

Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The East Haddam Library System (EHLS) includes the East Haddam Free Public Library in Moodus and the Rathbun Memorial Free Library in the Village of East Haddam. Both are governed by the same EHLS policies and Library Director, and both libraries welcome expressions of opinion concerning materials, programs, or displays. All EHLS library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the CT general statutes. Individuals with a vested interest who reside in East Haddam may challenge library materials, displays or programs. An East Haddam resident who wishes that a specific item, program or display be reconsidered is asked to complete and submit the *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form* available on the Library's website and at the circulation desk of either library. In accordance with *CT Public Act 25-168 Sec 22,323*, the East Haddam Library System abides by the following statutory requirements:

- No library material, display or program shall be removed, or programs cancelled, because of the origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display or program or because of the origin, background or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display or program.
- Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the display and program policy.
- The materials review and reconsideration process for East Haddam residents to challenge any library material, display or program shall neither favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics.
- The individual completing a reconsideration form must be a resident in East Haddam and must include specific information about which portion or portions of such material they object to and provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection. The Request for Reconsideration form must include the individual's full legal name, address and telephone number.
- Reconsideration requests are not confidential patron records under section 11-25 of the CT general statutes.
- Any library material being challenged will remain available in the library according to its catalog record and be available for a resident to reserve, check out or access until a final decision is made by the library director.

Review Process:

The library director, along with appropriate staff, will evaluate the request for reconsideration form, read the challenged material in its entirety, evaluate the challenged material against the collection development and maintenance policy and make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material not later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request. The library director shall provide a copy of the library director's decision and report to the individual who submitted the form within sixty days.

The individual who submitted the request for reconsideration form may appeal, in writing, the library director's decision to the EHLS Board of Trustees. The Library Board shall then:

- (A) consult with (i) the library director, (ii) the State Librarian, or the State Librarian's designee, (iii) a representative of the cooperating library service unit, as defined in section 11-9e of the CT General Statutes, (iv) the president of the Connecticut Library Association, or the president's designee, and (v) the president of the Association of Connecticut Library Boards, or the president's designee,
- (B) deliberate on such request for reconsideration,
- (C) provide a written statement of the reasons for the reconsideration or refusal to reconsider the library material, and
- (D) provide any final decision that is contrary to the decision of the library director.

Any librarian or library staff member who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation. A library director may consolidate any request for reconsideration of the same challenged library material.

A resource that has previously been reconsidered by request shall be exempt from additional requests for reconsideration for three years following being retained in the Library's collection despite a formal request for reconsideration. The Library Director shall summarize the previous decision in response to any new request for reconsideration during that three-year time period.

The Library is prohibited by state statutes from removing, excluding or censoring any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive.