



Library Display Policy

Purpose

In keeping with its mission to improve the quality of life and meet the informational, educational, and cultural interests of the entire Hamden community, the Library recognizes that the provision of library displays is a means to fulfilling this commitment. This policy serves to inform the public and staff alike about the purpose of displays, the guiding principles and criteria used for display development, the role of library staff in such development, and how the public may express support or concern regarding displays.

Library displays are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents. Library displays 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. The Library recognizes the importance of displays as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. Through displays, the Library builds connections between the diverse needs of our community, our vast collection of physical and digital materials, ongoing library services, and the array of engaging library and community programming.

Professionally trained librarians curate and develop displays. Displays express the Library's dedication to building community knowledge and providing for lifelong learning by sharing resources and highlighting access to information and ideas. Displays reflect and build community by exhibiting a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, offering information on cultural celebrations or monthly recognitions, and bridging tangible resources to ideas.

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 that are professionally trained to curate and develop displays. Professionally trained library staff uses the following criteria in making decisions about display topics, materials, and accompanying resources:

- Relation to library collections, services, resources, exhibits, and programs;
- Community needs and interest;
- Availability of display space;
- Historical, cultural, or educational significance;
- Connection to other community or national programs, exhibitions, or events.

The Library may partner with other Town departments, community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored displays and exhibits. Such displays are library initiated and maintained.

Library staff determines the placement of displays. Displays are presented to the public in relation to the anticipated engagement of the user/audience. Some library displays will include materials to highlight a specific subject for a multitude of audiences [i.e. National Library Card Sign-Up month], or a display may be specific to the intended audience [i.e. Caldecott Winners].

Staff considers accessibility of materials and resources in placement of displays.

The Library assures access to a wide spectrum of opinions and viewpoints while offering displays that appeal to a range of ages, interests, and information needs. Library-initiated displays and exhibits are inclusive, not exclusive. These should not exclude topics, books, media, and other resources solely because they may be considered to be controversial. Library displays may be interactive, stand alone, or part of a library wide initiative.

Displays are restricted to the areas designated by the Library. A display is not the posting of materials, flyers, or brochures on publicly accessible bulletin boards. Individuals or organizations wishing to partner on a display or to use a display area must contact the Library Director. If an outside group does create a display, it will be duly credited and contact information for the outside group will be provided. Acceptance of a display by the Library does not constitute an endorsement by the Hamden Public 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 set forth in [section 46a-64 of the Connecticut State General Statutes](#).

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship

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. Thus, the choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. The selection of library materials is predicated on the patron'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.

Hamden Public Library's Display Policy 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', caregivers' or guardians' responsibility to determine which library materials are appropriate for their children. The Hamden 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 residents of Hamden. Please see our Material Review and Reconsideration policy for further information on this process.

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