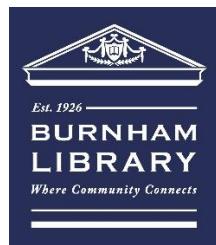


# Burnham Library

## Policy Handbook



# Burnham Library Policy Handbook

These are the policies of the Burnham Library. Specific policies can be changed, added, or deleted by the Board of Trustees at any time. Library policy is reviewed annually, and readopted by the Library board before the start of the next service year. When policies are changed, this document is superseded in those changed parts by the minutes of the board meeting.

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*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 2024*

## **Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

## **I. Our Mission, Vision and Values**

### **Our Mission**

The Burnham Library is a community anchor dedicated to lifelong learning and stimulating curiosity.

### **Our Vision**

The Burnham Library aspires to be a trusted center for increasing knowledge, fostering imagination, and enabling creative engagement. Through the sharing of diverse ideas, we strive to promote an inclusive and welcoming community.

### **Our Values**

- **ACCESS:** We foster an inclusive, welcoming environment that promotes safe, free, and convenient access to programs, services, and information to all without restriction.
- **LIFELONG LEARNING AND LITERACY:** We promote a community culture that supports the lifelong quest for knowledge and stimulates curiosity through collections and programs.
- **INNOVATION:** We embrace the challenge of change. The Library provides services that stimulate, enlighten, and enrich as community needs evolve.
- **STEWARDSHIP:** We facilitate use, access, and conservation of library archival materials. The Library partners with other organizations to preserve the rich cultural heritage of Bridgewater.
- **COLLABORATION:** We take pride in our role as a community anchor, cultivating relationships with local organizations in order to nurture the growth of our community.
- **SUSTAINABILITY:** We invest in the Library's resources by maintaining the Library infrastructure. We foster the growth and development of a well-rounded and forward-thinking staff to ensure the sustainability of our organization.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, January 2022*

## II. Patron Behavior Policy

The Board of Trustees of the Bridgewater Library Association strives to provide a safe and comfortable environment for Burnham Library patrons as they use and enjoy the facility and its resources.

Accordingly, the Patron Code of Conduct set forth below is expected to be observed by all patrons and will be applied without discrimination and in the best interest of all patrons.

Any activity or behavior that hinders the use of the library, is disruptive, or jeopardizes the safety and privacy of patrons or employees, inside or outside is prohibited. These behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Smoking, vaping, or use of any form of tobacco, or illegal substances in the library building or within 25 feet of the outside entrances to the building
- Possession or use of illegal drugs, narcotics or controlled substances
- Possession or use of alcohol except at authorized Library functions
- Engaging in disorderly conduct as defined by *Connecticut General Statutes Section 53a-152*, or otherwise committing or attempting to commit any activity that would constitute a violation of any federal, state or local criminal law or ordinance
- Possession of weapons
- Unapproved entry in non-public areas of the library
- Engaging in sexual activity or sexual harassment in the library
- Cell phones used in a way that disturbs others
- Harassment, sexual harassment, and/ or stalking library staff or any library patron will not be tolerated. This conduct includes, but is not limited to:
  - Using foul, abusive or threatening language or behavior in the library.
  - Filming or photographing any person without asking that person's permission.
  - Continue to film or photograph any person after being asked to desist.
  - Engaging in conduct (such as persistent staring or gestures) that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her personal safety or feel distressed, alarmed, or harassed.
- Sufficient clothing is required
- The Library is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Please do not leave valuable or personal belongings unattended.
- Soliciting, panhandling, political campaigning, and petitioning are not permitted on library property. All materials to be posted or distributed must be approved by the Library.
- Patrons must adhere to local, state, and federal health guidelines.
- Using library materials, equipment, fixtures, furniture, designated spaces, locations, buildings or grounds in a manner that is inconsistent with normal library intended purposes, including spaces or equipment designated for particular customers (e. Designated Youth Areas), or likely to damage library property or the property of others.

\*For policies regarding unaccompanied children 12 years and younger see **Policy Concerning Behavior and Supervision of Minors and Children's Areas of Library**

The provisions of this policy will be construed and enforced by the Library's Executive Director (or authorized designee) at his or her sole discretion. Patrons who are deemed not to be in compliance with may be asked to leave the library premises. Noncompliance may also result in suspension of library privilege or legal prosecution.

Any person who is on the Library premises and whose conduct interferes with the proper and efficient functioning of the Library or threatens the public health, safety or welfare may be removed.

Any person so removed may request a meeting with the Library Administration to discuss the removal and request reinstatement of the use of the Library. Determination of reinstatement will be made following the meeting and the person will be so notified in writing. All incidents involving permanent removal will be reported to and reviewed by the Library Board of Trustees. After review, the Board of Trustees of the Bridgewater Library Association will make a final determination.

These policies are drafted in accordance with Sections 11-32, 53-21 and 53a-182 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 18, 2024*

### **III. Policy Concerning Child Behavior and Supervision**

Service to children is an important part of our library's mission. The Library is free and open to unaccompanied children who are independent enough to use the resources for recreation, information, and education.

It is not the Library's function to provide supervision or care for children unless they are participating in a scheduled library children's program. The Library also has the responsibility to provide a safe, orderly and comfortable environment for every patron who is appropriately using its services and facilities.

- Parents and caregivers are, at all times, responsible for the conduct and safety of their children on Library premises. Appropriate supervision, based on the ages, abilities and levels of responsibility rest with the caregiver.
- The Library is a public building open to all individuals. Staff is not responsible for the safety, care or supervision of children of any age, whether in the library or on library premises unless when attending a scheduled children's library program.
- All children and young adults are expected to respect Library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the Library. (See Library Patron Behavior Policy). Those who do not use the Library appropriately or who require excessive staff attention and/or supervision may be asked to leave the Library.
- The judgment of the Library staff prevails when requesting the removal of a child from the building in the event of behavioral difficulties.

*By Library policy and State Code (Sec. 53-21a) children under the age of twelve cannot be in the library without a parent or guardian.*

Caregivers are expected to be aware of the opening and closing times of the Library bearing in mind that these can and do change with weather, power failures, etc.

If a child has not been met by a parent or caregiver 15 minutes prior to closing, the Library staff will attempt to contact the parent or guardian of the child. In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be located staff will contact the Resident Trooper or State Police. In no circumstances will staff take responsibility of taking the child home or will staff be alone in the building with an unaccompanied child.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 18, 2024*

#### **IV. Vulnerable Adults**

A vulnerable adult is an individual over the age of 18 who is mentally or physically challenged to a degree that may significantly impair that person's ability to provide adequately for his/her personal needs and manage his/her behavior without assistance.

A parent/guardian or caregiver 18 years of age or older must be responsible for monitoring the activities and managing the behavior of vulnerable adults during their Library visits.

Physically challenged adults who are capable of providing for their own needs are welcome to remain in the Library without supervision so long as a contact person is available in the event the adult's health or safety is in doubt.

The rules for vulnerable adults at closing time shall be the same as the rules for an unattended child.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 18, 2024*

## **V. Internet Access and Use Policy**

To fulfill its mission of providing equal access to ideas and information through a diversity of library materials, programs, services, and experiences, the Burnham Library free and open access to Internet resources.

The Burnham Library cannot assume responsibility for the content of the Internet, and has no control over the Internet nor any resources found on it. The Library assumes no responsibility for the accuracy, quality, or currency of any Internet resource. Internet users are subject to applicable local, state and federal statutes. U.S. copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials. All responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the Library disclaims any liability of responsibility resulting from such use.

