



DENTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY PROGRAM POLICY

Revised by the Library Management Team, Jan. 16, 2020
Library Board approved revision, February 10, 2020

Library programs are an extension of library services and promotes and complements the library's other services and collections. The Library Program Policy of the Denton Public Library is designed to be guided by its Mission and Vision Statements:

Mission Statement:

Denton Public Library strengthens community, transforms lives, and inspires imagination.

Vision Statement:

Denton Public Library will be a welcoming and inclusive center of the community, advancing literacy and education, providing accessible and relevant resources and technology to expand knowledge, and developing innovative services and engaging activities to encourage discovery.

The Denton Public Library supports intellectual freedom and subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights and its interpretative statements, including "Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights" (2019).

The professional staff of the Denton Public Library designs, plans, prepares, and presents programs and events for all ages. A library program is a planned event by library staff for library users. No fees will be charged for attendance at library programs.

Use of the library's public meeting rooms by an organization or individual to hold a public event is not a library program and must follow the guidelines set out in the **Denton Public Library Meeting Room Policy**.

The library may incorporate cooperative programming with other agencies, organizations, and educational institutions capitalizing on existing knowledge and expertise when they are compatible with the library's mission. Library program presenters who are affiliates of commercial enterprises may provide general knowledge without direct promotion of a business enterprise resulting in potential profit. The library does not allow programs of a purely commercial nature.

The library reserves the right to cancel programs as deemed necessary and will make every effort to notify the public in advance. Programs scheduled on a day when the Library is closed due to inclement weather are automatically cancelled. Rescheduling is at the discretion of the library staff.

Guidelines for attending programs:

Attendees of all ages are expected to abide by the **Denton Public Library Rules of Conduct**.

Attendees 17 and under and their parents will be expected to abide by the **Unattended Children Policy**.

Library staff recognizes that children may sometimes display behaviors that are disruptive for a program situation. Parents will be asked to calm the child or leave the room with the child in the event of problem behavior. Once the child is no longer displaying these behaviors, they may return to the program. Adults displaying behavior in programs that violates the **Denton Public Library Rules of Conduct** may be asked to leave the program or the library.

A library card is not required to attend a program, but patrons attending programs are encouraged to apply for a card to take full advantage of all the library resources.

Age Limits for programs:

The library may set age limits or other guidelines for participation in a program when the program is designed and best suited for a particular audience. These age limits will be noted in the program descriptions.

Youth programs are offered to children and their caregivers for specific age groups listed in the program's description. Adults will not be permitted in designated children's programs unless they are accompanying children or are adult observers who have secured approval from a librarian in advance.

Teen programs are offered for the specific age group listed in the program's description. Because of the unique needs of the teen populations, adults and young children are not permitted to stay in the room during a teen program unless the supervising librarian has made an exception due to special circumstances, such as a participant who needs caregiver assistance. This allows teens to feel safe and comfortable in an environment without unfamiliar adults, as well as giving parents and guardians confidence that their child will only be interacting with their peers. Parents and guardians are welcome to observe the program from outside the room. Adult observers will need to secure approval from a librarian in advance.

Adult observers may include educators, students, and librarians, and are not guaranteed approval to observe Youth or Teen programs.

Adult programs are for the specific age group listed in the program's description. Adults will not be permitted to bring children who are under the age listed unless they have secured approval from a librarian in advance.

Sale of Materials during library programs:

Ancillary materials, such as CDs or books which are related to the content of a program, may be offered for sale at a library program as a convenience to attendees. The sale of these materials as part of a library program is acceptable when sales are in promotion of literature, literacy, or culture and are consistent with the library's mission. To sell these items, the program presenter must receive permission from the staff member coordinating the program in advance.

Program Attendance Limits:

When safety or the success of a program requires it, attendance may have to be limited. When limits must be established, attendance may be determined on a first-come, first-served basis. Advance registration or distributing free tickets before the event may be used if attendance is anticipated to exceed program limits. This should be noted in the program description.

Due to limited space and fire codes, customers will not be allowed into a program that has reached capacity. The staff member in charge of the program will determine when a program has reached capacity.

Groups Attending Programs:

Due to room capacity limitations, childcare centers or other organized groups wanting to attend a program should make arrangements with the library at least two weeks before attending to make sure that space is available. When visiting the library or participating in library events, caregivers with childcare centers or other youth groups must be supervised by their adult leaders and will need to follow child-to-caregiver ratios from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers.

Objections to library programs:

The library welcomes expressions of opinions from the public about library programs. Concerns or questions should first be addressed to the library staff coordinating the program. If this does not resolve the issue, Denton residents or registered borrowers of the Denton Public Library may complete and submit a **Statement of Concern** form. The form will be received by a librarian, dated, and submitted to the Director of Libraries. The Director of Libraries will forward the Statement of Concern to the Denton Public Library Board for consideration and official input at the next scheduled Library Board meeting. The Director of Libraries shall have the responsibility for the final decision. The complainant shall be notified of the Director of Libraries' decision within one (1) month from the date of Library Board meeting in which the program was discussed, except in unusual circumstances (i.e. staff leave, transition of personnel, etc.)

Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by participants. A program will not be automatically excluded or cancelled because its topic may be regarded by some as controversial.

