its exhibit space to strictly "library-related" activities, provided that the limitation is clearly circumscribed and is viewpoint neutral.

Libraries may include in this policy rules regarding the time, place, and manner of use of the exhibit space, so long as the rules are content-neutral and are applied in the same manner to all groups wishing to use the space. A library may wish to limit access to exhibit space to groups within the community served by the Library. This practice is acceptable provided that the same rules and regulations apply to everyone, and that exclusion is not made on the basis of the doctrinal, religious, or political beliefs of the potential users.

The Library should not censor or remove an exhibit because some members of the community may disagree with its content. Those who object to the content of any exhibit held at the Library should be able to submit their complaint and/or their own exhibit proposal to be judged according to the policies established by the Library.

Libraries may wish to post a permanent notice near the exhibit area stating that the Library does not advocate or endorse the viewpoints of exhibits or exhibitors.

Libraries which make bulletin boards available to public groups for posting notices of public interest should develop criteria for the use of these spaces based on the same considerations as those outlined above. Libraries may wish to develop criteria regarding the size of material to be displayed, the length of time materials may remain on the bulletin board, the frequency with which material may be posted for the same group, and the geographic area from which notices will be accepted.

## **Expurgation Of Library Materials: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

Expurgating library materials is a violation of the [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#). Expurgation as defined by this interpretation includes any deletion, excision, alteration, editing, or obliteration of any part(s) of books or other library resources by the Library, its agent, or its parent institution (if any). By such expurgation, the Library is in effect denying access to the complete work and the entire spectrum of ideas that the work intended to express. Such action stands in violation of Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the *Library Bill of Rights*, which state that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval," and that "Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment."

The act of expurgation has serious implications. It involves a determination that it is necessary to restrict access to the complete work. This is censorship. When a work is expurgated, under the assumption that certain portions of that work would be harmful to minors, the situation is no less serious.

Expurgation of any books or other library resources imposes a restriction, without regard to the rights and desires of all library users, by limiting access to ideas and information.

Further, expurgation without written permission from the holder of the copyright on the material may violate the copyright provisions of the United States Code.

## **Free Access To Libraries For Minors: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

Library policies and procedures which effectively deny minors equal access to all library resources available to other users violate the [Library Bill of Rights](#). The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the [Library Bill of Rights](#) states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the Library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based



solely on the chronological age, educational level, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities which fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, level of education, or legal emancipation.

The selection and development of library resources should not be diluted because of minors having the same access to library resources as adult users. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the Library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Librarians and governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions on access to library resources in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections from parents or anyone else. The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries do not authorize librarians or governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents or legal guardians. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that parents—and only parents—have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children—and only their children—to library resources. Parents or legal guardians who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials or facilities, should so advise their

children. Librarians and governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to provide equal access to all library resources for all library users.

Librarians have a professional commitment to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free and equal access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

### **Library-initiated Programs As A Resource: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

Library-initiated programs support the mission of the Library by providing users with additional opportunities for information, education, and recreation. Article I of the [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#) states: "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the Library serves." Library-initiated programs take advantage of library staff expertise, collections, services and facilities to increase access to information and information resources. Library-initiated programs introduce users and potential users to the resources of the Library and to the Library's primary function as a facilitator of information access. The Library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals as part of its own effort to address information needs and to facilitate information access in the community the Library serves.

Library-initiated programs on site and in other locations include, but are not limited to, speeches, community forums, discussion groups, demonstrations, displays, and live or media presentations.

Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language. Library-initiated programs that cross language and cultural barriers introduce otherwise unserved populations to the resources of the Library and provide access to information.

Library-initiated programs “should not be proscribed or removed (or canceled) because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval” of the contents of the program or the views expressed by the participants, as stated in Article II of the [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#). Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by the participants, any more than the purchase of material for the Library collection constitutes an endorsement of the contents of the material or the views of its creator.

Library-initiated programs are a library resource, and, as such, are developed in accordance with written guidelines, as approved and adopted by the Library’s policy-making body. These guidelines should include an endorsement of the [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#) and set forth the Library’s commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Library staff select topics, speakers and resource materials for library-initiated programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Topics, speakers and resource materials are not excluded

from library-initiated programs because of possible controversy. Concerns, questions or complaints about library-initiated programs are handled according to the same written policy and procedures which govern reconsiderations of other library resources.

Library-initiated programs are offered free of charge and are open to all. Article V of the Library *Bill of Rights* states: "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

The "right to use a library" encompasses all of the resources the Library offers, including the right to attend library-initiated programs. Libraries do not deny or abridge access to library resources, including library-initiated programs, based on an individual's economic background and ability to pay.

### **Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

Many libraries provide meeting rooms for individuals and groups as part of a program of service. Article VI of the <http://www.ala.org/work/freedom/lbr.html> *Library Bill of Rights* states that such facilities should be made available to the public served by the given library "on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use."

Libraries maintaining meeting room facilities should develop and publish policy statements governing use. These statements can properly define time, place, or manner of use; such qualifications should not pertain to the content of a meeting or to the beliefs or affiliations of the sponsors. These

statements should be made available in any commonly used language within the community served.