Rules of Use:

- Access to the public computers will be on a “first come, first served” basis.
- Access to public computers is limited to 30 minutes per session if others are waiting
- A maximum of two people may use a computer workstation at one time.
- It is prohibited to send, receive, or display pornographic images
- It is prohibited to use the Internet for unlawful or criminal activity

Any unlawful or malicious activity that causes harm to another person, the Library or the computer equipment will result in the suspension of privileges.

### **Wireless Internet**

By choosing to use this free wireless service you agree to abide by the Library's Internet Policy that prohibits abusive or illegal activity while using the Library's Internet service.

This service is free of charge and subject to the terms and conditions of use as follows:

- Wireless access is provided as a public service free of charge on an as-is basis with no guarantee and no warranty. The library's Wireless network is subject to periodic maintenance and unforeseen downtime.
- Information passing through the Library's wireless access is not secured and could be monitored, captured, or altered by others. There are risks involved with connecting to a public wireless connection, such as possible viruses, malware, loss of data, possible hacking/snooping by others connected, possible hardware/software failure. It is your sole responsibility to protect your information from all risks associated with using the Internet, including any damage, loss, or theft that may occur as a result of your use of the Library's wireless access.
- All Wi-Fi users should have up-to-date antivirus software installed on their computers.
- The Library assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment; users must keep their equipment with them at all times.

- Printing is available via the wireless connection. There is a nominal fee per printed page.
- Any attempt to circumvent library procedures or any unauthorized attempt to access or manipulate library equipment will result in permanent disconnection from the library's Wi-Fi network.
- If you do not agree to the above terms, please disable your wireless connection or turn off your computer.
- Connecting to the network requires a laptop computer with wireless capability supporting the WiFi standard (also known as IEEE 802.11b/g).

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 18, 2024*

## **VI. Internet Safety Policy**

### **Introduction**

Burnham Library is a forum for all points of view and adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the Library Bill of Rights formulated by the American Library Association, and endorsed by its Board of Directors.

Burnham Library's Internet Safety Policy is designed to promote access to the Internet while protecting children from exposure to inappropriate material, as well as the public from unlawful access to and use or disclosure of personal information, and unauthorized access to legally restricted areas.

The Internet Safety Policy's purpose is to prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; to prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information; and to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

### **Filtering**

In compliance with CIPA, the Library filters all its computers, and all access to the Internet through its network, to protect against access to obscene visual depictions, child pornography, and/or other material harmful to minors, as required by law.

The filter may unintentionally block sites that have legitimate research value and fail to block objectionable content. Users should be aware that Internet filtering software installed for CIPA compliance should not substitute for individual judgment and/or parental involvement and oversight.

As the law requires, the Library will disable filtered Internet access to persons 18 or older who request it for bona fide research or any other lawful purposes.

### **Inappropriate Network Usage**

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Burnham Library's online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and (c) dissemination and viewing of obscene visual depictions, child pornography, and/or other materials harmful to minors.

## **Education, Supervision and Monitoring**

The Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and caregivers to monitor and determine their children's access to library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet.

Parents or caregivers are responsible for the Internet information selected and/or accessed by their children. Children, defined as individuals under 18 years of age by Connecticut State Statute, who use the Internet unsupervised may be exposed to inappropriate or disturbing information and images. Parents are encouraged to discuss the use of the Internet in relation to family values and boundaries with their children and teens and to monitor their children/teen's use of the Internet.

## **Public Access**

Users are cautioned that, because security in an electronic environment such as the Internet cannot be guaranteed, all transactions, files and communications are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use and, therefore, should be considered public.

Internet access in the library is available on computers that are located in open public areas and are subject to supervision. Staff is available to assist customers who need help finding information on the Internet. The Library reserves the right to engage in monitoring activities, both electronic and non-electronic, at its sole discretion and without further notice unless otherwise restricted by law. Such practices may include, but are not limited to, those for the purpose of monitoring the nature and quality of our services, and the security and the conduct of people on our premises.

Disclaimer: The Burnham Library makes no warranty, expressed or implied, for the timeliness, accuracy or usefulness for particular purpose of information accessed via the Internet.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, June 2017*

## **VII. Privacy and Confidentiality Policy**

### **Privacy and Confidentiality Policy**

It is the policy of the Burnham Library to preserve the privacy of its circulation records and to treat all the Library's personally identifiable information with confidentiality. This privacy and confidentiality standard is basic to the trust users place in the Library and its staff. The American Library Association's Code of Ethics states: "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted." In addition, Section 11-25(b) of the Connect General Statutes protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information contained in the circulation records of all public users.

The Burnham Library shall endeavor to create and maintain only necessary records. The Library shall create and follow a schedule of deletion of personally identifiable information when such information is longer necessary for the efficient operation of the library. The Executive Director shall have sole discretion with respect to determining the appropriate retention of records.

Any request for information by the media shall be handled in accordance with the Burnham Library's Public Relations Policy.

#### **General**

- A parent or guardian can receive information concerning a minor child's registration and circulation. The term minor is defined by the General Statutes of Connecticut 1-1d as a person under the age of eighteen years.
- Board and committee members, employees, and volunteers must exercise good judgment and care at all times to avoid unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information. Conversations in public places should be limited to matters that do not pertain to information of a sensitive or confidential nature.

#### **Library Cards and Circulation Records**

- To receive a library card, library users are required to provide identifying information such as name, birth date and mailing address. This identifying information is retained as long as the library user continues to use the library card. For more information on applying for a library card, please see the Circulation Policy.
- A library user's library record includes current information, items currently checked out or on hold, as well as overdue materials and fines.
- The Library does not maintain a history of what a library user has previously checked out once books and materials have been returned on time.

## Public Computer Use and Library's Online Catalog

- Internet browsing history does automatically delete at the end of a computer session. For more information on public computer and Wi-Fi use please see the Internet Use Policy.
- The Library's online public access catalog system offers library user self-activated features, using "My Account." Information gathered and stored using this feature is only accessible to the library user. There is no administrative interface to this information for library staff and, therefore, it is not retrievable by anyone other than the user. The user has the option to delete their search and checkout history at any time.

Library records will not be made available to any agency of the state, federal or local government except pursuant to such process, order or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigatory power.

The Executive Director, and/or any person duly appointed in writing by the Executive Director, shall be responsible for handling all law enforcement or similar requests to obtain the Library's confidential information. The Executive Director shall immediately consult with appropriate legal counsel to determine if such a request is in proper form and to formulate an appropriate response. The Library staff shall immediately refer all law enforcement inquiries to the Executive Director, or in his or her absence, to the duly appointed person, and shall not release any Library confidential information until authorized in writing by the Executive Director or duly appointed designee.

The Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to amend this policy at any time.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 18, 2024*

## **VIII. Photography, Recording, and Filming Policy**

The Burnham Library reserves the right to utilize photographs or video taken at the library during public programs and events for future library publications and promotional material. Attendance at Burnham Library programs, events, or library spaces constitutes consent to be photographed for use in print and/or electronic publicity for the Library. To ensure the privacy of all individuals, their images will not be identified using full names or personal identifying information without written approval from the photographed subject, parent or legal guardian.

If a patron does not wish to be photographed/videoed, the patron must notify the library staff member coordinating the event prior to the program.

### **Photography or recording by members of the public or the media**

While the library is a public place, it is considered a “limited public forum” when it comes to First Amendment rights. Public libraries may reasonably restrict First Amendment rights in their buildings, particularly when the conduct would be disruptive to, or interfere with, the other patrons or staff or be inconsistent with the library’s mission.

Library patrons should be able to use library services without fear that their identity, location, or reading choices will be published.

Casual amateur photography by patrons and visitors wanting a memento of their visit is permitted in Library facilities so long as additional equipment such as tripods and/or lighting is not used and filming only captures the image of the person filming or of people who have provided express permission to be filmed/recorded.

Photography and video or audio recording for commercial purposes are permitted only if the activity has been expressly approved by the Executive Director. In order to insure that such activity would not be disruptive to, or interfere with, the library staff or patrons, or be inconsistent with the library’s mission, all individuals proposing to engage in such commercial activities must request approval in writing and in advance.

All requests to use a library facility as a setting for photography, video or audio recording are to be referred to the Board of Trustees, who has the responsibility and authority to evaluate the requests in terms of their impact on library operations and services. The Executive Director will make arrangements with specific library departments and personnel in advance of the approved photography or recording and will monitor the recording.

Any consent granted pursuant to this Policy to permit photography or filming may be revoked at any time upon failure to comply with terms of the Policy or other rules and regulations of the Library.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 18, 2024*

## **IX. Material Display Policy: Displays, Exhibits & Bulletin Boards**

### **Purpose**

The Burnham Library's ("the Library") Material Display Policy provides a basis for the display of library materials by librarians, 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:

*"The Burnham Library is a community anchor dedicated to lifelong learning and stimulating curiosity"*

Furthermore, the Library *"aspires to be a trusted center for increasing knowledge, fostering imagination and enabling creative engagement. Through the sharing of diverse ideas, we strive to promote an inclusive and welcoming community."*

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Library displays.

### **Policy**

The Burnham 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. 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. 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.

### **Art Exhibit Space**

Requests for display space in the Library shall be made to the Art Coordinator who shall have sole authority to make selections. Exhibits shall be scheduled so that there is minimal conflict with library programs.

### **Bulletin Board**

The Library maintains one bulletin board and a pamphlet rack in the lobby to publicize activities of a civic, cultural, educational or recreational nature. The intent of the Library is to give access to as much community information as possible and therefore, bulletin board display is limited to one month.

Literature to be displayed must be approved by the Library Director. Preference is given to Bridgewater and non-profit organizations.

The Library does not permit petitioning, solicitation, distribution of leaflets, canvassing or similar types of appeal by members of the public. Exceptions may be made after review by the Library Executive Director and Board of Directors.

### **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 and library staff throughout the library that are professionally trained to curate and develop displays. Library staff use 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, or events
- Relation to library collections, resources, 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, as well as offer displays 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 topic by the Library does not constitute an endorsement by Burnham Library of the content of the display, 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.

The Material Review and Reconsideration Policy is available on the Library website and at the Library for individual residents of Bridgewater who wish to submit a request to reconsider a display.

### **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 patron's right of

access to information and freedom from censorship. Selections will not be made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the material itself.

### **Burnham Library Display Policy**

Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of or be seen by minors. It is the parents' or guardians' responsibility to determine which library materials are appropriate for their children. The Burnham 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 Bridgewater, CT. Please see our Material Review and Reconsideration Policy found on the website or at the library for further information on this process.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees*

*Date: 10/15/2025*

## **X. Collection Development and Maintenance Policy**

### **Purpose and Scope**

This policy of the Burnham Library (the "Library") provides direction for the growth and development of collections. This policy applies to both the digital and print materials in the Library's collection. The Library strives to select, acquire, curate and provide free and easy access to materials, in all formats, that meet the varied needs and interests of the community. This policy provides guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials that anticipate and meet the needs of the community. It also addresses collection maintenance, and replacement and weeding of materials.

The Library makes every effort to provide library materials for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents and represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole. The Library recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents.

Specific acquisitions may include items that may be unorthodox, unpopular or controversial in nature. The Library's acquisition of such items does not constitute endorsement of their content but rather allows for their free expression. The Library adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association as expressed in its **Library Bill of Rights**, **Freedom to Read**, and **Freedom to View** statements. No library material, display or program shall be removed, or programs be cancelled, because of 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. All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

### **Key Definitions**

The Library's collection is the collection of books and other materials, in a variety of formats (print, electronic media, downloadable audio books, digital, etc.), owned or licensed and maintained by the Library and made available to the public at no cost.

### **Responsibility of Selecting Materials**

In accordance with this policy, the Library Board delegates responsibility for collection oversight and management to the Library Director and librarians who are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides residents with access to the widest array of library and other educational materials.

These librarians are tasked with selecting, maintaining, replacing, and weeding materials to ensure the collection provides broad access to library and educational resources. Consortium-level collections may be subject to additional collection criteria.

## Procedures

### 1. Selection Criteria

A. The Library applies the following general criteria when considering materials for acquisition:

- Public demand, interest or need
- Accuracy and effectiveness of material
- Anticipated potential for long-term public interest
- Favorable assessments by reputable critics, reviewers, or organizations in professionally recognized publications
- Prominence and credibility of author and publisher
- Relation to existing collection and other material on the subject
- Timeliness and importance of material as a document of the times; current or historical significance of the author or subject
- Availability and affordability
- Compatibility of format for Library use
- Value as resource material
- Suitability of subject or style for intended audience
- Local origination or particular relevance to Burnham Library and the region
- Public's ability to procure item from alternative sources
- Availability of electronic bibliographic records

B. The selection of materials is guided by the professional knowledge and judgment of librarians, whose expertise includes familiarity with a wide range of resources, an understanding of the strengths and gaps within the existing collection, and awareness of the needs and interests of the community. Patron suggestions are always welcome and are given thoughtful consideration; however, final decisions rest with Library staff, who will determine which suggestions are appropriate for action.

C. Textbooks will generally not be considered for the collection unless they are the best or only available source of information in their subject area and serve the general public and adult learning community. The Library does not purchase multiple copies of textbooks for use by students, a responsibility of the Board of Education.

- D. Self-published books by local or Connecticut authors will be considered for the Library collection if they are donated, meet the Library's standards of quality, and are determined to be of suitable interest to the public.

## **2. Digital Collections and Databases**

- A. Wherever possible, the Library makes electronic information available in the Library and remotely. In choosing to purchase or license electronic databases, the Library applies the same standards for selection as for print materials. However, the Library recognizes that it does not have the same control over electronic databases as it has over its in-house print materials. The Library will make every effort to provide assistance and ensure that the public learns how to use its electronic databases.
- B. Born digital items are those materials created in a digital format. They are distinct from analog items that are subsequently digitized, such as paper manuscripts or photographs. In order to accept born digital items, the Library addresses:
  1. Copyright and licensing
  2. Redaction of personally identifiable information
  3. Any restrictions on use or circulation
  4. Maintenance and evolution of accepted formats

## **3. Collection Maintenance**

- A. Maintenance of the collection includes discarding, replacement, rebinding and repair. If an item is lost or damaged, it may not necessarily be replaced depending upon the number of duplicate copies or similar materials in the collection, existence of adequate coverage of the subject field, and demand for the specific author, title or subject. It is sometimes preferable to purchase current materials rather than replace older ones. The staff serves as arbiter in such instances.
- B. A librarian will continually review library and other educational material within a public library using professionally accepted standards, which shall include, but not be limited to, the material's relevance, the physical condition of the material, the availability of duplicates or copies of the material, the availability of more recent age-appropriate or grade-level-appropriate material and the continued demand for the material.

## **4. Weeding**

Weeding is a term used by libraries to describe the removal of materials from their collections. Such items may contain outdated or inaccurate information, have multiple duplicate copies, be no longer of interest, inconsistent with evolving community standards, or in poor condition. At

the Library weeding is performed as a regular, ongoing process by qualified staff and the Library Director in the interest of keeping all collections current and useful. Weeded materials in good condition may be sold, donated, or disposed of however the Library deems appropriate. Generally, standard titles of permanent value and materials of local significance are spared weeding even if they may meet the criteria for so doing.

## **5. Gifts and Donations**

The Library welcomes gifts of books and other materials for the collection and applies to them the same standards of selection that govern purchases. Gift materials are accepted with the understanding that those that meet the Library's selection criteria may be retained and those that do not may be redistributed to other non-profit organizations. See the Library's Gifts Policy for more information.

## **6. Controversial Materials**

- A. The Library recognizes that some materials may not be considered appropriate by all patrons. Selections will not be made based upon anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the overall library patron community.
- B. Responsibility for the reading, listening and viewing habits of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. The Library maintains several age-appropriate collections for children and teens. Materials may be reassigned among these sub-collections based on the age appropriateness of the content. Selection of adult material will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The removal, exclusion or censoring of any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive is prohibited.
- C. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be removed from the open shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.
- D. The decision by an author, publisher, or other content creator to withdraw their work from the market and stop selling or publishing it will not be considered sufficient reason alone for the Library to withdraw it from the collection.

## **Intellectual Freedom and Censorship**

The Library recognizes not all users will greet all materials with the same degree of enthusiasm and regard. Therefore, some materials selected for the collections may seem controversial and even

distasteful to some Library users. It is the right of the individual not to read, view or hear materials that the individual considers objectionable. It is never the right of any Library user or users to deny access to Library materials to others. The freedom to choose from a broad range of informational and artistic materials will not be abridged. When evaluating library materials, the **Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View** statements from the American Library Association are used as guiding documents.

### **Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy**

The Burnham Library Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of hearing from the public regarding material selection. The Library Administration and Staff seriously consider suggestions made by Bridgewater, CT residents and taxpayers. The completion of the **Request for Reconsideration** form does not guarantee either accession to the collection or removal from the collection but does ensure the attention of Library Staff to user opinion, interests, and concerns. The library limits consideration of requests to reconsider materials, material displays or programs to residents of Bridgewater, CT.

Please see our Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and form for further information on this process. This policy can be accessed on the Burnham Library website. A copy is maintained in the Library's Administration Office.

Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards as outlined in the Library's Collection Development and Maintenance Policy and Display and Program Policy. Any librarian or Library staff member who, in good faith, carries out the responsibilities and decisions described in these policies shall be immune from civil or criminal liability and shall be afforded the same protection in any judicial proceeding arising from such implementation.

This policy is in accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323.

The Library neither approves nor disapproves of the views expressed in materials included in the collection.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees*

*Date: 10/15/2025*

## XI. Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The Burnham Library (“the Library”) welcomes expressions of opinion concerning materials, programs or displays. A Bridgewater resident with a vested interest who wishes that a specific item, program or display be reconsidered is asked to complete and submit a **Reconsideration Form**. In accordance with PUBLIC ACT 25-168 SEC. 322,323 an Act Concerning School and Public Libraries, the Library abides by the following statutory requirements:

- Establishes a process for individuals with a vested interest to challenge any library and other educational material, display, or program.
- Limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays or programs to individuals residing in the town in which the library is located or the town in which the contract library is located
- 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.
- Any process for petitioners to challenge any library material, display or program shall neither favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics;
- Provide for the creation of a request for reconsideration form that may be submitted by an individual to the library director to initiate a review of such material.
- Request for reconsideration form has space for individual's full legal name, address and telephone number. The form must state that an individual shall not submit a request for reconsideration without this information included.
- The form shall require such individual to specify which portion or portions of such material such individual objects to and provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection. Such individual shall not submit a request for reconsideration form without including such 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 have access until a final decision has been made by the Library Director.
- Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section 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.

**Review Process:**

The Library Executive Director, will evaluate the request for reconsideration form, read the challenged material in its entirety, evaluate the challenged material against the collection development and maintenance policy and make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material not later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request. The Library Director is permitted to consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenge library material. The Library Director shall provide a copy of the library director's decision and report to the individual who submitted the form.

The final authority regarding the removal or retention of library materials ultimately resides with the Library Board of Trustees/Directors. An individual who submitted a request for reconsideration form may appeal, in writing, the Library Director's decision to the Library Board of Trustees.

The Library Board shall, after evaluating the challenged material under the collection development and maintenance policy shall:

- (A) consult with (i) the Library 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 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 Library Director.

Once a decision has been made by the library director or the board of trustees or other governing board on the reconsideration of any library material,

- Such material cannot be subject to a new request for reconsideration for a period of three years.
- The Library Director shall summarize the previous decision in response to any new request for reconsideration during that three-year time period.

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.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

*Approved by The Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees*

*Date: 10/15/2025*

## **XII. Circulation Policy**

### **PATRON REGISTRATION**

The Burnham Library (BL) will issue a library card at no cost to any person who is a current resident of Bridgewater (whether full or part-time) and who can establish proof of residency.

Proof of residency includes: Connecticut driver's license or ID card with current address printed on the front, check imprinted with name and current address, utility bill, and valid vehicle registration.

BL cards issued to individuals expire in three years. Cardholders are responsible for keeping their cards current.

BL cards may be issued to children at any age with a parent's or guardian's permission. It is the policy of BL that these parents or guardians and not the Library staff, are encouraged to supervise and approve the selection of materials made by their minor children. It is these parents and guardians, and only these, who may restrict their children (and only their children) from borrowing specific library items.

All Burnham School children are issued a BL card at the beginning of Kindergarten (or when entering as a new student). Parents/guardians are provided an application to register their child with the BL. If that application is not returned to the Library, the child is provided a Student Card and privileges are limited to the BL only.

Guest cards may be issued to any non-resident guest at the staff's discretion. This guest card is issued to those whose principal residence is not a town in Connecticut. Borrowing privileges are limited to the BL only and expire within 1 year of issue.

### **BORROWING PRIVLAGES**

A Library user is responsible for all materials checked out on their card or the cards of children under 12 years of age for whom they have assumed responsibility. If a user allows others to borrow materials using their card, those materials are the responsibility of the card owner.

To borrow an item from BL's collection, a patron is required to possess a valid library card that is registered with their hometown library and in good standing. Additionally, BL cards may be used to borrow materials at any Connecticut public library under the state-funded Connecticard Library Service program.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY RECORDS**

Circulation and registration information is kept confidential by the Library. A patron may see their own circulation records only. See Confidentiality of Library Records Policy.

## **LOAN PERIODS**

- Books and Audiobooks – 21 days, 1 renewal
- New Books / Bestsellers / Awards – 14 days, 1 renewal
- Magazines – 14 days, 1 renewal
- DVDs and Box Set/Series (older than 6 months) – 1 week, 1 renewal
- NEW DVDs and Box Set/Series - DVDS 3 days, 1 renewal & Box Set/Series 1 week
- Museum Passes – 3 days, no renewal
- Library of Things –
  - Equipment (i.e. technology & lawn games) – 7 days, 1 renewal
  - Kindles – 14 days, 1 renewal
  - Puzzles & Games – 21 days, 1 renewal
  - Projector & Laptop – 3 days, by arrangement with the staff
- Discovery Bags – 14 days, 1 renewal

Materials in Reference, Local History collection, and Special collections, do not circulate but may be used in the Library or at the discretion of the Executive Director.

