

3.20 Patron Requests for Reconsideration

Introduction

The Richland Community Library staff and board support intellectual freedom and subscribe to the principles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The Library shall strive to protect the right of the public to freedom of access to information and ideas. Freedom of choice is one of the bases upon which our democracy was built. Freedom of inquiry is essential to the functioning of public libraries. The patron's choice of library materials for personal use is an individual matter. While a person may reject materials for themselves and for their children, they cannot exercise censorship to restrict materials access to any others. Responsibility for the use of materials by children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians.

Richland Community Library Procedures for Handling Formal Complaints

The following steps will be used when an individual feels that further action is necessary to address concerns about a library resource. For the duration of this process, the material in question will remain in circulation in the library collection.

1. A concerned patron who is dissatisfied with earlier informal discussions will be offered a packet of materials that includes the library's mission statement, selection policy, reconsideration form, and the Library Bill of Rights.
2. Patrons are required to complete and submit a reconsideration form to the library director.
3. The director, with appropriate professional staff, will review the reconsideration form and the material in question, to consider whether its selection follows the criteria stated in the collection policy.

4. Within 20 business days, the director will make a decision and send a letter to the concerned person who requested the reconsideration, stating the reasons for the decision.

5. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted within 10 business days to the Board of Trustees.

6. If the board plans to address the appeal at their board meeting, the individual will be notified of when and where the meeting will be held.

7. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of public comments to 3 minutes.

8. Items previously reviewed and retained by the library board shall not be reconsidered for removal.

9. The decision of the board is final and will be discussed during a closed session.

10. A letter will be sent to the concerned parties within 20 business days of the meeting date, notifying all parties of the final decision.