If meeting rooms in libraries supported by public funds are made available to the general public for non-library sponsored events, the Library may not exclude any group based on the subject matter to be discussed or based on the ideas that the group advocates. For example, if a library allows charities and sports clubs to discuss their activities in library meeting rooms, then the Library should not exclude partisan political or religious groups from discussing their activities in the same facilities. If a library opens its meeting rooms to a wide variety of civic organizations, then the Library may not deny access to a religious organization. Libraries may wish to post a permanent notice near the meeting room stating that the Library does not advocate or endorse the viewpoints of meetings or meeting room users.

Written policies for meeting room use should be stated in inclusive rather than exclusive terms. For example, a policy that the Library's facilities are open "to organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, or charitable activities" is an inclusive statement of the limited uses to which the facilities may be put. This defined limitation would permit religious groups to use the facilities because they engage in intellectual activities, but would exclude most commercial uses of the facility.

A publicly supported library may limit use of its meeting rooms to strictly "library-related" activities, provided that the limitation is clearly circumscribed and is viewpoint neutral.

Written policies may include limitations on frequency of use, and whether or not meetings held in library meeting rooms must be open to the public. If

state and local laws permit private as well as public sessions of meetings in libraries, libraries may choose to offer both options. The same standard should be applicable to all.

If meetings are open to the public, libraries should include in their meeting room policy statement a section which addresses admission fees. If admission fees are permitted, libraries shall seek to make it possible that these fees do not limit access to individuals who may be unable to pay, but who wish to attend the meeting. Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states that “a person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.” It is inconsistent with Article V to restrict indirectly access to library meeting rooms based on an individual’s or group’s ability to pay for that access.

## **Privacy: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

### **Introduction**

Privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association. The courts have established a <http://www.ala.org/work/first.html> First Amendment right to receive information in a publicly funded library. Further, the courts have upheld the right to privacy based on the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution. Many states provide guarantees of privacy in their constitutions and statute law. Numerous decisions in case law have defined and extended rights to privacy.

In a library (physical or virtual), the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one’s interest examined or scrutinized by others. Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf.

Protecting user privacy and confidentiality has long been an integral part of the mission of libraries. The ALA has affirmed a right to privacy since 1939. Existing ALA policies affirm that confidentiality is crucial to freedom of inquiry. Rights to privacy and confidentiality also are implicit in the *Library Bill of Rights*' guarantee of free access to library resources for all users.

## **Rights Of Library Users**

The [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#) affirms the ethical imperative to provide unrestricted access to information and to guard against impediments to open inquiry. Article IV states: "Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas." When users recognize or fear that their privacy or confidentiality is compromised, true freedom of inquiry no longer exists.

In all areas of librarianship, best practice leaves the user in control of as many choices as possible. These include decisions about the selection of, access to, and use of information. Lack of privacy and confidentiality has a chilling effect on users' choices. All users have a right to be free from any unreasonable intrusion into or surveillance of their lawful library use. Users have the right to be informed what policies and procedures govern the amount and retention of personally identifiable information, why that information is necessary for the Library, and what the user can do to maintain their privacy. Library users expect and in many places have a legal right to have their information protected and kept private and confidential by anyone with direct or indirect access to that information. In addition, Article V of the [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#) states: "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

This article precludes the use of profiling as a basis for any breach of privacy rights. Users have the right to use a library without any abridgement of privacy that may result from equating the subject of their inquiry with behavior.

### **Responsibilities In Libraries**

The Library profession has a long-standing commitment to an ethic of facilitating, not monitoring, access to information. This commitment is implemented locally through development, adoption, and adherence to privacy policies that are consistent with applicable federal, state, and local law. Everyone (paid or unpaid) who provides governance, administration, or service in libraries has a responsibility to maintain an environment respectful and protective of the privacy of all users. Users have the responsibility to respect each others' privacy.

For administrative purposes, librarians may establish appropriate time, place, and manner restrictions on the use of library resources. In keeping with this principle, the collection of personally identifiable information should only be a matter of routine or policy when necessary for the fulfillment of the mission of the Library. Regardless of the technology used, everyone who collects or accesses personally identifiable information in any format has a legal and ethical obligation to protect confidentiality.

### **Conclusion**

The American Library Association affirms that rights of privacy are necessary for intellectual freedom and are fundamental to the ethics and practice of librarianship.



## **Questions And Answers On Privacy And Confidentiality**

What prompted the Intellectual Freedom Committee to take on the privacy question now?

In 1999 ALA Council resolved that the Library and Information Technology Association be asked to examine the impact of new technologies on customer privacy and the confidentiality of electronic records. The Taskforce on Privacy and Confidentiality in the Electronic Environment was formed at the 1999 ALA Midwinter Conference with broad participation from across ALA.

In July 2000, ALA Council approved the *Final Report of the Task Force on Privacy and Confidentiality in the Electronic Environment* and referred it to the Intellectual Freedom Committee for review. The recommendations contained therein were:

1. That ALA revise its policy statements related to *Confidentiality of Library Records* (rev. 1986) and *Concerning Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information About Library Users* (1991), in order to specifically and appropriately incorporate Internet privacy.
2. That ALA develop model privacy policies, instructional materials, and privacy "best practices" documents for libraries; and
3. That ALA urge that all libraries adopt a privacy statement on Web pages and post privacy policies in the Library which cover the issues of privacy in Internet use as accessed through the Library's services.

