



## **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:

1. Have a valid Roanoke Valley Libraries card.
2. Be a resident of Botetourt County.
3. Complete the Request for Reconsideration form in its entirety for one item/title or program only.
4. Address only material or programs owned by Botetourt County Library.

To ensure an equitable and timely response, the requestor is limited to no more than ten (10) active requests at a time. A separate form must be completed for each disputed item/title or program. All fields on the form must be completed in a full and meaningful way. Incomplete, cursory, duplicated forms or forms containing multiple titles will not be considered.

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 for alignment with the Collection Development Policy and make a policy-based 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 Committee's recommendation, 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, the requestor may appeal the Director's decision in writing to the Library Board of Trustees. The Library Board will review the material or program in light of the Collection Development Policy and address the appeal at a scheduled Board meeting. The requestor 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 feedback and make a final decision.

The specific material or program will be exempted from future requests for reconsideration for three (3) years after a final decision has been made.

Review time may be reasonably extended due to factors such as the unavailability of materials, existing staff workload, limited staff availability, or the prioritization of previously-submitted requests. 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 prior to the review process. 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; April 12, 2023*