

Stratford Library Association

Request for Review and Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials

I. Stratford Library Association Mission Statement

The mission of the Stratford Library is to empower and enrich our diverse community by providing access to innovative services, information and ideas.

II. Purpose

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion from the public about displays, programs and materials. This policy outlines the process for submitting a Request for Review and Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs and Materials and the process for evaluation by the staff, Executive Director and Board of Trustees. All library materials (including programs and displays) are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the Connecticut General Statutes, including, but not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. 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. A Stratford, Connecticut resident who wishes to formally request that a specific item, program or display be reconsidered must complete and submit a *Request for Review and Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs and Materials Form*.

In accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323 the Stratford Library Association abides by the following statutory requirements:

- No library material, display or program shall be removed, or programs be 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 library cardholders/town 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 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 Review and 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 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 Executive Director.
- Any employee of the Stratford Library Association who, in good faith implements the policies described herein 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.

III. Process

The Executive Director, along with appropriate staff, will review the Request for Review and Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs or Materials form and evaluate the request using the standards set forth in the Display Policy, Program Policy or Collection Development & Maintenance Policy. The Executive Director will provide a written response no later than 60 (sixty) days from the date of receiving such request.

Appeal of the Executive Director's decision: This policy permits the individual who submitted the Request for Reconsideration form to appeal, in writing, the Executive Director's decision to the Library Board of Trustees or other governing body for the Library. The final authority regarding the removal or retention of library materials ultimately resides with the Library Board of Trustees.

The Library Board, after evaluating the challenged material under the Collection Development & Maintenance Policy, Display Policy, or Program Policy shall:

- a) consult with (i) the Executive 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 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 review and 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 Executive Director.

In the event that a single resource, program or display is challenged multiple times, the Executive Director is permitted to consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenged library material (including programs and displays). A resource that has previously been reconsidered by request shall be exempt from additional requests for reconsideration for 36 months following a Library Board of Trustees decision to retain. The Executive Director shall summarize the previous decision in response to any new request for review and reconsideration during that 36 month time period.

Concerns or questions should first be addressed to the Library Department Head responsible. If not satisfied, the patron may utilize the Request for Review and Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials process. Formal requests are welcome from current Stratford (Connecticut) residents only (Organization and Teacher Cardholder requests will not be considered).

The process for a formal Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials is as follows:

1. The patron will meet with the Department Head responsible for the service area hosting the display, program or material. Based on the area of concern, the Department Head will provide the patron with the Library's Display Policy or Program Policy or Collection Development Policy. The patron will be asked to read the policy prior to submitting a *Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials* form.

2. The patron will then be given a *Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials* form to complete, detailing their objections. This form can be obtained from any service desk in the Library. A completed, hard copy of the *Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials* form is then to be submitted to the Executive Director, Stratford Library, 2203 Main Street, Stratford, CT 06615.
3. The Executive Director, or their designee, with a committee of at least three Stratford Library staff members, at least one who holds an MLS/MLIS Degree, will evaluate the submitted *Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials* form and determine the alignment of the objection with the Library's policies.
4. Within 60 (sixty) business days of receipt of the *Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials* form, the Executive Director, or their designee, will respond to the concern by sending a letter or email, outlining the results of the evaluation, to the patron.
5. If the patron is not satisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted to the Library Board of Trustees within 15 (fifteen) business days of the issuance of the Executive Director's decision. Appeal of the Executive Director's decision: This policy permits the individual who submitted the Request for Reconsideration form to appeal, in writing, the Executive Director's decision to the Library Board of Trustees or other governing body for the Library. The final authority regarding the removal or retention of library materials ultimately resides with the Library Board of Trustees.
6. If the Board of Trustees plans to address the appeal at their Board Meeting, the individual will be notified of when and where the meeting will be held.
7. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of public comments at this meeting (and the length of the portion of the meeting dedicated to the appeal); the Board will not restrict the viewpoints presented but will require that all speakers offering testimony/comment on the appeal observe appropriate decorum at the meeting and restrict their comments to the appeal.
8. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final and will not be subject to any further appeal or Request for Review and Reconsideration for 36 months. In the event that a single resource, program or display is challenged multiple times, the Executive Director is permitted to consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenged library material (including programs and displays). A resource that has previously been reconsidered by request shall be exempt from additional requests for reconsideration for 36 months following a Library Board of Trustees decision to retain. The Executive Director shall summarize the previous decision in response to any new request for review and reconsideration during that 36 month time period.

Request for Review and Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials Policy
Approved by the Board of the Stratford Library Association 11/20/2025

Stratford Library Association

Request for Review and Reconsideration of Library Displays, Programs & Materials

Please include your full name, address, and telephone number on this form or it will not be accepted. Only requests from current Stratford (Connecticut) residents will be considered (Organization & Teacher Cardholder requests will not be considered).

Date: _____

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Library Card#: 24003 _____

Email: _____

Do you represent yourself? Y or N

Do you represent an Organization? Y or N

Provide the name of the Organization: _____

Resource on which you are commenting:

_____ Book	_____ Music
_____ Display	_____ Newspaper
_____ Movie	_____ Artwork
_____ Magazine	_____ Library Program
_____ Other	_____

Title: _____

Author/Artist/Producer/Provider: _____

For the following questions, answer in the space provided or on additional pages as needed. Please be specific.

1. Specify which portion or portions of the material is objected to and explain the reason for your objection (Use additional pages, if necessary.).
2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you read or viewed the material in its entirety? Y or N.
If the answer is "no", what, if any part(s) did you read or view?
4. Explain your concerns about this material. Please be specific.
5. For what age group should this material be recommended?
____Adults ____Teens ____Children ____All Ages
6. Did you share your concerns with Stratford Library staff? What was their response?
7. What, in your opinion, were the positive aspects of this resource?
8. Are there resources you can suggest which provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?
9. Explain how your recommended resource(s) would comply with the Library's Display Policy, Program Policy or Collection Development and Maintenance Policy.
10. Why do you feel your opinion about this resource should prevent other members of the Stratford, Connecticut community, who may not share your concerns, from accessing this resource?
11. What would you like the Stratford Library Association to do about this resource?

Reconsideration requests are not confidential patron records under section 11-25 of the CT General Statutes. Please return this completed form to the Executive Director of the Stratford Library Association, 2203 Main Street, Stratford, CT 06615.