

Lucy Robbins Welles Library's Display Policy

Purpose

The Lucy Robbins Welles Library's Display Policy provides a basis for the display of library materials by library staff, informs the public about the principles and criteria upon which these decisions are made, and promotes the purposes of the library's mission, which is: "The Lucy Robbins Welles Library continues to fulfill its mission of providing information, education and cultural enrichment for the Newington community through a commitment to excellence in library resources."

Policy

The Lucy Robbins Welles Library recognizes the importance of displays as resources for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. With a strong focus on encouraging the love of reading, lifelong learning, and creativity, we establish responsive connections among the diverse needs of our community, our vast collections, our digital services, and an array of engaging programming. A key aspect of our approach is the creation of thoughtfully curated displays, which play an essential role in informing and inspiring individuals of all ages and diverse backgrounds. These displays serve as a tangible expression of our dedication to the community and exemplify our belief that a vibrant library contributes to a strong community. Displays are provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents, represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, and provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of residents.

Principles and Criteria

The final responsibility for the display of library materials is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by library employees throughout the library who are professionally trained to curate and develop displays. Library staff use the following criteria in making decisions about display topics, materials, and accompanying resources:

- Community needs and interests
- Availability of display space
- Historical, cultural, or educational significance
- Connection to other community or national programs, exhibitions, or events
- Relation to library collections, resources, exhibits, and programs
- The Library may partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored displays and exhibits.

The Library will strive to include a wide spectrum of opinions and viewpoints in library-initiated displays and exhibits, as well as offer displays and exhibits that appeal to a range of ages, interests, and information needs. Library-initiated displays and exhibits should not exclude topics, books, media, and other resources solely because they may be considered to be controversial.

The library provides displays created or curated by librarians or staff members of the public library, as well as allowing displays created by members of the public or community groups to be exhibited in the public library. Acceptance of a display or exhibit topic by the Library does not constitute an endorsement by the Lucy Robbins Welles Library of the content of the display or exhibit, or of the views expressed in the materials on display.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination outlined in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship

The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial or offensive to an individual, but maintains that individuals can apply their values only to themselves. The selection of library materials is predicated on the customer's right of access to information and freedom from censorship. Selections will not be made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the material itself.

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Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of or be seen by minors. No one can exercise censorship to restrict access to library materials by others. It is the parents' or guardians' responsibility to determine which library materials are appropriate for their children. The Lucy Robbins Welles Library supports intellectual freedom and endorses the American Library Association (ALA) Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, the Library Bill of Rights, and all relevant interpretations.

Procedures for the Questioning of Library Displays by Patrons

Individuals may take issue with library materials that do not support their own views or values on a subject or that are incompatible with their beliefs. Staff are available to discuss concerns and to identify alternate materials that may be available. If the concern is not satisfied through discussion with staff, then a Newington, Connecticut resident, with a vested interest who wishes that a specific item, program, or display be reconsidered, will be asked to complete and submit a Statement of Concern About Library Materials, Programs or Displays Reconsideration Form.

The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays, or programs to individuals who are residents of Newington who hold a valid Newington library card. Please see our Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and Statement of Concern About Library Materials, Programs, or Displays Reconsideration Form for further information on this process.

Adopted October 2025
Lucy Robbins Welles Library Board of Trustees