

## Caroline County Library

### CHALLENGE TO LIBRARY MATERIALS POLICY

#### Policy Statement

Caroline County Library believes in freedom of information for all, and does not practice censorship. The selection of library materials is predicated on the patron's right to read and freedom from censorship by others. The library does not promote particular beliefs or views, instead, providing resources for various opinions and viewpoints according to its *Collection Development Policy*. Language, situations, or subjects which may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify materials which, in their entirety, are judged to be of value.

Caroline County Library recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in the library's collection. A formal process for handling these objections will be followed to assure that challenges are handled in an attentive and consistent manner. Patrons who wish to request the withdrawal or reclassification of materials currently owned by the library are encouraged to discuss their concerns with a branch manager and/or the library director. Materials under consideration will remain available to patrons until a decision is made.

In the interest of protecting the individual's right to access materials, Caroline County Library supports the following documents:

- The Library Bill of Rights- American Library Association, June 30, 2006.  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>
- The Freedom to Read Statement- American Library Association, July 26, 2006.  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>
- The Freedom to View Statement- American Library Association, May 29, 2007.  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement>

#### Policy Regulations

- The choice of reading and viewing materials is a purely individual matter. Patrons are free to reject books and other materials of which they do not approve, but may not exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of others.
- Responsibility for materials selected and read, heard, or viewed by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Library selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to minors.
- Labeling and/or special shelving may be used for some collections, but will not be used for the purpose of restricting access or pre-judging content.
- No items are sequestered except to protect valuable items from injury or theft.
- Once an item has been accepted as qualifying under the library's *Collection Development Policy*, it will not be removed at the request of those who disapprove of its selection unless it can be shown to be in violation of these policies and rules.

### *Requests for Reconsideration*

Individuals wishing to object to the presence of any library materials should follow this procedure.

- Branch managers are available to discuss the interpretation and application of selection principles.
- If not satisfied, the patron will be given a packet of materials that includes a copy of the library's *Collection Development Policy*, the Library Bill of Rights, and a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form.
- Patrons are required to complete and submit a reconsideration form to the library director.
- All branch managers will evaluate the reconsideration form and the material in question.
- The library director will review the managers' decision and send a letter to the concerned patron who requested the reconsideration, stating the reasons for the decision, within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the request.
- If the patron is not satisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted within ten (10) business days to the Caroline County Administrator's Office.
- The library director, county administrator, and deputy administrator will assess the appeal, as well as the material in question and the original reconsideration form.
- The decision of the county administrator is final.

Adopted by Caroline County Board of Supervisors January 14, 2020