

# Thomas B. Norton Library Policy Manual



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## **I. Bulletin Boards**

1. Display space is provided for the purpose of information and publicity. Primary space is reserved for library news, city ordinances and announcements. Secondary space, if available, is used for community news pertaining to non-profit organizations.
2. Community material must be left with a staff member or it will be subject to discard. The following types of brochures, posters, and advertising materials will not be accepted, posted, or distributed:
  - Those promoting the sale of a commercial product or service
  - Political campaign posters
  - Petitions for voters' signatures
  - Material of a religious, political, or offensive nature
3. Any material accepted is displayed for a maximum of one month after which time it is discarded. No material is accepted contingent upon its return at the end of the display period. The date the item was posted should be placed in the upper right hand corner of the announcement. In the case of brochures or pamphlets for handout, one, with the date marked at the bottom, is kept at the circulation desk for reference. Announcements of a series of events scheduled over a period of time are accepted and posted as space allows. This is also the rule for bookmarks, flyers, etc., promoting non-profit organizations. No one organization shall be allowed to monopolize the available display space.
4. Display areas are to be kept neat, attractive, and in good taste. Visual clutter is to be avoided.

## **II. Circulation Policies**

- A valid library card is required to check out materials. Your first library card is free.
- Patron is not allowed to check out materials if the fine limit of \$5.00 has been reached.
- If a patron forgets to bring their card, they will be required to show valid picture identification. You may use your identification card three times before you will be required to replace your library card.
- Lost cards can be replaced for a fee of \$ 2.00.
- Corporate cards will be issued with the Director's approval.

### **A. Circulation of Materials**

- All books, audiocassettes, videocassettes, DVD's, CD's, and CD-ROMs check out for two weeks.
- All Media items are limited to adult cards. Children may check out audio books.
- AV Equipment may be checked out for three days. A fee of \$5.00 per item will be collected at time of checkout. A list of items currently available is at the circulation desk.

### **B. Item Checkout Limits for Patrons with a Resident or Non-Resident Card**

- Books: 25 items per card
- New Books: 5 books per card
- Videocassettes: 5 titles per card
- DVD: 5 titles per card
- Audio: 5 titles per card (CDs and Cassettes)
- CD-ROMs: 2 titles per adult card
-

### **C. Item Checkout Limits for Patrons with a Visitor Card. Visitors have a 5 item limit per card.**

- Books: 5 books per card
- New Books: 1 books per card
- Video: 1 titles per card
- Audio: 1 titles per card (CDs)
- Audio: 1 titles per card (cassettes)
- CD-ROMs: 1 titles per adult card

Limits may be imposed on children's material or non-fiction items needed for specific school assignments.

### **D. Renewals**

- New Books: No Renewals
- Books and paperbacks may be renewed twice
- Movies on Videocassette and DVD May renew one time. Audios: May be renewed once
- CD-ROMs: May be renewed once
- Items may be renewed by telephone and online.

### **E. Reserves**

- Patrons in good standing (no overdue items or outstanding fees) may reserve a maximum of 5 items at one time.
- Reserve items will be held at the Circulation Desk for pickup for one week.

### **F. Overdue Charges**

- Books \$.10 per day
- Audios (cassette and CD) \$.50 per day
- Videos \$.50 per day
- AV Materials \$.50 per day

### **G. Lost Item Charges**

- Adult Books Current retail cost
- Children's Books Current retail cost
- Paperback Books Current retail cost
- Audios (cassette or CD) Current retail cost
- CD-Rom Current retail cost
- Video Cassettes Current retail cost
- Audio/Visual equipment Current retail cost
- Kit Bags \$5.00
- DVD Envelopes \$2.00
- DVD Case \$
- If a previously undamaged item is returned in damaged condition, other charges may apply.

### **H. Interlibrary Loans (ILL)**

- Interlibrary loan service is available for items not in the library collection. (Materials less than one year old, videos, and audiocassettes are not available for ILL.)

- Patrons in good standing (no overdue items or outstanding fees) may reserve up to three items at one time with payment of \$1.00 per item.
- Patrons will be notified if any fees are required to borrow material from another library prior to incurring the charges.