In its own end-of-conference report to Council, the IFC responded to this referral by saying: "The Intellectual Freedom Committee gladly accepts Council's charge to review the recommendations. IFC has been reviewing

and will continue to monitor the appropriateness of all ALA policies regarding privacy and confidentiality and will address all three recommendations in our Midwinter Meeting report to Council.”

At the 2001 ALA Midwinter Meeting, the IFC established a standing Privacy Subcommittee, which is charged to monitor ongoing privacy developments in technology, politics and legislation and identify needs and resources for librarians and library users.

At its 2001 spring meeting, the committee returned to Council’s original request to consider developing an Interpretation of the Library *Bill of Rights* on Privacy. Initial work began on a draft Interpretation at that time and continued through the 2001 Annual Conference and the committee’s 2001 fall meeting. In its deliberations, the committee thought carefully about the implications of 9/11 on privacy issues. We have sought to develop the Interpretation for lasting impact, knowing that this issue was of importance to libraries prior to those events and that it has enduring importance for those who rely on us in our libraries.

## **Basic Concepts**

### **What is the difference between privacy and confidentiality?**

In a library, the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one’s interest examined or scrutinized by others.

Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information (see “What is personally identifiable information” below) about users and keeps that information private on their behalf. Confidentiality is a library’s responsibility. This responsibility is assumed when library procedures create records such as closed-stack call slips, computer sign-up

sheets, registration for equipment or facilities, circulation records, what Web sites were visited, reserve notices, or research notes.

In protecting the privacy rights and the confidentiality rights of library users, librarians should limit the degree to which personally identifiable information is monitored, collected, disclosed, and distributed.

**What is “personally identifiable information?” Why is it such a wordy phrase?**

“Personally identifiable information” (PII) seems to have become the generally accepted language because it covers a greater range than “personal identification,” such as a driver’s license. The phrase has been in use in ALA policy since the 1991 adoption of the *Policy Concerning Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information about Library Users*. PII connects you to what you bought with your credit card, what you checked out with your library card, and what Web sites you visited where you picked up cookies. More than simple identification, PII can build up a picture of your tastes and interests —a dossier of sorts, though crude and often inaccurate. While targeted advertising is the obvious use for PII, some people would use this information to assess your character, decide if you were a security risk, or embarrass you for opposing them. Because of the chilling effect that such scrutiny can have on open inquiry and freedom of expression, libraries and bookstores have long resisted requests to release information that connects individual persons with specific books.

**If there is no reasonable expectation of privacy in a public place, how can anyone expect privacy in a library?**

A library cannot be responsible for someone being seen or recognized in a library, but should take steps to protect user privacy whenever possible. That is, in a library, a user's face may be recognized, but that does not mean that the subject of the user's interest must also be known. Library buildings, interior design, and functions can be planned to preserve privacy of inquiry, even while the user's presence and behavior remain observable. Thus, both safety and privacy are maintained. To the greatest extent possible, the user should be able to work independently, both to afford privacy and to reduce the quantity of confidential records for which the Library must be responsible.

### **What about the rights of staff, volunteers, and trustees?**

*Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, like the *Library Bill of Rights* itself, addresses the rights of library users. As such, this new Interpretation does have implications for staff, volunteers, and trustees. Librarians involved in training volunteers, new employees, or trustees should inform them of the requirements that they not abuse confidentiality and that they protect library users rights of privacy. When staff are themselves library users, they are entitled to equal protection of their privacy and confidentiality of their records as library users.

### **If users have rights and librarians have responsibilities, don't users also have responsibilities to protect their own privacy?**

*Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, like the *Library Bill of Rights* itself, addresses the rights of library users. Text is included in this new Interpretation about the right of the user to be informed of library policy and practices that create choices for the user about personal privacy.

Librarians should educate the public, through a variety of methods, about information and tools that can help to preserve privacy or protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information. In each library transaction in which an individual is asked to divulge personally identifiable information, library staff need to ensure that the individual is making an informed choice. Librarians should clarify any trade-offs between greater convenience and greater privacy. Users also need to understand their own responsibility to respect each one another's privacy.

### **Does privacy include a right to avoid exposure to unwanted images?**

Protecting privacy in the Library setting ensures open inquiry without fear of having one's interests observed by others. Ensuring user privacy not only benefits the user, but also those who prefer not to see what other users view. When there is a conflict between the right of individuals to view constitutionally protected speech and the sensibilities of unwilling viewers, free expression rights have generally prevailed in the Courts unless unwilling viewers are unable to avert their eyes. Libraries may address the concerns of unwilling viewers in a number of different ways, including the strategic placement of workstations and the use of devices such as privacy screens or recessed monitors.

### **What role does education play in protecting customer privacy?**

The Library should have a continuing training plan to educate staff, trustees, volunteers, and contract workers about library privacy principles, policies and procedures, and library staff's legal and ethical responsibilities as custodians of personally identifiable information. It is important that all concerned understand that this responsibility includes avoiding any inferences about users based on their library use.