The number of library materials that can be borrowed with a valid library card is not limited. BL reserves the right to restrict borrowing during high demand times, such as required summer reading, holiday books, and videos.

Most items will be renewed automatically one time unless there is a hold on the item(s). If we have an email address on file for you, a courtesy notice is emailed two days before an item is due with notification of your due date or automatic renewals. Renewals may be made via phone, email, or the library catalog.

## **INTER-LIBRARY LOAN**

Materials may be borrowed from another library through our inter-library service. Requests for these loans may be made in person, by phone, email or via the library catalog. Materials borrowed from other libraries circulate according to the lending library's policy. Books lent through inter-library loan to the borrowing library's cardholders circulate for 35 days; videos and DVDs circulate for 21 days (this includes shipping time between libraries).

## **RETURNING ITEMS**

Items can be returned when the library is open or closed. Items can be returned at the main circulation desk or to the youth services desk when the library is open. Items can be returned 24/7 in the external book drop located in the parking lot – unless otherwise noted. Items returned via the book drop, will be discharged from your account the next library day.

Generally, materials borrowed from BL may be returned at any other public library in Connecticut. Conversely, materials borrowed from other libraries may be returned to BL.

### **CURBSIDE PICK-UP**

BL is pleased to offer contactless/after hour curbside pick-up of library materials. Requests will be processed during library hours, Tuesday – Saturday. Items must be picked-up within 1 day.

### **FEES AND FINES**

Borrowers are responsible for returning library materials by their due date. As of January, 1, 2023, BL no longer charges overdue fines for most materials. This policy applies to Burnham Library items only. Overdue items belonging to another Bibliomation library will follow that particular library's lending and fine policies. Patrons are encouraged to either view their records online through the library's website/catalog or call the library if they need help. The Fine and Fee schedule is as follows:

Museum Passes - \$2.00 per day

Library of Things - \$2.00 per day

Discovery Bags - \$2.00 per day

The maximum fine per item is capped at \$10.00 and in accordance with Bibliomation policy the borrower's account will be blocked. This will also block access to services such as Hoopla and Libby.

If an item is not returned within three weeks (21 days) of the due date, the item will be considered lost. The material is billed at the list price that is part of the bibliographical record. If this information is not available, a standardized price predetermined by the library will be used.

The donation of a new copy, or an acceptable replacement, (as determined by Executive Director) will be permitted in lieu of payment. Refunds are only issued for payment of lost items that are later found at the discretion of the Executive Director.

The Library may notify borrowers that they have overdue materials. The Executive Director will decide upon the number of overdue notices, their mailing schedules, and other particulars.

It is the borrower's responsibility to make sure that each case contains all items when returning audiobooks, DVDs, and/or Library of Things.

- If one or more pieces are missing, the item will remain on the borrower's account.
- Borrowers will be charged for the missing/damaged piece(s) OR entire item.
- If the problem is not resolved, the borrower will be billed for the entire item's replacement.

### **RESERVES**

Patrons may reserve a book or other items that may not be immediately available. Reserves are honored in the order taken. Upon the items availability, the patron will be notified by phone, email, or

text and the item will be held for seven days. If the item is not picked up after seven days, the hold will be canceled and given to the next person or returned to the owning library.

**POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE, AMMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS**

This policy is effective upon approval of the Library Board of Directors. The policy may be amended and/or revised at the regular meeting of the Board.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, May 9, 2024*

### **XIII. Meeting – Use of a Facility Policy**

#### **Burnham Library**

#### **Meeting – Use of Facility Policy**

##### **Purpose**

The Bridgewater Library Association (BLA) is a non-profit organization that operates the Burnham Library (Library) and offers its facilities to organizations for non-commercial, cultural, informational, educational, intellectual, recreational, and civic purposes. The Bridgewater Library Association reserves the right to supersede all other uses.

The Library offers facility use to Bridgewater community groups, non-profit organizations, private business, individuals, and government agencies in accordance with BLA policies and procedures and state and federal laws. The meeting space is not available for entrepreneurial or commercial purposes or solicitations.

Granting use of the facilities does not imply endorsement by the Library of the any group, meeting, or ideas presented at the meeting. The Library shall not be used as a campaign headquarters by any political committee. *Meetings hosted by outside individuals or groups do not constitute Library sponsored programs.*

##### **Scope**

A *Meeting* is a gathering of individuals or a group for discussion, planning, education, or collaboration that is limited in size and scope, does not require special staffing or resources, and can be accommodated within the Library's regular meeting room setup and hours. Meetings do not require a certificate of insurance unless otherwise determined by the Library.

##### **RULES OF USE:**

- Use of the Library and its meeting space for Library-sponsored activities take precedent over all outside use of the facility.
- Meeting space use is limited to after library hours only, unless approved by the Library Director.
- Meetings are to be held in the Community Room on the lower level in the Susan Beris, MD Youth Learning Center, unless alternative arrangements have been discussed with and approved by the Library Director.
- Any organization wishing to meet in the Library shall complete a *Meeting – Facility Use Agreement form*.
- Groups that do not have a recurring meeting schedule are required to submit requests to the Library at least two (2) weeks in advance of the desired date. Approval is subject to availability and will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis.

- At the Director's discretion, may permit two meetings to take place in the Library at the same time. Each group will be assigned meeting space as deemed appropriate.
- Each group must designate one individual to be responsible for the meeting. The group assumes full responsibility for any loss or damage incurred during its use of the Library.
- Outside organization are prohibited from charging a fee or making a profit from use of the facility (e.g. holding a class with an admission fee).
- Outside organizations using the facility for a meeting shall adhere to the Patron Code of Conduct in Section II of this policy.
- The key may be picked up during regular library hours or by prior arrangement with the Library Director and/or staff.

Additionally:

- Patrons may not remove library materials from the building or use library computers outside of regular library hours.
- The key must be left along with completed *Library Use Sheet* before exiting and locking the Library.
- Arrangements may be made to use the Library's TV monitor, DVD player, projector and screen. The organization is responsible for setting up and dismantling the borrowed equipment.
- Attendance may not exceed posted legal capacity of 50 individuals for the SBYLC Community Space.
- Each group is responsible for leaving the Library in an orderly condition, ensuring that all appliances are turned off, lights are out, and entrance doors are locked. A Library Use Sheet will be provided in the meeting area, including a checklist of closing procedures and a section to record total attendance for the meeting or event.
- The side entrance door must remain locked after the group's designated representative enters the Library. Group members should be informed to enter through the back door located in the SBYLC Community Space. An erasable sign will be provided for this purpose.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees*

*Date: 1/21/2026*

## **XIV. Event – Use of Facility Policy**

### **Burnham Library**

#### **Event - Use of Facility Policy**

##### **Purpose**

The Bridgewater Library Association (BLA) is a non-profit organization that operates the Burnham Library (Library) and offers its facilities to organizations for non-commercial, cultural, informational, educational, intellectual, recreational, and civic purposes. The Bridgewater Library Association reserves the right to supersede all other uses.

The Library offers event facility use to Bridgewater community groups, non-profit organizations, and government agencies in accordance with Association policies and procedures and state and federal laws.