### III. Collection Development

#### A. Purposes and Goals

The overall purpose of the Library is to serve all of the citizens of the City by offering the services, resources, and facilities to fulfill their informational, educational, and recreational needs and interests. The term "citizens" encompasses individuals and groups of every age, educational level, philosophy, occupation, economic level, ethnic origin, and human condition.

**The Library shall strive toward the following goals:**

- I. To assemble, preserve, and administer books and related educational, informative, and recreational material, within the framework of its budget, in order to promote an enlightened citizenship and enrich personal lives.
- II. To serve the community as a center of reliable information.
- III. To accumulate the best in literature, fiction, thought, and children's books for the best use and benefit of the public.
- IV. To initiate activities that will encourage the most effective use of those selected materials.
- V. To cooperate with education, civic, and cultural groups and organizations whose aims are compatible with those of the library.
- VI. To provide opportunity and encouragement for children, young people, men and women to educate themselves continuously.
- VII. To facilitate universal, lifelong education for the reader.

*The Library subscribes to the principles of the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights", the "Freedom to Read" statement, "Statement on Labeling", and "Free Access to Libraries for Minors".*

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Responsibility for what children read rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that some items may, inadvertently, come into the possession of children.

Selections will be made on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and the interest of the community.

Certain items are not deemed suitable for collection. These include:

- Collector's Items: The Library does not have the resources or staff necessary for this kind of collection.
- Textbooks: The Library will not attempt to furnish materials or textbooks needed for formal courses of study offered by elementary and secondary schools, or by institutions of higher learning. Titles on the high school reading lists may be available but not in classroom quantities. Donated textbooks may be added to the collection, depending on their condition, accuracy, datedness, and value to the collection.

## B. Use of Selection Aids

Ideally, a Librarian with trained judgment, knowledge of the Library's present resources, and acquaintance with the requirement of local readers should read every book added to the Library before purchase. Where circumstances make such reading impossible or unnecessary, the staff makes skilled use of selection aids, such as basic, general lists, special bibliographies for reference books and particular subject materials, and book reviewing journals. While book reviews are a major source of information about new books, they are not followed blindly. No one publication is relied upon exclusively; the critical opinions of reviewers are checked against each other where feasible.

The professional librarian will use the following aids in the selection of materials:

- Public Library Catalog and other Wilson Catalogs
- Booklist
- Publisher's Weekly
- Library Journal

Works of imagination should possess qualities of:

- Representation of important movements, genre, trends of national culture
- Vitality and originality
- Artistic integrity
- Effective characterization
- Authenticity of historical or social setting
- Sustained interest

Specifically, materials considered for inclusion in the Library's collection must meet one or more of the following standards:

- Importance of subject matter to the collection
- Serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value
- Permanence
- Timely value
- Purpose or intent of the material
- Accuracy of content
- Historical value
- Readability
- Scarcity of material on the subject
- Reputation and significance of author, illustrator, editor, artist, performer, etc.
- Popularity
- Local interest
- Reputation and professional standing of publisher
- Price
- Format
- Availability of material

In addition to the above standards, periodicals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature
- Frequency of use

- Interest, as indicated by patron request
- New title on subjects of current interest
- Indexed in other Wilson indexes

## C. Video Cassette Collection

The Library's collection will emphasize how-to, instructional, educational, documentary, children's and travel themes. Some entertainment films are included. Criteria for selection include:

- General audience appeal
- Availability
- Price
- Usability
- Lasting appeal
- Quality of content
- Limited duplication of subject matter within our collection
- Content: Theme, quality of color, sound and script, quality of print
- Either color or black/white will be acceptable

*\*The presence of materials in the library must not be construed as a personal endorsement of their contents by any member of the staff, the Library Board, or the City Council. The Library has a responsibility to collect materials expressing a variety of views and opinions, many of which the persons responsible for maintaining the library may find personally unacceptable.*

This Materials Selection Policy shall serve the following purposes:

- To further the stated goals, objectives and functions of the Library
- To guide librarians in the selection of materials
- To inform the public about selection principles

The policy will be reviewed by the library staff annually to insure that it remains current and useful.