Library staff should also be informed of their responsibility to cooperate with other organizations that work to protect privacy and challenge intrusions.

Librarians must educate the public through a variety of learning methods that provide the information and tools individuals need to protect their privacy and the confidentiality of their own personally identifiable information.

**I know people can be suspicious of what bureaucrats might do with personal information, but I'm a librarian — can't people just trust me?**

While we librarians don't often think of ourselves as government bureaucrats, members of the public may see us as authorities just like a uniformed police officer or a robed judge. In fact, staff in publicly funded libraries are part of government and are constrained by all the laws that restrict the power of government. One of the lessons learned on the way to democracy was that no matter how nice the current office holder may be, someday someone else may try to abuse the position. Laws and institutional policies are among the ways we make sure that we aren't totally dependent on the character of the person in the job. Especially when new technology makes issues look different, policies can provide guidance and strength. By establishing strong privacy and confidentiality policies, libraries can protect staff from pressure to violate users' rights.

## **Protection Of Privacy And Library Records**

A privacy audit is a technique for assuring that an organization's goals and promises of privacy and confidentiality are supported by its practices, thereby protecting confidential information from abuse and the organization from liability and public relations problems. An audit ensures that information processing procedures meet privacy requirements by examining how information about customers and employees is collected, stored, shared, used and destroyed. Privacy auditing is a process, not a one-time solution, as services, data needs, and technology change. A designated Privacy Officer may lead the audit, but all stakeholders and aspects of privacy need to be represented, from information technology to public relations. The audit process needs to be capable of dealing with the full extent of the information system. When a library is part of a larger organization that is conducting a privacy audit, specific library issues and needs must be included.

The audit process begins by evaluating the organization's existing policies and procedures for legality and consistency with the organization's mission and image. When policies have been reviewed (or established), the data collected can be categorized according to the degree of security necessary. The audit assesses the sensitivity, security risks, and public perceptions of the information the organization collects. The audit examines the necessity for each type of data, how it is collected, and what notice and options are provided to the individuals identified by the information. Mapping how data flows through the organization for access, storage, and disposal can reveal security needs, both electronic and physical. The audit process itself must be managed so that it does not increase risks and its recommendations must be addressed quickly once risks are revealed.

## **Are there special challenges created for library administration by digital customer records?**

Any database of personally identifiable information is a potential target for computer crime and identity theft. Data security must be planned to protect both the Library itself and its promise of confidentiality, and to ensure the thorough removal of customer records as soon as each ceases to be needed. Library administration should seek ways to permit in-house access to information in all formats without creating a data trail. Library policies should clearly state the purposes for which users' personally identifiable information is needed; these records should be deleted as soon as the original purpose for collection has been satisfied.

In general, acquiring the least amount of personally identifiable information for the shortest length of time reduces the risk of unwanted disclosure. The Library should also invest in appropriate technology to protect the security of any personally identifiable information while it is in the Library's custody, and should ensure that aggregate data has been stripped of personally identifiable information.

In order to assure their obligations of confidentiality, libraries should implement written policies governing data retention and dissemination of electronic records. These policies should affirm the confidentiality of information about library users and their use of all library materials.

## **What if our library or institutional policy requires us to be closely involved with or closely monitoring our library users?**

In all libraries, it is the nature of the service rather than the type of the Library that should dictate any gathering of personally identifiable



information. Some common library practices necessarily involve close communication with—or monitoring of—library users. Services such as bibliographic instruction, research consultation, teaching and curriculum support in school libraries, readers' advice in public libraries, and preservation of fragile or rare library materials in special collections libraries are just a few instances of services that require library staff to be aware of users' information-access habits. As part of serving the user, it is often necessary for staff to consult with each other. Staff must be careful to conduct such conversations privately and keep strictly to the purpose. But in all types of libraries, any such compromising of user privacy by library staff carries with it an ethical and professional (and often legal) obligation to protect the confidentiality of that personally identifiable information. Most important, all gathering of personally identifiable information should be done in the interests of providing, or improving, particular library services.

### **What else besides library records might compromise user privacy?**

It is inevitable that library staff will recognize users. It is also necessary that staff be aware of activity and behavior inside the Library to ensure that users' needs are met and for security purposes. This knowledge should not be put to any purpose other than service to library users.

### **Does the Library's responsibility for user privacy and confidentiality extend to licenses and agreements with outside vendors and contractors?**

Most libraries conduct business with a variety of vendors in order to provide access to electronic resources, to acquire and run their automated systems, and in some instances, to enable access to the Internet. Libraries need to ensure that contracts and licenses reflect their policies and legal obligations

concerning user privacy and confidentiality. Whenever a third party has access to personally identifiable information, the agreements need to address appropriate restrictions on the use, aggregation, dissemination, and sale of that information, particularly information about minors. In circumstances in which there is a risk that personally identifiable information may be disclosed, the Library should warn its users.

