



## Censorship Policy

The Oldham County Public Library (hereafter called the Library) supports and upholds the principle of intellectual freedom. The selection of Library materials is predicated on the Library patron's right to read, and similarly, the freedom from censorship by others.

The Library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that, while anyone is free to reject for themselves materials of which they do not approve, they cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Selections of materials for the Library will not, therefore, be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the material and in accordance with the Materials Selection Policy of the Library.

In regard to the use of the Library by minors, the decision as to what materials a minor may have access to is the responsibility of the minor's parent or guardian (See the "Library Services for Minors Policy"). Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that those materials may inadvertently come into the possession of minors. The following documents constitute a part of this policy:

- Resolution on Challenged Materials (ALA Council)
- Challenged Materials Statement (ALA Council)
- Expurgation of Library Materials (ALA Council)
- Materials Selection Policy (OCPL)
- Collection Development and Maintenance Policy (OCPL)
- Library Services for Minors Policy (OCPL)

Occasionally, objections to a selection will be made despite the care taken to select materials according to the "Materials Selection Policy." The principles of intellectual freedom and of the professional responsibility of the staff in serving the objectives of the Library must be defended, rather than the materials. If a complaint is made, the following procedure will be followed:

- 1) The staff person to whom the complaint is made should refer the patron to a supervisor or manager and provide the patron with a copy of any relevant policies. If the patron does not wish to speak with anyone else, or is unsatisfied with the explanation offered by the supervisor or manager, they should be offered a *Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Form*. A reminder should be given to the customer that no action will be taken on the basis of a verbal complaint alone, and that they should read, view or listen to the material in its entirety.
- 2) The form will be given to the Director, who will acknowledge receipt with a letter or email to the customer explaining the procedure. This begins the formal review process.
- 3) Each member of the Management Team will, in turn, be provided with the material in question, and do the following:
  - Examine and discuss the concerns expressed in the request.

- Examine the challenged material by reading, viewing or listening to the material in its entirety.
  - Determine if the material was selected within the parameters of the Library's Collection Development Policy and Materials Selection Policy.
  - Determine the general acceptance of the material by reading reviews, if available.
  - Weigh the values, strengths and weaknesses of the material and form opinions on the basis of the entire work rather than on limited passages or sections taken out of context.
  - Consider the material in the context of the Library's mission statement.
  - Review the material in conjunction with all adopted American Library Association Policies including but not limited to: the Library Bill of Rights, the Right to Read, the Right to View, and the American Library Association's guidelines on intellectual freedom.
- 4) The Management Team will meet to discuss their findings. If the committee does not reach a decision within 60 days from the date of the request for reconsideration, the Director will notify the patron in writing stating that the title is still under review, and that a letter will be mailed upon a decision. The Director will then notify the Board of Trustees of the Management Team's decision at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees.
- 5) In the event that the person who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision of the committee, she or he may appeal for a hearing before the Board of Trustees by making a written request at least 10 days in advance of the next regularly scheduled board meeting. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the Oldham County Public Library.

Decisions on appeals are based on careful review of the objection, the material, and Library Board policies including: this policy, the Library Bill of Rights, the Right to Read, the Right to View, and the American Library Association's guidelines on intellectual freedom. The final decision on appeals rest with the Library Board and will be taken up at publically held Board meetings.

This policy becomes effective on November 21, 2019 and replaces any previous policy written or implied. The Board of Trustees of the Library reserves the right to amend, alter or revoke this policy if it is deemed necessary and desirable to do so.

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President, Board of Trustees  
*Adopted 7/13/1987, Amended 11/21/2019*

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