## IV. Confidentiality of Library Records

1. Pursuant to the [Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 41-8-9 & 41-8-10](#), the circulation and registration records of the Library are not available to the public. However, individuals may inspect their own circulation and registration records and those pertaining to their minor children.
2. Those agencies identified in the [Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 41-8-10](#), may have access upon demonstrated need and approval by the Library Director.
3. Persons, firms, corporations, or agencies other than those mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 hereinabove, shall have access only by obtaining an appropriate order or subpoena from a court of competent jurisdiction, as may be authorized by law.
4. Upon receipt of a court order or subpoena, the Library Director shall consult with the City's attorney or designated legal counsel to determine if the court order or subpoena complies with applicable law. If the order or subpoena is not appropriate or does not comply, then relief through a protective order may be sought. Further, such counsel for the Library and the Library Director shall have discretion to seek judicial relief if they deem it appropriate to do so.

5. Any matters relating to release or publication of the circulation and/or registration records not provided hereinabove are to be referred to the Library Director. The Director shall be empowered to decide any issue arising from such matters.
6. Should any portion of this policy conflict with existing State Law ([Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 41-8-9 & 41-8-10](#)) then State Law will have precedence.

*\*This library does not maintain circulation records (other than the number of items used annually) after the return of item*

## **V. Displays and Exhibits**

- 1 The library welcomes non-commercial displays and other materials of general interest to the community. However, it is the policy of the library not to advertise commercial endeavors unless specifically related to the goals of the library.
- 2 The Library Board must approve all permanent or semi-permanent exhibits offered for display in the library. Temporary displays (up to two months duration) should be scheduled through the Friends of the Library.
- 3 All materials in the library will be given reasonable care and protection within the limits of the general operation of the library. The City of Gulf Shores does not assume responsibility for either damage or loss suffered on the premises, or the costs of insurance coverage. Such costs, losses, damages, etc., are understood to be the responsibility of the organization or individual providing the display or exhibit.
- 4 Placement of exhibits must be mutually agreeable to both the Librarian and the Exhibitor and should not in any way interfere with the normal operation of the library.

[Loan Agreement form to be filled out by the Exhibitor](#)

## **VI. Failure to Return Library Property**

City of Gulf Shores Ordinance No. 201, 1,3-9-81: It shall be unlawful for any person to willfully detain or fail to return any book, or property of the city public library within (30) days after notice in writing by certified mail to return the same.

## **VII. Additional Services Policy**

Added to the manual January, 1998

- Fax service is available at a nominal fee to cover expenses.
- Sending a fax is \$1.00 each page
- Receiving a fax: \$1.00 per page
- There is no charge for the cover sheet
- The Library will attempt to notify a patron upon receipt of fax
- If the fax is not picked up within three days, it will be destroyed
- Printouts from computers are \$.15 per page.
- Copy machine service is provided at \$.15 per page

## VIII. Gifts and other Donations

The Library gratefully accepts gifts of books and other materials that are in good condition and can be of value to the library collection.

Gift materials will become a part of the Library's collection according to its selection policy. Disposition of gift materials not meeting these criteria shall be at the discretion of the Librarian.

If the donated materials cannot be incorporated into the Library's collection, the items will be put into the Friends of the Library Book Sale.

Patrons are advised that their gift materials to the Library are tax deductible as donations to a non-profit organization. The Library does not accept responsibility for assigning a dollar value to such materials. However, it does acknowledge each gift, upon request, at the time it is received. A [Donation Form](#) is provided for the convenience of the donor.