**Are privacy rights of minors the same as those of adults? What information about a minor's use of the Library should be kept confidential and what may be released to parents?**

The rights of minors vary from state to state. Libraries may wish to consult the legal counsel of their governing authorities to ensure that policy and practice are in accord with applicable law. In addition, the legal responsibilities and standing of library staff in regard to minor customers differ substantially in school and public libraries. In all instances, best practice is to extend to minor customers the maximum allowable confidentiality and privacy protections.

Parents are responsible not only for the choices their minor children make concerning the selection of materials and the use of library facilities and resources, but also for communicating with their children about those choices. Librarians should not breach a child's confidentiality by giving out information readily available to the parent from the child directly. Libraries should take great care to limit the extenuating circumstances in which they will release such information.

Parental responsibility is key to a minor's use of the Library. Notifying parents about the Library's privacy and confidentiality policies should be a part of the process of issuing library cards to minors. In some public

libraries, the privacy rights of minors may differ slightly from those of adults, often in proportion to the age of the minor. The legitimate concerns for the safety of children in a public place can be addressed without unnecessary invasion of minors' privacy while using the Library.

The rights of minors to privacy regarding their choice of library materials should be respected and protected. More information on the privacy rights of children can be found on the OIF's page "Privacy Resources for Librarians, Library Users, and Families."

**My library already has a Web Site Privacy Policy. Where can I go for guidance on what our Web Site Privacy Policy should contain?**

This new Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights is intended to reaffirm and clarify the long-standing commitment of librarians to protect the privacy rights of our users, regardless of the format or medium of information in use. This commitment has not changed in the era of the World Wide Web. In fact, it has only strengthened in the years since the Internet was introduced into America's libraries. See for example *Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks*, in which ALA reaffirmed that "Users have both the right of confidentiality and the right of privacy."

Many non-library Web sites now have privacy policies that explain whether personally identifiable information is collected, how it is used if it is collected, and whether they sell or share this information to third parties. Such policies often explain how "cookies" are placed on hard drive and how they are used to track Web surfing. The privacy policies on governmental Web sites—including governmental library sites—may be covered by applicable local, state, and federal laws. However, regardless of whether such laws are in place or not, libraries of all types—not just those that are publicly

funded—need policies outlining the protections in place governing the online and offline privacy and confidentiality rights of library users.

### **What about additional records kept by libraries for the purpose of serving customers with special needs?**

If libraries create additional records for special purposes, the same responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of those records applies. However, libraries that choose to keep such information on an ongoing basis acquire a correspondingly greater responsibility to maintain the ongoing confidentiality of that information.

Policies and procedures should address the collection, retention, and disclosure of records in any format that contain personally identifiable information in compliance with statutory requirements. Libraries should also apply the fair information practice principles: notice, consent, access, security, and enforcement.

When complying with ALA's library services for people with disabilities policy, all attempts should be made to protect the privacy and confidentiality of library users with disabilities.

### **Are there special challenges created for library administration by digital customer records?**

Any database of personally identifiable information is a potential target for computer crime and identity theft. Data security must be planned to protect both the Library itself and its promise of confidentiality, and to ensure the thorough removal of customer records as soon as each ceases to be needed. Library administration should seek ways to permit in-house access to

information in all formats without creating a data trail. Library policies should clearly state the purposes for which users' personally identifiable information is needed; these records should be deleted as soon as the original purpose for collection has been satisfied.

In general, acquiring the least amount of personally identifiable information for the shortest length of time reduces the risk of unwanted disclosure. The Library should also invest in appropriate technology to protect the security of any personally identifiable information while it is in the Library's custody, and should ensure that aggregate data has been stripped of personally identifiable information.

### **What about these new smart cards and other new technology? Won't they help protect privacy?**

Every technology since fire can be used for both good and evil. It is the responsibility of librarians to establish policies to prevent "function creep." With the best intentions, other government agencies sometimes propose sharing data on people who receive government services. Library policies on confidentiality should state clearly that personally identifiable information collected by the Library will not be shared with any other agency or organization unless required by a court order. If agencies are jointly issuing a smart card, library data must be partitioned with no leakage to other agencies.

The more agencies using a shared card, the greater the need for strong identification confirmation. Various biometrics, from photographs to fingerprints to iris scans, are proposed to ensure that identification cards are authentic. This raises correspondingly greater risks that tampering with the encoding of identification will affect every aspect of an individual's life.

Biometrics can offer increased convenience, as in the suggestion of children checking out books by thumb print, but the risks must be carefully weighed. Libraries have a responsibility to invite public discussion on the pros and cons of identification technology proposals.

Some privacy rights advocates encourage increased use of data encryption as a method for enhancing privacy protection. Encrypted data requires others to use a pre-defined electronic “key”; to decipher the contents of a message, file, or transaction. While not yet in widespread use by individuals, data encryption is commonly used in online banking and commerce. Libraries should negotiate with vendors to encourage the use of such technology in library systems (e.g., in the document deliver, saved searches, and email features now offered by many OPAC vendors). Whenever possible, libraries should consider making encryption tools available to library users who are engaging in personalized online transactions or communications.

As much as any threat or promise to privacy posed by new technologies, it is attention and commitment to fundamental principles of data security that may best ensure that user rights to privacy and confidentiality are not threatened through their use of library services.

