



Cortland Free Library

Books are just the beginning!

Policy Category: Collection

Policy Title: Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Need for Policy: To outline the principles the Library endorses related to library materials, programs, and other resources while providing a mechanism through which patrons may express their concern about said resources.

Policy:

Cortland Free Library fully endorses the principles documented in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association. Materials, programs, and other resources available in the library present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy.

The library also selects and provides a wide variety of library materials, programs, and resources that satisfy the diverse interests of our community. The library upholds the right of the individual to secure these resources, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to some. While a person may reject materials and other resources for oneself, they may not restrict access to those materials and/or resources by other library users.

Patrons who wish to request the withdrawal or reclassification of materials currently owned by the library or to issue a statement of concern about a program or other resource are first encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Library Director. If the patron is not satisfied with the response to their request, the Library Director will provide the patron with a Statement of Concern form so that they may formally state their concern regarding the library resource.

For a Statement of Concern to be valid and for further action to be taken, the patron must be a resident of Cortland Free Library's chartered service area (the city of Cortland, town of Cortlandville, or the town of Virgil) and a registered cardholder. An exception may be made if the patron is not a resident of the service area but works in/frequents the service area and is a registered cardholder. A Statement of Concern may not be filed anonymously.

Please note that this policy and procedure apply regardless of the source of the challenge (library user, staff member, volunteer, faculty member, administrator, trustee/board member, community member, elected official, government employee, etc.)

Identical challenges considered together, or if arguments made at a later date are not substantially different than those acted on by the board before, the board can decline to reconsider.

The completed decision on reconsideration of a specific title shall remain in effect for three years.

Approved: 8/21/2023

Please note that the Statement of Concern about Library Resources form replaces the Request for Reconsideration Form.

References

Selection & Reconsideration Policy Toolkit for Public, School, & Academic Libraries

Intellectual Freedom Manual. American Library Association, 2021.

Programming Librarian webinar: <https://programminglibrarian.org/learn/preparing-program-challenges-your-public-library>