## IX. In Depth Reference Work

1. Only three, brief questions will be answered at one time.
2. Specialized inquiries:
  - a. MEDICAL QUESTIONS - Only spelling, brief dictionary definitions, and factual information are provided. Opinions, interpretation, or diagnostic advice is not given.
  - b. LEGAL QUESTIONS - Only spelling, brief dictionary definitions, and factual information are provided.
  - c. ENCYCLOPEDIA AND DICTIONARY PURCHASE INFORMATION - Patrons who ask advice for home purchase of encyclopedias and/or dictionaries may be given brief, factual content information. The library staff should invite the patrons to visit the library to compare the various editions in the collection, and refer them to the standard buying guides and publications that compare these products.
  - d. CONSUMER QUESTIONS - Brief, factual information will be provided by library staff over the telephone. The patron should come to the library to consult lengthy articles and / or charts. Patrons with consumer complaints against local businesses should be referred to the Better Business Bureau.
  - e. EXAMS, CONTESTS, QUIZZES, PUZZLES AND SCHOOL ASSIGNMENTS - Patrons requesting such information are treated the same as any patron with a question. The length of time involved and the in-house circumstances, not the type of question, are the governing factor.
3. REFERENCE MATERIALS - The library staff will assist patrons in the use of certain library tools (e.g., the Reader's Guide, biographical dictionaries, atlases, etc.) by explaining the characteristics of the item. Staff members should be able to recognize the difference between a simple information question and an extended bibliographic search or research assignment. Students are given quick, factual information when it is readily available but must expect to use the library in person for most assignments. When students are present in the library, the staff will explain the use of bibliographic aids, catalogs, reference tools, etc., rather than execute the assignment for the student.

4. CLOSING THE CALL - Let the caller know you were glad to be of service or that you are sorry you were unable to help. Whenever possible, suggest alternative sources of information.

## **X. Internet Access**

In addition to the internet computers that you may use in the building, the library also offers Wireless access 24 hours a day. There is no outdoor seating, but you may sit in the parking lot in your car, or on the lawn.

The Thomas B. Norton Public Library offers access to the Internet on computer(s) available to users of the Library. The terminals, servers and software are the property of the Library. Library staff is hereby authorized to develop and establish procedures for the use of the Internet access terminal(s). Such procedures may include, but are not limited to: time limits and other scheduling procedures, staff assistance, privacy for users and penalties for misuse.

Access to the Internet is compatible with the Library's adopted mission, and continuing efforts to develop collections and resources that meet the cultural, informational, and recreational and educational needs of Gulf Shores' diverse community. The Thomas B. Norton Library has endorsed the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and adopted the [Code of Ethics](#), [Freedom to Read](#) and [Freedom to View Policy](#) as endorsed by the American Library Association for all electronic information, services and networks.

The Internet is currently an unregulated medium. Unlike other library resources, it is not organized, cataloged or indexed in a uniform manner. The information available on the Internet includes much that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching. It also provides access to material that may be offensive or disturbing to some individuals, as well as access to information that may be factually incorrect and/or illegal. The Thomas B. Norton Library has no control over the information access on the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Parents, guardians and/or teachers are responsible for supervising their children during internet sessions and may restrict only their children or children in their charge.

The Thomas B. Norton Library prohibits the use of its Internet services or its equipment for illegal, commercial or political purposes.

Personal storage media, or other devices, may not be used or attached to the computers. Disks may be purchased at the Front Desk.

Adopted by the Library Board

Date: October 15, 1997

Revised and updated: August 2001

Amended: December 4, 2003

## **XI. Internet Procedures for Distribution in the Library**

The Internet is currently an unregulated medium. Unlike other library resources, it is not organized, cataloged or indexed in a uniform manner. The information available on the Internet includes much that is personally, professionally and culturally enriching. It also provides access to materials that may be offensive or disturbing to some individuals, as well as access to information that may be factually incorrect and/or illegal. The Thomas B. Norton Library has no control over the information accessed on the Internet and cannot be held responsible for

its content. Parents, guardians and/or teachers are responsible for supervising their children during Internet sessions and may restrict only their children or children in their charge.

The Thomas B. Norton Library prohibits the use of its Internet services or its equipment for illegal, commercial or political purposes.

- Time limit 30 minutes per session maximum, up to 60 minutes per day
- Downloading and installing programs is prohibited
- Personal software programs may not be installed.
- Personal Disks, MP3's, Jump Drives are allowed to save or reference previously saved work.
- Purchase disks at the desk to save personal items, or request assistance with internally available jump drive for email attachment purposes
- People may obtain additional time for projects/school exams, etc., by asking at the desk

Please observe the rules so everyone may enjoy the use of the computers and the programs provided by the City of Gulf Shores at no charge.

## **XII. Meeting Room Use**

A meeting room is available for public use at the Library. Seating capacity is approximately 40 persons.

The library has a meeting room that may be used for meetings or programs by organizations or private groups. An adult or adults must be present at all times.