### **Security Concerns**

**What if law enforcement requests disclosure of library records?**

**What if laws applicable to my library require the disclosure of some or all library records or other personally identifiable information without a court order?**

Library policies must not violate applicable federal, state, and local laws. However, in accordance with Article IV of the *Library Bill of Rights*, librarians

should oppose the adoption of laws that abridge the privacy rights of any library user.

Forty-eight states have statutes that protect the confidentiality of library records. The other two have attorneys general opinions that support the confidentiality of library records. For your state statute or opinion, see *State Privacy Laws regarding Library Records*.

Library policy should require that law enforcement requests for any library record be issued by a court of competent jurisdiction that shows good cause and is in proper form. See ALA's documents, *Suggested Procedures for Implementing Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records* and *Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records*. The Library governing authority needs to be aware that privacy, and especially the privacy of children and students may be governed by additional state and federal laws. For example, on April 21, 2000, a new Federal law, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), went into effect. This law, designed to protect children's privacy on the Internet, directly impacts how children access Internet content.

When creating its privacy policies, library governing authorities need to be fully aware of any such laws regarding disclosure and the rights of parents, and create policies accordingly. Faculty and school administrators do not have parental authority over students' privacy.

### **What about library staff's civic duty to help law enforcement?**

If staff observe illegal behavior, this should be reported to law enforcement. A library should have clear, written procedures for responding to criminal behavior, in addition to behavior that violates policy. Neither libraries, their

resources, nor their staff should be used in any scheme to elicit and catch criminal behavior.

In the event of a request for information from a federal or local law enforcement agency, librarians should consult with their library administration and/or legal counsel before complying with such requests. Librarians should note that requests made under the USA PATRIOT Act must come from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and are not valid if coming from state agencies. If a librarian is compelled to release information, further breaches of customer confidentiality will be minimized if the librarian personally retrieves the requested information and supplies it to the law enforcement agency. Otherwise, allowing the law enforcement agency to perform its own retrieval may compromise confidential information that is not subject to the current request.

Library policies protecting customer privacy and confidentiality are grounded in the profession's ethical commitment to providing an atmosphere conducive to free intellectual inquiry. We must always remember that we have a unique and important contribution to make to society through this protection, and that as such we have a duty to make it a priority.

### **Are video or electronic surveillance cameras in libraries a violation of customer privacy?**

Today's sophisticated high-resolution surveillance equipment is capable of recording customer reading and viewing habits in ways that are as revealing as the written circulation records libraries routinely protect. When a library considers installing surveillance equipment, the administrative necessity of doing so must be weighed against the fact that most of the activity being recorded is innocent and harmless. Any records kept may be subject to FOI



requests. Since any such personal information is sensitive and has the potential to be used inappropriately in the wrong hands, gathering surveillance data has serious implications for library management.

If the Library decides surveillance is necessary, it is essential for the Library to develop and enforce strong policies protecting customer privacy and confidentiality appropriate to managing the equipment, including routine destruction of the tapes in the briefest amount of time possible, or as soon as permitted by law.

**What about security? Shouldn't priority be given to the legitimate needs of security personnel who are responsible for protecting the physical safety of users and staff? And what about the needs of systems personnel to ensure security of computers and networks?**

Those responsible for maintaining the security of the Library, its users, staff, collections, computing equipment and networks all have a special obligation to recognize when they may be dealing with sensitive or private information. Like other staff whose jobs are not direct library service (custodians, guards, etc), those with access to personally identifiable information or to users' personal files need to be informed of library ethics and of job expectations that they will not abuse confidentiality.

It is the responsibility of library staff to destroy information in confidential or privacy protected records in order to protect from unauthorized disclosure. Information that should be regularly purged or shredded includes personally identifiable information on library resource use, material circulation history, and security / surveillance tapes and logs. Libraries that use surveillance cameras should have written policies stating that the cameras are not to be used for anything else to avoid "function creep." If the cameras create any

records, the Library must recognize its responsibility to protect their confidentiality like any other library record. This is best accomplished by purging the records as soon as their purpose is served.

### **Won't privacy policies create a situation that will protect illegal acts?**

All libraries are advised to have in place Customer Behavior policies as well as Internet Use policies. In both instances it should be clearly stated that engaging in any illegal act will not be permitted. A possible policy statement could be:

Any activity or conduct that is in violation of federal, state, or local laws is strictly prohibited on library premises.

Clear evidence of illegal behavior is best referred to law enforcement who know the processes of investigation that protect the rights of the accused.

### **Should staff be instructed to monitor library use by customers to determine inappropriate or illegal behavior?**

Library Customer Behavior policies and Internet Use policies should clearly state that illegal activity is prohibited. Staff should be carefully trained to deal with any illegal customer behavior that is apparent to them or has been brought to their attention. General monitoring by staff of customer content or use of library materials and resources in any format is inappropriate in all instances with the exception of observation for the purposes of protecting library property. Customer Behavior and Internet Use policies should clearly state all of the steps to be taken by staff when illegal behavior or activity in violation of the above policies is observed. The steps in these guidelines will vary from library to library and should be determined locally. Once again, clear evidence of illegal behavior is best referred to law enforcement who know the processes of investigation that protect the rights of the accused.