Tours

Library staff is available to provide tours of the library to groups of children, students, and organizations. The tour should be scheduled at least two weeks in advance of the proposed date.

Refreshments

Refreshments may be served at programs. Food will be purchased from a kitchen certified by the City of Denton Consumer Health Department or purchased pre-packaged from a store.

Evaluation of Programs

Library staff will conduct regular evaluations of programs and services to make sure the needs of the community are being met within staff limitations and budgetary restrictions.



DENTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

**STATEMENT OF CONCERN
FOR LIBRARY PROGRAMS OR DISPLAYS**

Revised by the Library Management Team, Jan. 16, 2020
Approved by the Library Board, February 10, 2020

Note: If you wish to request reconsideration of an item in the library's collection, please use the Reconsideration of Library Materials Form.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Phone: _____

I am a Denton resident I have a current borrower account at the Denton Public Library

Library card # _____

I am filling out this form:

As an individual

On behalf of a group/organization called: _____

Program or display on which you are commenting:

Name/Description: _____

Date: _____

Branch: Emily Fowler Central Library North Branch South Branch

Presenter/Performer (if applicable): _____

Intended Audience: All Ages Adult Teen Children

Any other descriptive information _____

Please list your reasons for filing this request. Please be as specific as possible. (You may attach pages to this form if needed.)

What brought this program or display to your attention?

Have you attended the entire program or event or viewed the entire display? Have you attended another event with this presenter?

Did you share your concerns with library staff at the program/branch? What was their response?

In what way could this program or display be of value?

Please suggest alternative events, displays, or services that could provide similar information on this topic or support in this area to the community.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return the completed form to the Director of Libraries, library@cityofdenton.com.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights.

Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library-initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for accessing information, education, and recreation. Article I of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, “Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves.” Library displays increase awareness of programs, resources, and services.

Library-initiated programs include, but are not limited to, lectures, displays, exhibits, community forums, performing and visual arts,¹ participatory workshops, technology programming, creative learning programming, wellness programs, story times, continuing education, fairs and conventions, book clubs, discussion groups, demonstrations, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or entertainment purposes. Library-initiated programs may take place onsite at the library, off-site at other locations, or online, and may be provided by library workers, volunteers, or partners. Libraries may also choose to promote their programs, services, and resources through displays and digital signs.

Library-initiated programs and displays utilize library worker expertise for community interests, collections, services, facilities, and providing access to information and information resources. They introduce users and potential users to library resources and the library’s role as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Libraries should not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and shall ensure they have equitable access to library resources. Library-initiated programs and displays should comply with all applicable laws, including the standards and requirements of The Americans with Disabilities Act and state and local disability accessibility guidelines.² If a program is held in a location not controlled by the library, the library should assure that the space is accessible to all users. If users overflow designated event areas during library events, libraries should secure accessible public spaces (e.g., ramps, pathways, and emergency exit routes) to ensure access and safety for everyone. Reasonable accommodations should also be made to have interpretation or real-time captioning for the deaf or hard of hearing at library-initiated programs when needed or requested by library users.

“Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs that libraries offer.”³ Libraries should actively seek to include a variety of programming options representing diversity of genres, formats, ideas, and expressions with a multitude of viewpoints and cultural perspectives that reflect the diversity in our communities. Library-initiated programs that cross language and cultural barriers introduce community members to the library’s resources and provide access to information. Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those who speak and read languages other than English, including advertising for such events.

Concerns, questions, or complaints about library-initiated programs and displays are handled according to the same written policy and procedures that govern reconsiderations of other library resources. These policies should apply equally to all people, including, but not limited to, library users, staff, and members of the governing body. The policies should set forth the library's commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Programs should not be canceled because of the ideas or topics of the program or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, nor should library workers censor or remove displays because someone may disagree with the content. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the program content or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, any more than the purchase of resources for the library collection or curation of a display constitutes an endorsement of the resources content or its creator's views. Libraries should vigorously defend the First Amendment right of speakers and participants to express themselves.

Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The right to use a library encompasses all the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library-initiated programs. Libraries create programs for an intended age group or audience based on educational suitability and audience interest; however, restrictions on participation based solely on the gender, chronological age, or educational level of users violate this right and should be enforced only when not doing so would adversely impact the safety of the participants or interfere with the intended purpose of the program. Parents and guardians may restrict their own children's access to library programs, but no person or organization can interfere in others' access and participation. A parent or guardian may discuss their child's access to and participation in library programs with their child, but may not impose those decisions on others, including other people's children.

Libraries should not deny access to library-initiated programs if patrons owe the library for overdue fines or other fees. If libraries charge program participants for supplies used, they should make every effort to reduce economic barriers to participation.

Any collection and retention of program participants' personal information should be on an opt-in basis only. While attendees may need to demonstrate their eligibility to attend the program by showing a library card or student ID, they should not be required to share their personal information in order to attend a library program.

¹ "Visual and Performing Arts in Libraries: An Interpretation of the [Library Bill of Rights](#)," adopted February 13, 2018, by ALA Council.

² "Services to People with Disabilities: An Interpretation of the [Library Bill of Rights](#)," adopted January 28, 2009, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 2018.

³ "Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the [Library Bill of Rights](#)," adopted June 27, 2017, by the ALA Council.

Adopted January 27, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000; June 26, 2018 *under previous name* "Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource"; and June 24, 2019.