

PURPOSE:

The East Longmeadow Public Library offers programs to further extend the Library's mission and strategic plan to help educate and enrich the community in response to the intellectual, educational, and cultural needs and input of its patrons.

The Board of Library Trustees, the Library Director, and Library Staff recognize the responsibility of the East Longmeadow Public Library to provide programs and materials that support diverse points of view on different topics. The Program Policy is intended to provide guidance for the development and presentation of programs which anticipate and meet the needs of our patrons. The American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, the Freedom to View Statement, and the First Amendment and Censorship have been endorsed by the East Longmeadow Board of Library Trustees and are an integral part of this policy.

(see Appendix A)

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROGRAMMING:

The ultimate responsibility for programming, as with all library activities, rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the East Longmeadow Board of Library Trustees. The Library Director delegates program management responsibility to other members of the staff within the areas of service to children, adolescents, and adults.

PROGRAM DEFINITION:

Library programs are a live or recorded activity or event in a group setting, developed or selected to offer opportunities for community connection, cultural enrichment, exchange of information, life-long learning and literacy support for an intended audience in the community.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

The process of program development and presentation involves the experience and knowledge of those staff members so designated by the Library Director. In making programming decisions, staff members use their familiarity with the community, library resources, other programs and events, the existing collection, and budget. Staff consider the suitability of the program's materials, format, presenter, and relevancy when determining the intended audience. Programs with an intended audience are publicized as such.

The Library draws upon community resources in developing programs and attempts to partner with other community organizations, educational and cultural institutions, or individuals to develop and present or co-sponsor programs.

Library selection of a program does not constitute or imply an endorsement of its content or the views expressed by the participants by the Library, Library Staff, or the Town of East Longmeadow. Program topics, speakers, and resources are not excluded from programs because of possible controversy.

Programs are not primarily for commercial purposes; however, presenters may leave their business card or brochure for program participants to pick up if they are interested in contacting the speaker after the program. While presenters may not distribute such materials as part of the program, performers or authors may sell books, cds, or other items as part of a library program when approved in advance by the Library Director. Programs sponsored by the Friends of East Longmeadow Public Library may include the sale of merchandise as a fundraiser to benefit the Library.

Library programs may take place at the library, online, or at off-site locations.

PROGRAM SELECTION CRITERIA:

The Library Director and Staff use the following criteria in making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources:

- Availability of resources such as space, staff time, and/or budget
- Community needs and interests (perceived or requested)
- National and local observances, commemorative months, and initiatives
- Potential to promote, supplement, and encourage use of the Library's collections and resources
- Presenter qualifications/experience in content area
- Safety and security of patrons and staff
- Relevance to the Library's mission and strategic plan
- Timing/length of the program

A program need not meet all of these criteria to be presented.

ACCESS TO PROGRAMMING:

Library programs are open to the public and free of charge.

Responsibility for a child’s access to Library programs rests solely with their parent or guardian. As stated in *Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, “Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children’s—and only their children’s—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their own children.”

(see Appendix B)

The Library will make every attempt to accommodate all patrons who wish to attend a program. However, when available resources or safety requires it, attendance may be limited. The Library will not limit attendance due to topic.

When limits are established, attendance will be determined by advance registration through the Library’s online calendar of events at eastlongmeadowlibrary.org or at the door on a first come, first served basis. A wait list may be available for some programs. The staff member responsible for the program has sole discretion if the program has a wait list and how many spots are available. If a spot becomes available either before or on the day of the program, patrons on the wait list will be notified and offered the available spot based on their place on the wait list.

The Library reserves the right to deny attendance or request a patron to leave a program if they are disruptive to other patrons or the program facilitator.

(see Appendix C)

This policy refers to programs selected by the East Longmeadow Public Library, not programs held at the Library by a community member or group in a Meeting Room.

The Program Policy is subject to review and amendment by the Board of Library Trustees.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, September, 2023

APPENDIX A:

American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

American Library Association's Freedom to View Statement

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement>

American Library Association's The First Amendment and Censorship

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship/>

APPENDIX B:

American Library Association's Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors>

APPENDIX C:

Behavior Policy

<https://eastlongmeadowlibrary.org/behavior-policy/>

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