The fee for non-public organizations is computed at \$25.00 per three-hour use with a three-hour minimum. Set-up and clean-up times are included in the three hours.

Reservations are made at the library circulation desk. A reservation form must be filled out and on file at the desk. Those using the meeting room must follow the rules set out in the "Meeting Room Reservation" form.

### **A. Scheduling the Meeting Room**

- The use of the room is scheduled through the librarian.
- The room is available by reservation on a first-come, first-served basis. The person reserving the room must have a library card and be in good standing.
- The room is available for private groups or organizations. The fee is \$25.00 per three hour use. Three hours is the minimum time that can be booked and includes set-up and clean-up time. There are no smaller fees or time increments. Fees must be paid in advance of room use.
- The meeting room may be scheduled during regular library hours only.

### **B. Refreshments**

- Refreshments may be served.
- There are no facilities or equipment for cooking, preparing, serving or storing food and drinks.
- A double coffee pot is available in the meeting room.
- No alcoholic beverages are permitted.
- Please clean up any spills promptly to avoid staining the carpet, tables, or chairs.
- Supplies in the cabinets belong to the library.

### C. Setting up the Meeting Room

- The tables and chairs may be arranged to fit the group's needs. Seating capacity is approximately 40 people.
- If room temperature needs to be adjusted, please seek assistance at the Circulation Desk.
- A motorized screen is recessed in the ceiling and is controlled by a switch at the rear of the room. If you require a slide projector, overhead projector, TV, or VCR, you will need to schedule the equipment at the circulation desk prior to your meeting. There is a \$5.00 fee for each item used.

### D. Cleaning up and Closing up

- Please return the room to its original condition.
- Please return any borrowed equipment to the circulation desk.
- Please empty coffee pots and turn coffee machine off.
- Place all trash in the trashcans.
- Chairs should be folded and returned to the rack.
- Notify the library staff on duty when you are finished.

## XIII. Membership Requirements

Full time residents of Gulf Shores, sixteen years of age or older, will be issued a Resident library card after providing proper identification (current ID showing a Baldwin County address) and verification that there are no outstanding charges due at any of the libraries in the county.

Children under the age of sixteen will be issued a library card as long as parent or guardian has a valid library card and is present during issuance of said card. Adult privileges will be granted when the child turns sixteen. Parent and child cannot have any outstanding charges at any Baldwin County library.

Baldwin County property owners that do not live in Gulf Shores will be issued a Non-Resident library card after providing proof of ownership and current ID.

Visitors may be issued a card after providing a current ID, in addition to a local and home mailing address.

## XIV. Unattended Children

The library encourages children of all ages to visit the library with their parents to take advantage of the resources available for them to meet their informational, recreational and educational needs. It is the responsibility of the parents to insure the appropriate behavior of their children in the library.

Library staff is **not** responsible for the supervision of children left unattended by their parents. Disruptive children will be required to leave after receiving **one** warning.

Under no circumstances will the library staff transport or take a child away from the library building.

## XV. Patron Request for Purchase

The library welcomes patron interest in the collection and will seriously consider all requests that specific materials be acquired. The library is under no obligation to fill any particular request if it is not deemed valuable to the collection.

A patron who has a suggestion for a specific item to be purchased should fill out the Suggestion for Purchase form.

## **XVI. Responsibility and Authority**

Final responsibility and authority for materials selection rests with the City Librarian, who operates within a framework of policies adopted by the Library Board.

The staff of the library will be active in materials selection, using their knowledge of the collection, the needs of the community, and their critical judgment of materials available.

### **A. Criteria for the Selection of Materials**

In general, the basic principles listed below will guide the selection of materials. Materials should possess:

- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Accuracy and objectivity of approach
- Authority of the author in the field
- Clear presence and readability
- Social significance

## **XVII. Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Materials**

Because in a pluralistic society, tastes and opinions differ, some materials the library acquires may be offensive to some patrons. In a democracy that incorporates the rights of free press and free speech into its basic system of law, the minority does not have the prerogative to curtail the free access, by the majority, to published materials. Just as importantly, the majority does not have the right to curtail free access, by the minority or the individual, to published materials. If, however, a patron objects to material held by the library, (s)he may submit a Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials. In no instance will material(s) be removed on demand. All considerations of the request to remove materials will be reviewed using the principles of this selection policy as a guide.

