



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY – INTRODUCTION

The free exchange of ideas and information is guaranteed in the US Constitution and is vital to a healthy democracy. Within the framework of the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement, the Botetourt County Library provides materials and programs representing a wide variety of viewpoints, including perspectives and expressions that may be deemed offensive or controversial to individuals or groups. The use of Library materials and programs is voluntary. Parents or guardians of minors are responsible for monitoring the selection of materials or attendance at programs by their children.

The Library embraces its mission to provide materials and programs that enable patrons to freely access and consume information and cultural expressions across the spectrum of human experience and knowledge. The Library does not promulgate particular beliefs, views, or forms of expression, nor does the selection of an item or program express or imply an endorsement of the content or viewpoint expressed. Library materials and programs will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, nor will items be sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft. In support of its mission, the Library rejects censorship and the abridgement of the free expression and access to ideas.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

The Botetourt County Library provides a process for patrons to voice concerns about materials or programs they consider objectionable or inappropriate for public consumption or attendance. Patrons may request a reconsideration of material or programs by filling out a Request for Reconsideration form. For the request to be considered, the requester must:

- Have a valid Roanoke Valley Libraries card.
- Be a resident of Botetourt County.
- Complete the Request for Reconsideration form in its entirety.

The Request for Reconsideration form may be submitted in writing to the Library Director. Upon receipt of a fully-completed form by a qualified patron, the Library Director will convene a Reconsideration Committee composed of at least three (3) members, including a minimum of two (2) professional librarians (which shall not include the Director). The Committee will review the material or program and make a recommendation to the Library Director.

After consulting with the Reconsideration Committee, the Library Director will make a decision regarding the material or program. Within thirty (30) days of receiving the Request

for Reconsideration, the Library Director will respond to the patron in writing with the action to be taken and the reasons for the decision.

Within seven (7) days of the Library Director's decision, it may be appealed in writing to the Library Board of Trustees. The Library Board will have thirty (30) days to review the material or program and address the appeal at their next scheduled Board meeting. The requester will be invited to attend the Board meeting as a public commenter. If the Library Board's recommendation aligns with that of the Library Director, then that decision is final. If the Library Board's recommendation differs from that of the Library Director, then the Library Director will reconsider the request in light of the Board's recommendation and make a final decision within seven (7) days of receiving the Board's recommendation.

If, in any of the above review steps, the material or program content is unavailable for an adequate review, then the timeline for responding to the patron will be automatically extended to thirty (30) days from the time the material or program content is successfully obtained for review purposes. The Library is not obligated to remove any material or program requested for reconsideration during the reconsideration process, except for the purpose of examining it.

The Library reserves the right to seek an informal conversation (verbal or written exchange) between the patron and a professional librarian on staff at Botetourt County Library within the initial 30-day review period. Communication can lead to better clarity for both the patron and Library staff, and it may help the patron determine whether continuing with a formal request for reconsideration is necessary or desirable.

The patron is also responsible for abiding by the Library's Patron Behavior Policy, and all patrons are encouraged to express their concerns in a manner that is respectful.

Botetourt County Administration and Library Board of Trustees

Adopted November 15, 1984

Revised and adopted December 18, 2006; June 21, 2022