## **Restricted Access To Library Materials: An Interpretation Of The Library Bill Of Rights**

Libraries are a traditional forum for the open exchange of information. Attempts to restrict access to library materials violate the basic tenets of the Library *Bill of Rights*.

Historically, attempts have been made to limit access by relegating materials into segregated collections. These attempts are in violation of established policy. Such collections are often referred to by a variety of names, including "closed shelf," "locked case," "adults only," "restricted shelf," or "high demand." Access to some materials also may require a monetary fee or financial deposit. More recently, some libraries have applied filtering software to their Internet stations that prevent users from finding targeted categories of information, much of which is constitutionally protected. In any situation which restricts access to certain materials, a barrier is placed between the customer and those materials. That barrier may be age related, linguistic, economic, or psychological in nature.

Because restricted materials often deal with controversial, unusual, or "sensitive" subjects, having to ask a librarian or circulation clerk for access to them may be embarrassing or inhibiting for customers desiring the materials. Needing to ask for materials may pose a language barrier or a staff service barrier. Because restricted materials often feature information that some library customers consider "objectionable," the potential user may be predisposed to think of the materials as "objectionable" and, therefore, are reluctant to ask for access to them.

Barriers between the materials and the customer which are psychological, or are affected by language skills, are nonetheless limitations on access to information. Even when a title is listed in the catalog with a research to its restricted status, a barrier is placed between the customer and the publication (See also "Statement on Labeling.")

There may be, however, countervailing factors to establish policies to protect library materials—specifically, for reasons of physical preservation including protection from theft or mutilation. Any such policies must be carefully formulated and administered with extreme attention to the principles of intellectual freedom. This caution is also in keeping with ALA policies, such as "Evaluating Library Collections," "Free Access to Libraries for Minors," and the "Preservation Policy."

Finally, in keeping with the "Joint Statement on Access" of the American Library Association and Society of American Archivists, restrictions that result from donor agreements or contracts for special collections materials must be similarly circumscribed. Permanent exclusions are not acceptable. The overriding impetus must be to work for free and unfettered access to all documentary heritage.

## **Statement On Labeling: An Interpretation Of The Library Bill Of Rights**

Labeling is the practice of describing or designating materials by affixing a prejudicial label and/or segregating them by a prejudicial system. The American Library Association opposes these means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library materials for the following reasons:

1. Labeling is an attempt to prejudice attitudes and as such, it is a censor's tool.
2. Some find it easy and even proper, according to their ethics, to establish criteria for judging publications as objectionable. However, injustice and ignorance rather than justice and enlightenment result from such practices, and the American Library Association opposes the establishment of such criteria.
3. Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the Library.

A variety of private organizations promulgate rating systems and/or review materials as a means of advising either their members or the general public concerning their opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, or other materials. For the Library to adopt or enforce any of these private systems, to attach such ratings to library materials, to include them in bibliographic records, library catalogs, or other finding aids, or otherwise to endorse them would violate the Library *Bill of Rights*.

While some attempts have been made to adopt these systems into law, the constitutionality of such measures is extremely questionable. If such legislation is passed which applies within a library's jurisdiction, the Library should seek competent legal advice concerning its applicability to library operations.

Publishers, industry groups, and distributors sometimes add ratings to material or include them as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse such practices. However, removing or obliterating such ratings—if

placed there by or with permission of the copyright holder—could constitute expurgation, which is also unacceptable.

The American Library Association opposes efforts which aim at closing any path to knowledge. This statement, however, does not exclude the adoption of organizational schemes designed as directional aids or to facilitate access to materials.

## **The Universal Right To Free Expression: An Interpretation Of The Library *Bill Of Rights***

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly, and association, and the corollary right to receive information.

The American Library Association endorses this principle, which is also set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Preamble of this document states that “. . . recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. . .” and “. . . the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people. . .”

Article 18 of this document states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or

belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19 states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers.

Article 20 states:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

We affirm our belief that these are inalienable rights of every person, regardless of origin, age, background, or views. We embody our professional commitment to these principles in the *Library Bill of Rights* and *Code of Ethics*, as adopted by the American Library Association.

We maintain that these are universal principles and should be applied by libraries and librarians throughout the world. The American Library Association's policy on International Relations reflects these objectives:

" . . . to encourage the exchange, dissemination, and access to information and the unrestricted flow of library materials in all formats throughout the world."

We know that censorship, ignorance, and limitations on the free flow of information are the tools of tyranny and oppression. We believe that ideas and information topple the walls of hate and fear and build bridges of

cooperation and understanding far more effectively than weapons and armies.

The American Library Association is unswerving in its commitment to human rights and intellectual freedom; the two are inseparably linked and inextricably entwined. Freedom of opinion and expression is not derived from or dependent on any form of government or political power. This right is inherent in every individual. It cannot be surrendered, nor can it be denied. True justice comes from the exercise of this right.

We recognize the power of information and ideas to inspire justice, to restore freedom and dignity to the oppressed, and to change the hearts and minds of the oppressors.