Granting use of the facilities does not imply endorsement by the Library of the any group, meeting, or ideas presented at the meeting. The Library shall not be used as a campaign headquarters by any political committee. *Events hosted by outside individuals or groups do not constitute Library sponsored programs.*

##### **Scope**

An *Event* is a planned activity or gathering that is open to the public or a large audience and may, upon specific request, require additional library resources, staffing, equipment, setup, or coordination. Events are typically time-limited, special in nature, and may involve performances, lectures, receptions, celebrations, or programs that extend beyond standard meeting room use. **Due to the increased operational and liability considerations, events require proof of liability insurance in the form of a certificate naming the Library and/or town as additional insured(s).**

##### **Procedure for Reservation:**

1. The requesting group or person (the Applicant) will submit the attached *Event – Use of Facility form* to the Library Director at least six (6) weeks but not more than twelve (12) months before the proposed event unless otherwise agreed space is allocated. On a first-come, first-served basis.
2. The application must be accompanied by proof of General Liability insurance with a minimum per occurrence limit of \$500,000 providing coverage for bodily injury and property damage. See below for *Event Insurance Details*.

The Board Chair and the Library Director have the joint authority to approve the Application, if they choose to do so.

If approved, the Library Director will return a signed copy of the application to the Applicant. Arrangements will then be made for key pick-up during Library hours or by prior appointment.

## **Event Spaces:**

**Susan Beris, MD Youth Learning Center's Community Space** – The SBYLC's Community Space is located on the lower level of the Library. It is available for programs, meetings, and special events. The space is limited to legal capacity of 50 individuals. Food approved for this space can include non-alcoholic beverages and light snacks. This space includes a ADA compliant restroom, as well as a sink and microwave. Use of the convection oven is not permitted unless authorized by the Library Director. Tables and chairs are available with seating for 50 individuals depending on space configuration.

**Van Wyck Brooks Reading Room** – The VWB Reading Room (including the Local History Room and side vestibule) is located on the upper level of the Library. It is available for special events. The maximum capacity is 100 (standing room only). 30–40 attendees is recommended for seated events to allow for comfortable spacing. An ADA-compliant restroom is located on the lower level and is accessible by elevator or staircase. The restroom in the staff workspace is not available for Events. Food approved for this space can include alcoholic beverages (wine and beer) and light snacks (finger foods not typically requiring cooking, heating, plates, or utensils to serve). Limited use of the staff work area/kitchen is available upon approval by the Library Director.

## **RULES FOR USE:**

- The Applicant must designate a person who will be in charge of the Event who shall be present before the Event begins and will until everyone has left the building.
- The Applicant will observe the stated occupancy limit and approved hours for the Event.
- The Applicant may charge admission or solicit contributions to cover program expenses. The Board in its sole discretion may grant an exception to any civic or charitable group or organization.
- No Library equipment is to be altered moved, or removed unless previously arrangement is made.
- Arrangements may be made to use Library equipment, such as TV and projector. The Applicant may request Library assistance for setting up and dismantling all such equipment.
- Neither the Library nor the Town will be responsible for loss or theft of personal property.
- If children are present for any Event, they are to remain in the Event Space during the scheduled Event.
- All waste must be removed from the Library at the end of the Event.
- The Applicant, individually as well as organizationally, is responsible for returning the Library spaces to their original condition and for any damage to contents.
- Use of the Library and its meeting space for Library-sponsored activities and events take precedent over all outside use of the Library.
- The event space use is limited to after library hours only.

- Authorization for use of the event space does not include use of Library staff other than to provide access to the facility and to determine that the room arrangement and equipment requested are provided as agreed upon at the time of the booking.
- Patrons may not remove library materials from the building or use library computers outside of regular library hours.
- The key must be left along with completed *Library Use Sheet* before exiting and locking the Library. The Library Use Sheet will be provided to the individual in charge of the Event. The Library Use Sheet includes instructions for opening and closing the Library following the Event.

### **Publicity and Promotional Materials**

- Advertising or promotional materials may not imply that an Event is sponsored, co-sponsored, endorsed, or approved by the Library unless written permission is granted by the Library Director.
- All promotional materials must clearly identify the name and contact information of the event sponsor or organizer.
- If the Library's name or address is used for directional purposes, all materials must state that the views of the sponsor of the Event do not represent those of the Library or the Association.

### **Event Insurance Details**

You should contact your existing homeowner's / business insurance company to inquire about event insurance or visit: [www.eventhelper.com](http://www.eventhelper.com)

- a) General Liability insurance with a minimum per occurrence limit of \$500,000 providing coverage for bodily injury and property damage.
- b) The Certificate of Insurance will indicate that User has made Burnham Library, Bridgewater Library Association, the Town of Bridgewater, and its trustees officers, employees, and directors, and each of their agents, employees, successors, and associates, (collectively the "Additional Insureds") on the User's policy with respect to the use by User of the Library facilities, and
- c) User's insurance shall be "primary and non-contributory" with any other insurance from and must indemnify and hold the Library and the Additional Insureds harmless from and against any and all liability, responsibility, causes of action, claims, demands, damages, costs, debts, expenses, compensation and/or suits at law or in equity, of any kind of nature whatsoever, for injuries or damages suffered by User or User's guests that arise, directly or indirectly, by or in connection with User's use of the Library premises on account of or relating to any act or omission by the Library, without limitation.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees      Date: 1/21/2026*

## XV. Programming Policy

### Purpose

The Burnham Library (“the Library”) develops and presents programs that support its mission to promote knowledge, ideas, and cultural enrichment.

*“The Burnham Library is a community anchor dedicated to lifelong learning and stimulating curiosity”*

Furthermore, the Library *“aspires to be a trusted center for increasing knowledge, fostering imagination and enabling creative engagement. Through the sharing of diverse ideas, we strive to promote an inclusive and welcoming community.”*

As a vital component of library services, library programs should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents and represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, and provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and education needs of residents. Library programming enhances and complements the Library’s collections while strengthening its role as a community hub. The Library recognizes the importance of 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. This policy outlines the principles and guidelines for the development, management, and oversight of all Library-sponsored programs.

### Key Definitions

A Library program is a free, librarian-planned event—virtual or in-person—offered for the benefit of the public. Programs may feature guest presenters, facilitators, or performers and can be held in partnership with other organizations. **Note:** Public events hosted by outside individuals or groups using Library meeting space do not constitute Library programs.

### Scope

This policy applies to all Library programs.

### Roles and Responsibilities:

The Library acknowledges that librarians are professionals trained to curate and develop programs. The Library Board delegates development, presentation and oversight of programs to the Library Executive Director and professionally and library staff.

The final responsibility for the library program is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by librarians and library staff who are responsible for the development, coordination and supervision of Library programs.

Attendees are responsible for complying with the **Library's Behavior Policy**.

