

Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The New Haven Free Public Library (NHFPL) welcomes expressions of opinion concerning materials, programs or displays. A New Haven resident with a vested interest who wishes that a specific item, program or display be reconsidered is asked to complete and submit a Reconsideration Form. In accordance with **Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323**, NHFPL abides by the following statutory requirements:

- No library material, display or program shall be removed, or programs be cancelled, because of the origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display or program or because of the origin, background or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display or program.
- Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the display and program policy.
- The materials review and reconsideration process is limited to current New Haven residents, who may challenge any library material, display or program; however, the process shall neither favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics.
- The individual completing a reconsideration form must include specific information about which portion or portions of such material they object to and provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection. The Request for Reconsideration form must include the individual's full legal name, address and telephone number.
- Reconsideration requests do not constitute confidential patron records under section 11-25 of the General Statutes and are subject to disclosure in response to public requests pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- Any library material being challenged will remain available in the library according to its catalog record and be available for a resident to reserve, check out or access until a final decision is made by the City Librarian.

Review Process:

The City Librarian, along with appropriate staff, will evaluate the request for reconsideration form, read the challenged material in its entirety, evaluate the challenged material against the collection development and maintenance policy and make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material no later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request.

The City Librarian may, at their discretion, combine or consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenged library material.

The City Librarian shall provide a copy of the library director's decision and report to the individual who submitted the form. The final authority regarding the removal or retention of library materials

ultimately resides with the Library Board of Directors. The individual who submitted the request for reconsideration form may appeal, in writing, the Library Director's decision to the Board of Trustees or other governing body for the Library.¹

After evaluating the challenged material under the Collection Development and Maintenance policy, the Library Board shall:

- A. consult with (i) the City Librarian, (ii) the State Librarian, or the State Librarian's designee, (iii) a representative of the cooperating library service unit, as defined in section 11-9e of the general statutes, (iv) the president of the Connecticut Library Association, or the president's designee, and (v) the president of the Association of Connecticut Library Boards, or the president's designee,
- B. deliberate on such request for reconsideration,
- C. provide a written statement of the reasons for the reconsideration or refusal to reconsider the library material, and
- D. provide any final decision that is contrary to the decision of the City Librarian.

A resource that has previously been reconsidered by request shall be exempt from additional requests for reconsideration for three years following being retained in the Library's collection despite a formal request for reconsideration. The City Librarian shall summarize the previous decision in response to any new request for reconsideration during that three-year time period.

The Library is prohibited by state statutes from removing, excluding or censoring any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

Any New Haven Free Public Library staff member who, in good faith, implements the policies of this section shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability and shall be entitled to the same immunity in any related judicial proceeding.

Review and Reconsideration forms are available for the following areas of library service:

[Displays](#)

[Library Materials](#)

[Programming](#)

¹ For the purposes of this policy, references to the "Board of Trustees" or any other "governing body" shall be understood to mean the Library Board of Directors.