In order to have this request considered, the patron must:

- Be a registered patron of the Library
- File a completed Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form with the City Librarian
- Supply his/her full name and address. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

After the completed complaint form is received, the City Librarian will review the reasons for the complaint and the material in question. An attempt to answer the complaint to the patron's satisfaction will be made. If the patron is not satisfied with the City Librarian's action, a request may be made that a Materials Review Committee review the material in question. This committee will be composed of the City Librarian, two other city employees, and three members of the Library Advisory Board. The chairman of the Library Advisory Board will appoint all members of the committee, except the City Librarian.

The decision of the Materials Board shall be final.

## **XVIII. Services to the Handicapped or Disabled**

The goal of the Thomas B. Norton Public Library is to assist anyone needing help locating material or information. The library building meets the ADA guidelines and aisles within the building will easily accommodate people with assistance devices, such as walkers or wheelchairs.

Library staff members are available to help in reaching shelves, carrying materials, and assisting patrons in or out of the building. Limited devices are available for those with reading disabilities, i.e., magnifying glass and large print on a computer. The staff can provide information on the Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (BPH), available through the Alabama State Library Services in Montgomery.

## **XIX. Appendix**

### **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.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

## **Code of Ethics of the American Library Association**

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
- IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Adopted June 28, 1997, by the ALA Council; Amended January 22, 2008.

## **The Freedom to Read Statement**

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

## **Freedom to View Statement**

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

## Copyrights in the Library

A. How much of someone else's work can I use without getting permission?

Under the fair use doctrine of the U.S. copyright statute, it is permissible to use limited portions of a work including quotes, for purposes such as commentary, criticism, news reporting, and scholarly reports. There are no legal rules permitting the use of a specific number of words, a certain number of musical notes, or percentage of a work. Whether a particular use qualifies as fair use depends on all the circumstances. See FL 102, Fair Use, and Circular 21, Reproductions of Copyrighted Works by Educators and Librarians.

*Please refer to the following URL for complete Copyright rules and laws. FL 102, Fair Use is excerpted here for the sake of convenience, but other rules and restrictions may apply.*

*<http://www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap1.html#107> Copyright Law of the United States of America and Related Laws Contained in Title 17 of the United States Code Circular 92*

B. FL 102, Fair Use

One of the rights accorded to the owner of copyright is the right to reproduce or to authorize others to reproduce the work in copies or phonorecords. This right is subject to certain limitations found in sections 107 through 118 of the Copyright Act (title 17, U. S. Code). One of the more important limitations is the doctrine of “fair use.” Although fair use was not mentioned in the previous copyright law, the doctrine has developed through a substantial number of court decisions over the years. This doctrine has been codified in section 107 of the copyright law.

Section 107 contains a list of the various purposes for which the reproduction of a particular work may be considered “fair,” such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. Section 107 also sets out four factors to be considered in determining whether or not a particular use is fair:

- the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- the nature of the copyrighted work;
- amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

The distinction between “fair use” and infringement may be unclear and not easily defined. There is no specific number of words, lines, or notes that may safely be taken without permission. Acknowledging the source of the copyrighted material does not substitute for obtaining permission.

The 1961 Report of the Register of Copyrights on the General Revision of the U.S. Copyright Law cites examples of activities that courts have regarded as fair use: “quotation of excerpts in a review or criticism for purposes of illustration or comment; quotation of short passages in a scholarly or technical work, for illustration or clarification of the author's observations; use in a parody of some of the content of the work parodied; summary of an address or article, with brief quotations, in a news report; reproduction by a library of a portion of a work to replace part of a damaged copy; reproduction by a teacher or student of a small part of a work to illustrate a lesson; reproduction of a work in legislative or judicial proceedings or reports; incidental and fortuitous reproduction, in a newsreel or broadcast, of a work located in the scene of an event being reported.”

Copyright protects the particular way an author has expressed himself; it does not extend to any ideas, systems, or factual information conveyed in the work.

The safest course is always to get permission from the copyright owner before using copyrighted material. The Copyright Office cannot give this permission.

