

BURLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY PROGRAM POLICY

PURPOSE

The Burlington Public Library's Program Policy serves to articulate the principles and criteria that guide the Burlington Public Library staff in the creation and development of library programs and to inform the public about those standards. **This policy is publicly available on the Library's website and in print upon request, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes.**

PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

The Burlington Public Library's mission is to be the best small-town public library we can be through exceptional service, relevant resources, and cultural, social, and educational programming for the community. In keeping with this mission, the Library develops and offers programs that serve the needs, interests, and enrichment of people of all ages who live in or pay taxes in the town of Burlington, Connecticut.

Library programs are intended to educate, entertain, and inspire. They promote voluntary inquiry, lifelong learning, and the dissemination of information, while encouraging curiosity, creativity, free expression, and equitable access to ideas. Programs also strengthen community connection by providing opportunities for residents to gather, share experiences, and engage with diverse perspectives.

Programs may include, but are not limited to, lectures, performances, storytimes, workshops, book discussions, cultural celebrations, and hands-on activities. The selection and development of programs are guided by community interests, available resources, and alignment with the Library's mission and values. When appropriate, partnerships with community organizations or outside presenters may be pursued to broaden program offerings.

For the purposes of this policy, library programs are defined as events, either in-person or virtual, that are planned and presented by Library staff for the benefit of the public. Programs are generally held at the Library, but may also take place outdoors, at other community venues, or through online platforms.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for library programming rests with the Library Director, who delegates program selection and coordination to staff who have been professionally trained to curate and develop programs. Program selection is based on the following criteria:

- Community interest and or relevance
- Promotion of literacy, learning and civic engagement
- Presenter qualifications and/or reputation
- Budget and staffing considerations

- Alignment with the library's mission and policies

The Library may collaborate with outside organizations, institutions, or individuals to co-sponsor programs that meet these criteria.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, COORDINATION, AND SUPERVISION

Programs may be presented by library staff directly or may involve outside presenters, facilitators, or performers, and may be presented in cooperation with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals. In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization or individual when appropriate. However, all programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the library must abide by this policy regardless of who is supervising the program or where the program is held.

PROGRAM SELECTION

The library will offer educational, informational, cultural, and recreational programs that appeal to a range of ages and represent a varied range of topics, genres, and areas of interest. Specific topics, content, and timing of programs are determined by taking into consideration available resources, cost, community needs and interests, and staff availability.

Programs will not be excluded solely because they may be considered controversial. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute nor imply an endorsement of the content or of the presenter of a program.

Library programs may address religious topics or holidays to educate, inform, or entertain, but not to promote, observe, or proselytize any particular religious dogma or belief.

Programs of a purely commercial nature or those designed solely for the solicitation of business will not be offered.

Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be offered. However, educational and nonpartisan programs, such as candidate forums, may be offered.

All library programs are selected and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the Connecticut General Statutes, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. The Burlington Public Library also complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will make reasonable accommodations to ensure program accessibility. Additionally, the Burlington Public Library subscribes to and affirms the Library Bill of Rights and its interpretations, the Intellectual Freedom Statement, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement adopted by the American Library Association.

PROGRAM ACCESS

All programs are open to the public on a first-come, first-serve basis and are free of charge to all. Any programs that require registration will be indicated in the description of the event.

Not all programs are suitable for all ages. Individual program descriptions will indicate which age group the program is intended for and, in the case of children's programs, whether parents/guardians or other responsible adults are required to attend with their child.

Any individual who requires special accommodations to an event may indicate such when they register for the event or by calling the library directly.

All library program attendees must comply with the library's Patron Behavior Policy and Code of Conduct. Attendees who do not follow these behavioral guidelines may be asked to leave.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

Some programs may be offered using a virtual meeting platform such as Zoom. The library will make a good-faith effort to utilize platforms that are compatible with the widest array of hardware and software but cannot guarantee that every patron will be able to access every virtual program. The library also cannot guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees.

As with in-person programs, patrons attending virtual programs are expected to comply with the behavioral guidelines in the "Roles and Responsibilities" section above. Failure to do so may result in being immediately removed from the program. Library staff will follow best practices for virtual events and will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the security of those events, but attendees must understand that all online activity carries some degree of risk.

PROGRAM MATERIALS

Books or other materials related to the content of a program may be offered for sale at a library program as a convenience to attendees. In most cases, such sales will be handled by the performer/presenter, not by the library.

Presenters may distribute business cards to attendees, but distribution of other business materials must be approved in advance by the Library Director. Presenters may also collect contact information for program attendees, but attendees are not required to share this information. The library will not share registration information with presenters or other attendees.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Library staff will gather information about program results to help guide future programming decisions and may solicit feedback from attendees.

REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Formal complaints about library programs must be made in writing on the form provided by the library. The form must be filled out by a Burlington resident or taxpayer. Please see the Review and Reconsideration Policy for further information on this process.

Approved by the Board of Library Directors 11/4/2025