**Procedures:**

1. **Program Selection:** The Library strives to present programs that are educational, informational, cultural or recreational and avoids programs that do not meet these standards. Topics, content and timing of Library programs are developed with consideration of available resources and keeping community needs and interests in mind. Program selection is based upon the suitability of topic, format and intended audience. A program will not be excluded because its topic may be regarded by some as controversial. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the content or of the presenter of the program. The library provides programs created or curated by librarians or staff members of the public library as well as allowing programs created by members of the public or community groups in the public library.
  - a) Library programs must have an educational, informational, cultural or recreational value to the community. The Library will not offer programs of a purely commercial nature or those designed for the solicitation of business.
  - b) Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be approved or offered by the Library. However, educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates, may be offered.
  - c) Programs that support or oppose a specific religion will not be approved or offered. Programs are planned to be inclusive of all cultures and of all religions and no religion. Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe or proselytize a particular religious' conviction. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of Library patron
2. **Program Development, Coordination and Supervision:** Library programs may originate from Library staff, collaborating institutions or members of the public.  
In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization depending upon the timing and venue of the program.  
All programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library, however, must abide by this policy regardless of where they are hosted.
3. **Program Access:** Library programs are free and open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration may be required in advance or at the door. For programs intended for specific audiences—such as children or teens—priority admission may be given to those groups, as deemed appropriate by the Library. Individuals requiring accommodations should contact the Library at least two weeks in advance.

4. **Virtual Program Delivery:** Some Library programs may be delivered through a Library-approved virtual platform, accessible to registered participants via their own internet-enabled devices. These may include virtual programs or hybrid events conducted both online and on-site.

Library staff, program facilitators, and partnering organizations will follow industry-standard best practices for virtual events. Some programs may be recorded—either pre-recorded for future broadcast or recorded live for later viewing. When live programs are recorded, participants will be notified at the beginning of the session.

Advance registration is required for live virtual programs. Registered participants will receive a private access link via email, which must not be shared. Information collected during registration will be used solely to communicate details about the program or to verify eligibility.

Participants are expected to follow the **Library's Behavior Policy**. Violations may result in immediate removal from the session.

While the Library will take reasonable measures to ensure digital security, attendees should be aware that all online activity carries inherent risk.

Patrons are responsible for providing their own equipment and internet access. The Library will make a good faith effort to select platforms compatible with a broad range of devices and systems but cannot guarantee universal access, nor can it ensure the quality of audio, video, or connectivity for any presenter or participant.

5. **Program Materials:** Books, CDs, DVDs or other ancillary materials related to the content of a program may be offered for sale at a Library program as a convenience to attendees.
6. **Program Evaluation:** To provide the highest quality and most useful programming, Library staff may gather information about program results to guide future programming decisions. Outputs, such as the number of attendees at a program, will be gathered for all or almost all programs. Outcomes, such as how well the content of a program helped attendees learn about the program's topic, will be gathered at times when such data is required for grant reporting or would be helpful in evaluating a new program topic or format.
7. **Procedures for the Questioning of Library Programs by Patrons:** The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays or programs to individual residents of Bridgewater, CT. Please see our reconsideration policy for further information on this process. The Material Review and Reconsideration Policy is available on the library website and at the library for individual residents of Washington who wish to submit a request to reconsider a display or program

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

*Approved the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees*

*Date: 10/15/2025*

## **XVI. Materials for Sale Policy**

While the primary consideration will always be given to material sold for the benefit of the Library and other Town organizations, effective April 27, 2005, the Library will permit the sale of artwork and books sold for the benefit of an artist or author.

The artwork that is on display as part of the regular bimonthly art exhibit may be for sale.

Any sales transactions should be made directly between the artist and the buyer.

Authors who provide talks, readings or programs at the Burnham Library may sell copies of the book under discussion. Any transactions will be handled by the author, who will be responsible for bringing his or her books to the library for purchase at the event.

Artists and authors who provide their work for sale at the library are encouraged but not required to make a monetary contribution to the library.

All other requests to sell material at the Library will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, April 15, 2015*

## **XVII. Book Donation Guidelines**

Thank you for considering Burnham Library as a place to donate your gently used book, puzzles and other materials. Please help us with our mission by following these handy tips and guidelines.

### **Materials that we can accept for donation:**

- Books in excellent/like new condition
- Books with that new book smell (we love that!)
- Books with wide appeal, and bestsellers
- Items that fit our Material Selection Policy
- DVDs
- Puzzles (complete with all pieces)
- Items for our Library of Things

### **We cannot accept the following items:**

- Books with an offensive odor, mildew, or rodent damage
- Books damaged by highlighter, pen, or pencil marks
- Old library books
- Books with torn covers and pages
- Textbooks, dictionaries, or encyclopedia sets
- VHS or cassette tapes
- Magazines, museum pamphlets, Reader's Digest condensed books.
- Bibles

Due to a space limitation, we ask you to phone or email the library to schedule a drop-off for donations totaling 2-5 boxes. Up to 1 box may be brought to the Main Desk; staff is not available to assist by bringing donations into the building.

Items that are not added to the collection are donated to the Friends of the Library and available in the Burnham Book Store. Proceeds help support library programs and digital services. Items donated become the property of the Library and may be given to other libraries and non-profit agencies, sold, traded or discarded.

Please DO NOT leave donations outside the Library or in the book drop unless prior arrangements have been made.

If we are unable to accept your items, consider donating to Goodwill or Savers, or repurposing items into crafts. Paperback books can be recycled, visit <https://hrra.org/information-bridgewater/> for guidelines.

*Adopted by the BLA, August 4, 2023*

## **XVIII. Gift Acceptance Policy**

The Library accepts cash and non-cash gifts from individuals, corporate or other business entities, government agencies and other organizations on a current or future commitment basis, that are consistent with its mission and subject to the following conditions.

The Library reserves the right to reject a proposed gift if the board of directors, in its sole judgment, considers the donor or organization with which the donor is affiliated to reflect values inconsistent with those of the Library.

All requests by a donor for recognition of a gift must be approved in advance by the board of directors.

All gifts intended for a limited or restricted purpose must be approved in advance by the board of directors.

Multi-year pledges of not less than \$10,000 and of up to 5-year duration, will be accepted subject to the donor executing a written pledge agreement in a form acceptable to the board of directors. Such agreement shall include, but not be limited to, the amount and payment schedule, agreed upon restrictions, if any, and the nature of any recognition requested by the donor.

A selection of naming or commemorative opportunities shall be available to donors of gifts of \$25,000 or more. In addition, the Library may offer a variety of planned giving options for gifts of \$50,000 or more.

The Library shall keep a publicly available record of all accepted gifts reflecting the amount, date of gift and name of donor, unless anonymity is requested. In no event, shall the Library disclose any donor information other than as noted above.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, March 17, 2001*

## **XIX. Endowment Policy**

### **PURPOSE**

To have a sustainable policy that will promote the creation of a meaningful endowment to augment funds available for operating and capital expenses and to establish the terms and conditions upon which the Library will accept, invest and utilize funds designated as endowments.

### **DEFINITIONS**

1. Unrestricted or general purpose endowment funds: these are funds in excess of annual expense needs and designated for inclusion in the endowment, either by the board of directors, or by a donor whose gift was not restricted to a specific purpose.
2. Restricted or donor directed endowment gifts: funds that are directed, either by a donor or the board, to be used for a specific purpose, which in all cases shall be in furtherance of the library's mission and, if from a donor, approved by the board of directors.

### **POLICY**

All endowment funds, whether unrestricted or restricted, shall be [made in perpetuity] and shall be subject to the terms and conditions of this policy, as amended from time to time, and to the terms under which restricted endowment gifts were accepted from the donor. A donor restricted endowment gift will only be accepted by the Library if the fair market value of such gift is at least \$50,000 at the time of acceptance. Acceptance by the Library will be deemed to have occurred on the date on which the Donor Endowment Agreement (as described below) is fully executed.

All donor restricted endowment funds shall be evidenced by a written Donor Endowment Agreement, which shall state the initial amount of the gift, whether it is the intent of the donor to add to the gift over time and, if applicable, the purpose for which the gift is intended. Such purpose shall be mutually agreed to by the donor and the board of directors of the Library. The Donor Endowment Agreement may be amended by mutual consent of the Donor and the board of directors during the life of the Donor.

