

Library Program Policy

PURPOSE:

The La Crosse Public Library recognizes the need to provide quality programs for all ages in keeping with the mission, vision and goals of its strategic plan. A policy is needed to set guidelines for the types of programs that are presented at the Library and community events.

Use of Library meeting rooms by outside organizations will fall under the Library Meeting Room Policies.

STATEMENT OF POLICY:

La Crosse Public Library programs are events that promote the use of library materials, services and/or offers the community informational, entertaining or cultural experiences. Programs are planned for the interest and enlightenment of the residents of our La Crosse community as well as to increase and diversify the visibility of the library within the community. The Library strives to offer a variety of programs that reflect the interests of our growing and diverse population and as such, programs will not be canceled because of the ideas or topics of the program or the views expressed by the participants or speakers.

As recommended by the American Library Association, the library defends the First Amendment right of speakers and participants to express themselves. The First Amendment does not protect behavior that crosses the line into targeted harassment or threats, or that creates a pervasively hostile environment. But merely offensive or bigoted speech does not rise to that level, and determining when conduct crosses that line is a legal question that requires examination on a case-by-case basis.

Library programs shall generally be voluntary, free, and open to the public. However, a fee may be permissible for certain types of Library initiated programs. The Library's philosophy of open access to information extends to library programming. The library does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or any other characteristics protected by local, state, and federal law.

Library programs must be non-commercial in nature. Although a professional expert may present a program, the information should always be generic in nature. Library programs must have a special entertainment, informational, or cultural value to the community. No individual or organization shall use a program at the Library to advertise or recruit members or customers. Programs are not used for commercial, religious, or partisan purposes or the solicitation of business.

Library programs are funded primarily through donation funding the budget of which is managed by the Program Coordinators.

Co-sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by participants. Co-sponsorship is defined as the library working with another agency, presenter, or business to provide a program (as defined above) for library customers. Priority co-sponsorship will be given to local government agencies. Agencies, businesses, or organizations that

participate in co-sponsoring a library program receive acknowledgement on the library website and in local publications. Program Coordinators reserve the right to accept or deny potential program collaborations based on the needs of the Library.

The Library and its employees will not be liable for the content of any program presented by a third party. Professional performers or presenters will be permitted to sell their creative products (CDs, books) following the completion of their program.

Timely and adequate public announcement shall be made of all programs. Organizations or individuals partnering with the library must coordinate marketing efforts with the Program Coordinator(s). Press releases, public notifications, and marketing publicities must be approved by the Program Coordinator(s).

Registration may be required for planning purposes and when space is limited. When preregistration is required, it must be handled by the library unless other arrangements are made with the Program Coordinator. In some cases, the nature and success of a program may limit attendance.

Program evaluation forms may be distributed to the participants of select programs so that staff may know what has been successful and receive ideas for new programs from customers. Recurring programs such as story times, book discussions and regularly scheduled programs with repeat attendees may receive a program evaluation annually.

The Library will endeavor to offer an equitable number of programs throughout the community. However, factors such as staffing levels, program space, budget concerns, and other demands upon the staff will influence the number and types of programs able to be offered. Library staff who present programs do so as part of their regular job and are not hired as outside contractors for programming.

Ultimate responsibility for programming at the Library rests with the Library Director, who administers under the authority of the Board of Trustees. The Library Director, in turn, delegates the authority for program management to the Program Coordinator, who coordinate this responsibility by working in partnership with the Program Lead Person and/or designated staff. It is the responsibility of the Program Coordinator to keep the Director informed of the status of all programs.

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion from any library customer concerning programming. If a customer questions a library program, he/she should first address the concern with a Library staff member. Customers who wish to continue their request for review of Library programs must follow the procedure outlined below.

Procedures for handling a statement of concern regarding library-initiated programs or displays

1. To receive consideration by the library, all concerns regarding library-initiated programs or displays (including those from Library Board members) must be made by fully completing the attached form.
2. The library-initiated program or display about which a concern has been made will not be canceled, nor be restricted in any way, before final action is taken by the Library Board on the complaint, unless the Library Director finds substantive justification for the program to be delayed or canceled until further investigation can be completed.
3. Within 30 days of the filing of the written complaint, the applicable Program Coordinator will confer with the Library Director, then send a written response to the patron, explaining in detail their decision regarding the statement of concern. The response will also inform the patron that they may appeal the decision within 30 days.
4. Within 30 days following the written response, if it is the desire of the patron, the Library Director will review the statement and submit it, along with their recommendation, to the Library Board.
5. Within 90 days of the filing of the written statement of concern the Library Board will review and take final action on it. In making its decision regarding the concern the Library Board will employ all of the Criteria for Selection of Library-Initiated Programs listed above, along with the American Library Association's statements entitled "Library Bill of Rights" and "Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource."
6. The patron will be notified in writing of the Library Board's decision in the matter.

Statement of Concern Programs or Displays

1. Title of program, display, or exhibit

2. Location

3. Department

- Youth Services
- Adult Services
- Outreach
- General

4. Request initiated by (name)

5. Phone

6. Address Street/ City/ Zip

7. Do you represent

- Yourself
- Organization _____

8.What specifically causes you to be concerned about this program?

9.Did you attend this event or view this exhibit in its entirety?

Yes

No

10.What do you think would be the result of a patron viewing this material or attending this program?

11.Is there an age for which you would recommend this program?

12.Are there any positive aspects to this event or exhibit?

13.What would you say the theme or purpose of the event is? Did it meet that purpose in your opinion?

14.Is there a program, event or exhibit you would recommend in place of this material?

15.What specific action would you recommend to library leadership?

16.Signature

Date