Courageous men and women, in difficult and dangerous circumstances throughout human history, have demonstrated that freedom lives in the human heart and cries out for justice even in the face of threats, enslavement, imprisonment, torture, exile, and death. We draw inspiration from their example. They challenge us to remain steadfast in our most basic professional responsibility to promote and defend the right of free expression.

There is no good censorship. Any effort to restrict free expression and the free flow of information aids the oppressor. Fighting oppression with censorship is self-defeating.

Threats to the freedom of expression of any person anywhere are threats to the freedom of all people everywhere. Violations of human rights



and the right of free expression have been recorded in virtually every country and society across the globe.

In response to these violations, we affirm these principles:

- The American Library Association opposes any use of governmental prerogative that leads to the intimidation of individuals which prevents them from exercising their rights to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas. We urge libraries and librarians everywhere to resist such abuse of governmental power, and to support those against whom such governmental power has been employed.
- The American Library Association condemns any governmental effort to involve libraries and librarians in restrictions on the right of any individual to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas. Such restrictions pervert the function of the Library and violate the professional responsibilities of librarians.
- The American Library Association rejects censorship in any form. Any action which denies the inalienable human rights of individuals only damages the will to resist oppression, strengthens the hand of the oppressor, and undermines the cause of justice.
- The American Library Association will not abrogate these principles. We believe that censorship corrupts the cause of justice, and contributes to the demise of freedom.

## **7.0 APPENDIX B**

### **THE 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 books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, 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 avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, 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 citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. 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.

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.

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 which are unorthodox or unpopular with 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 which 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 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 contained in the books 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 books 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 things proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book 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 which 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 literature 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 which 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 with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or 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 the citizen. 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.

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.*

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.

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 citizens 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 books. 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.

## **8.0 APPENDIX C**

### **FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT**

The freedom to view, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

<http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/freedomtoview.html>



## **9.0 APPENDIX D**

### **LIBRARIES: AN AMERICAN VALUE**

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America's libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed. To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the Library's resources and services;
- We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the Library and its resources and services;
- We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the Library's resources;
- We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services;
- We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all

individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners -  
informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in  
a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute  
to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that  
celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and  
their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

## **10.0 APPENDIX E**

### **CODE OF ETHICS OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service

policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.

- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
- IV. We recognize and respect intellectual property rights.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

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# **11.0 APPENDIX F**

## **BRANCH HOURS & LOCATIONS**

Phone: 540-372-1144

### **Fredericksburg Branch**

1201 Caroline Street, Fredericksburg 22401

Monday-Thursday 9:00 to 9:00

Friday & Saturday 9:00 to 5:30

### **John Musante Porter Memorial Branch**

2001 Parkway Boulevard, Stafford 22554

Monday-Thursday 9:00 to 9:00

Friday & Saturday 9:00 to 5:30

### **William J. Howell Branch**

806 Lyons Boulevard, Fredericksburg, VA 22406

Monday-Thursday 9:00 to 9:00

Friday & Saturday 9:00 to 5:30

### **Salem Church Branch**

2607 Salem Church Road, Fredericksburg 22407

Monday–Thursday	9:00 to 8:00
Friday & Saturday	9:00 to 5:30
Sunday	Closed

### **C. Melvin Snow Memorial Branch**

8740 Courthouse Road, Spotsylvania 22553

Monday–Thursday	9:00 to 8:00
Friday & Saturday	9:00 to 5:30
Sunday	Closed

### **Spotsylvania Towne Centre Branch**

390 Spotsylvania Mall, Fredericksburg, VA 22407

Monday–Thursday	10:00 to 8:00
Friday & Saturday	10:00 to 5:30
Sunday	Closed

### **Abraham & William I. Cooper Memorial Branch**

20 Washington Ave., Colonial Beach 22443

Monday, Friday & Saturday	9:00 to 1:00
Tuesday & Wednesday	12:00 to 8:00
Thursday	1:00 to 5:00
Sunday	Closed

### **Blake T. Newton Memorial Branch**

22 Coles Point Road, Hague 22469

Monday	12:00 to 8:00
Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday	9:00 to 1:00
Wednesday	1:00 to 5:00
Friday	9:00 to 5:00

### **Montross Branch**

56 Polk Street, Montross 22520

Monday & Thursday	12:00 to 8:00
Tuesday & Saturday	1:00 to 5:00
Wednesday & Friday	9:00 to 1:00

## 12.0 APPENDIX G

### PAID TIME OFF (PTO) LEAVE CHART

**Accrual Level** based on Hours Worked Per Week  
 Leave Hours  
**Accrued Per Pay Period**

Under 5 Years of Service	20	3.08
	25	3.85
	30	4.61
	35	5.38
	40	6.15
Over 5 Years of Service	20	4.61
	25	5.77
	30	6.92
	35	8.08
	40	9.23
Over 10 Years of Service	20	6.92
	25	8.65
	30	10.38
	35	12.11
	40	13.85

*Updated 7/26/18*



## 13.0 APPENDIX H

### PERSONAL LEAVE BANK RESERVE CHART

Hours worked per week:	Maximum hours of leave reserves:
20	1,040
25	1,300
30	1,560
35	1,820
40	2,080

*Updated 7/26/18*