All donor restricted endowment funds shall be subject to the Library's contingent use policy. In any fiscal year, should the board of directors determine that the annual payout from the fund is not needed, in whole or in part, for the specified purposes of the fund, the balance of the annual payout may be used for other purposes that further the mission of the Library. Such alternative use shall be agreed to by mutual consent of the board of directors and the donor, if the donor is living, or by the board of directors in its sole discretion if the donor is deceased. The annual payout shall be defined as the interest, dividends and capital appreciation on the endowment funds earned in the prior fiscal year, together with up to 5% of the principal of the fund if permitted by the Donor Endowment Agreement. If, in future years, the board determines that the purpose for which the endowment was created is no longer necessary, practical, desirable or possible to perform, the board of directors shall, after consultation with the donor, if living, or in its sole discretion if the donor is deceased, designate the endowment funds as available for any substitute purpose that advances the mission of the Library.

Unrestricted endowment funds may be used for any purpose determined by the board of directors to advance the mission of the Library. However, unrestricted endowment funds used to satisfy the operating or any other financial needs of the Library in any given fiscal year, may not exceed 5% of the fair market value of all such endowment funds at the beginning of that fiscal year.

#### **INVESTMENT OF ENDOWMENT FUNDS**

All endowment funds, whether restricted or unrestricted, shall be invested in accordance with the investment policies of the Library, as determined from time to time by the board of directors. For purposes of investment only, the monies in any given endowment fund may be pooled or commingled with other endowment funds held by the Library. At all times, however, the amount and performance of each restricted endowment fund shall be separately accounted for on the Library's books and records and the amount and performance of the monies allocable to each restricted endowment fund shall be used to determine the permissible expenditure from such fund in a given year.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, March 17, 2021*

## **XX. Volunteer Policy**

The Burnham Library Board of Trustees recognizes that volunteers are a valuable resource for the Library and welcome volunteers who provide support that enhance library service to the community. Volunteer services will supplement, but not replace, regular services. Volunteers shall not be used in lieu of full or part-time staff.

### **Selection and Retention of Volunteers**

While we appreciate every person who wishes to volunteer at the Library, opportunities for volunteer work are limited. Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications and the needs of the library at any given time. Volunteers may be selected by Director based on a completed volunteer application form and an interview. Anyone over the age of 14 is welcome to apply. Applications will be kept on file for one year.

Burnham Library volunteers are bound by the rules contained in all Library policies and guidelines, especially those that relate to patron privacy and confidentiality. Library volunteers are recognized by the public as representatives of the Library and will be guided by the same work and behavior policies as employees. Volunteers working in the Library are covered by the Burnham Library's Property and Liability Insurance policy.

### **Training and Supervision**

Volunteers will receive training from a Library staff member. Volunteers work when adequate supervision is available. Work schedules and specific time commitments will be arranged individually by each volunteer and their supervisor.

### **Community Service**

Persons who seek a specific number of volunteer hours at the Library to meet a requirement set by an outside agency for the performance of community service are subject to the above selection process and all other provisions of this policy. The Library does not accept volunteers requiring court-ordered community service.

The Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to amend this policy at any time.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, January 19, 2022*

## **XXI. Library Hours and Calendar of Operation**

The Library is a public service institution, and every effort is made to maintain regular hours for the public. The purpose of this policy is to provide the Executive Director and trustees a guideline for selecting Library hours, holidays, weather, and emergency closures.

The decision to close the Library will be based upon (in no particular order):

- Inclement weather conditions or projected forecast for worsening conditions
- Condition of the Library's parking lot and walkways.
- Damaged Library property or condition of building equipment
- Availability of staff to open and operate the Library.
- Construction or renovation projects
- A state of emergency for the immediate area declared by local, county or state law enforcement agencies.

The decision to close the Library for any emergency shall be made by the Executive Director in consultation with the Board President. In the absence of the President, the Executive Director shall consult with the Vice-President.

### **Weather related closures:**

- If Region 12 schools are delayed, the Library will be open for its regularly scheduled hours, if possible.
- If Region 12 schools are closed, the Library will have a delayed opening (10:30 AM), if possible, and all activities at the Library for that day will be cancelled. A decision on whether or not to close the Library for the day will be made by 10:00 AM
- When Region 12 schools are not open (Saturday and holidays), the Executive Director and the Board President (if available) will assess the weather situation and determine whether or not to open the library.

### **Extended Closings and/or Limited Services**

In the event of a pandemic, local emergency, or other similar circumstance, it may be necessary for the Library to take unique measures to help slow the spread of an illness or assist local agencies. This may include but are not limited to service restrictions or limited hours of operation. Recovery from such an emergency may be slow and services and hours may be reduced for an extended period of time.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 18, 2024*

## **XXII. Pets in the Library Policy**

The Burnham Library is a pet-friendly public space. To ensure the rights of all patrons, however, the following rules must be followed:

1. Dogs belonging to staff must be restricted to non-public areas behind the circulation desk.
2. Dogs visiting the Library must be leashed and under their handlers' control.
3. Dogs may visit for only brief periods, such as checking out/returning materials. Dogs do not attend programs or presentations that occur inside the Library building.
4. Dogs may attend outdoor concerts and events (see #2)
5. Service dogs and dogs that are part of a program are exempted from these guidelines.
6. Any patron experiencing a problem or inconvenience due to another's pet should immediately report the situation to the Executive Director or other staff.

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees, September 18, 2024*

## **XXIII. Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form**

The Burnham Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays or programs to individual residents Bridgewater, CT. Please see our reconsideration policy for further information on this process. The Material Review and Reconsideration Policy is available on the library website and at the library for individual residents of Bridgewater who wish to submit a request to reconsider a display or program.

**Note:** The form requires an individual to specify which portion or portions of a material such individual objects to and provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection. Such individual shall not submit a request for reconsideration form without including such individual's full legal name, address and telephone number. Requests are accepted only from residents of Bridgewater, Connecticut. Please submit in person to the Library Director.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

### **Section 1: Contact Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent:  Yourself  An organization (please specify):  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Section 2: Resource Information**

Type of Material (check all that apply):

Book     Movie     Magazine     Library Program     Music

Display     Newspaper     Artwork     Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Artist/Producer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3: Nature of the Concern**

1. What brought this material to your attention?

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2. Have you read/viewed the entire material?  Yes  No

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3. Which specific part(s) of the material do you object to, and why? (Use additional pages if needed.)

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4. What concerns you about this material?

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5. What do you believe is the purpose of the material?

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6. For what age group do you believe this material is appropriate?

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7. Do you believe there is any value in this material?  Yes  No Please explain:

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8. Are there other resources you would suggest that present additional or alternative viewpoints on this topic?

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9. Are you aware of any critical reviews of this material?  Yes  No If yes, please list sources or attach copies:

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#### **Section 4: Request for Action**

Why do you believe your concerns should affect others' access to this material?

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What specific action would you like the library to take?

- Remove the item from the collection
- Restrict access to certain users (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Reclassify the item
- Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Signature**

By signing this form, I confirm that I am a resident of Bridgewater, CT, and that I have read or viewed the material in question (in whole or in part). I understand that reconsideration requests are not confidential records under Section 11-25 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Approved by the Bridgewater Library Association, Board of Trustees*

*Date: 10/15/2025*