When it is impracticable to obtain permission, use of copyrighted material should be avoided unless the doctrine of “fair use” would clearly apply to the situation. The Copyright Office can neither determine if a certain use may be considered “fair” nor advise on possible copyright violations. If there is any doubt, it is advisable to consult an attorney.

**Loan Agreement to Thomas B. Norton Public Library**

- I. The library welcomes non-commercial displays and other materials of general interest to the community. However, it is the policy of the library not to advertise commercial endeavors unless specifically related to the goals of the library.
- II. The Library Board must approve all permanent or semi-permanent exhibits offered for display in the library. Temporary displays (up to two months duration) should be scheduled through the Friends of the Library.
- III. All materials in the library will be given reasonable care and protection within the limits of the general operation of the library. The City of Gulf Shores does not assume responsibility for either damage or loss suffered on the premises, or the costs of insurance coverage. Such costs, losses, damages, etc., are understood to be the responsibility of the organization or individual providing the display or exhibit.
- IV. Placement of exhibits must be mutually agreeable to both the Librarian and the Exhibitor and should not in any way interfere with the normal operation of the library.

The items listed below have been offered to the Thomas B. Norton Public Library as a loan for display purposes by:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_

And have been accepted by the Thomas B. Norton Public Library subject to the conditions listed above.  
Description: (inventory of loaned items and photographs, if possible)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Owner: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thomas B. Norton Public Library**

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221 West 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gulf Shores Alabama 36542

The Thomas B. Norton Public Library gratefully acknowledges the receipt of:

\_\_\_\_\_ Hardback Books  
\_\_\_\_\_ Paperback Books

\_\_\_\_\_ Audio Cassettes  
\_\_\_\_\_ Video Cassettes

From \_\_\_\_\_ on this date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Thomas B. Norton Public Library**

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\_\_\_\_\_ Video Cassettes

From \_\_\_\_\_ on this date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Purchase Suggestion Form**

Fill out as much of the information below as you can provide.

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_

Year Published \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you hear about this title? \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to be notified when this item is purchased, please provide the following:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

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Publisher \_\_\_\_\_

Year Published \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you hear about this title? \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to be notified when this item is purchased, please provide the following:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

## D. Request for Interlibrary Loan Form

### Interlibrary Loan Request

\_\_\_\_\_  
\$1.00 Charge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Some books cannot be borrowed for you. **NEW BOOKS (less than 1 year old), REFERENCE BOOKS, GENEALOGYMATERIALS and CHILDREN'S BOOKS** (easy and juvenile) are usually non-circulating and are not available to borrow. Check out time is 2 weeks. There is to be NO RENEWAL unless approved by a check of the ILL Files.

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author (last name) \_\_\_\_\_ Author (first name) \_\_\_\_\_

If the Author and Title are unknown, describe the subject as fully as possible.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Interlibrary Loan Request

\_\_\_\_\_  
\$1.00 Charge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Some books cannot be borrowed for you. **NEW BOOKS (less than 1 year old), REFERENCE BOOKS, GENEALOGYMATERIALS and CHILDREN'S BOOKS** (easy and juvenile) are usually non-circulating and are not available to borrow. Check out time is 2 weeks. There is to be NO RENEWAL unless approved by a check of the ILL Files.

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Author (last name) \_\_\_\_\_ Author (first name) \_\_\_\_\_

If the Author and Title are unknown, describe the subject as fully as possible.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Request for **Reconsideration**

Citizens Request for Reconsideration of Materials

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Material Questioned: \_\_\_\_\_

Book Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher, if known: \_\_\_\_\_

AV Material Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Media Type (circle one)      Video    Audiocassette    Other

Request initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a registered patron of this library? \_\_\_\_\_

Library Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read or seen this material in its entirety? (Please circle)      Yes    No

If no, what parts have you read or seen? \_\_\_\_\_

To what do you object? Please be specific, cite pages or sections of tape. Use back of form if necessary:

What do you believe is the main idea of this material?

Why?

In your judgment, does this material have any value?

What reviews of this material have you read?

What material, of equal literary value, would you recommend as a replacement that would convey as valuable a picture of and / or perspective on the subject?

Signature of Complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_