



MANSFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY DEPARTMENTAL POLICY MEMORANDUM

Approved by: Devon Andrews, Library Director
Effective Date: September 2, 2025
Subject: Library Display Policy

Purpose

The Mansfield Public 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 to provide guidance and access to materials and information which enhance and enrich the lives of people of all ages.

Policy

The Mansfield Public Library recognizes the importance of displays and programs as a resource for voluntary inquiry and 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 between 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. Library 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 librarians who are professionally trained to curate and develop displays and programs. Library staff uses the following criteria in making decisions about display topics, materials and accompanying resources:

- Community needs and interest
- Availability of display space
- Historical, cultural or educational significance
- Connection to other community or national programs
- 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 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 Mansfield Public Library or the Town of Mansfield 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 set forth in section 46a-64 of the Connecticut 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 on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the material itself.

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 Mansfield Public 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

The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays or programs to individual residents of Mansfield. Please see our Material Review and Reconsideration Policy for further information on this process.

Adopted by the Library Advisory Board on September 2, 2025