

# WASHINGTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM POLICY MANUAL

## **Mission Statement:**

The Washington County Public Library (Library) strives to Educate, Enlighten, and Empower all individuals who seek its services.

## **Collection-Development Policy:**

The plan's purpose is to offer present and future selectors developmental guidelines to form collection-building principles to meet the Library's ongoing commitment to the public. Evaluation of inventoried material is based on the American Library Association's (ALA) parameters outlined in *Guide for Written Collection Statements* (1996).

## **Challenged Material Policy:**

When a patron wishes to comment on a segment of the collection-development policy, a written request addressed to the Library director is recommended (Refer to Appendix A *Washington County Public Library Collection Development Plan and Selection Criteria Policies* for more information pertaining to specific collection-development procedures).

## **Circulation Policies:**

- A Library card may be secured by the presentation of a valid government-issued photo credential (for example: Florida driver's license or identification), **and** documentation indicating the person's current Washington County physical address. There is a fee to replace a lost or damaged card.
- A parent or legal guardian must sign for a Library card if an applicant is under the age of 18, and only children appropriate materials may be placed on that card.
- Loan period limits: books (21 days); CDs (21 days); DVDs (21 days--maximum, two per Library card).
- Checkout items may be renewed twice, unless any materials have been requested by another patron. Renewals may be performed in person, online, or by telephone, as long as the item(s) is (are) not overdue.
- The patron whose name appears on the Library card is responsible for any items checked out on it: report lost Library cards immediately.
- Items designated to be placed on hold will be retained in a patron's name for only five days.
- New patrons are limited to checking out only two items for the first three months. After that period, they may check out seven items (with two being DVDs).
- In-house services include: FAXes; copying; genealogy research; Internet access; meeting room reservation (fee required); free wireless; school readiness classes for toddlers;

educational outreach training; e-Book instruction; adult and children's summer reading programs; instructional classes (specific topics); free e-Books for children (TumbleBooks); free downloadable e-Books and audiobooks (Overdrive); monthly e-mail newsletter containing updates and information (Constant Contact); and special family presentations.

- Non-residents of Washington County may pay \$20 per year for a non-resident card to access library services.

#### **Code of Patron Conduct Policy:**

Each Library facility has its conduct policies posted for public review (Refer to Appendix B).

#### **Use of Personal Technology Policy:**

Visitors are requested to turn off cellular telephone ringers when entering the Library. Also, items such as personal computers, portable listening devices, hand-held games consoles, headphones, pagers, and radios should be kept at a volume that does not disturb others. The Library provides electrical outlets for personal equipment but is not responsible for lost data or damage when users access such receptacles. It is important that no personal materials be left unattended at worksites while visitors are accessing other provided services. Library staff are not able to secure items while users are away from work areas.

#### **Unattended Child Policy:**

Caregivers are responsible for the safety and behavior of their children in the Library. Children up to thirteen years of age must be supervised by their caregivers while using the facility. Library staff follow guidelines established in *Florida Statutes 39.201 (1)(a)* concerning child patrons left unattended (Refer to Appendix C: Unattended Child Policy for more information).

#### **Computer and Internet Use Policy:**

The staff encourages the use of technological offerings and makes these resources available to the public. However, Library users should not have an expectation of confidentiality or privacy for documents viewed, created, or received when using facility computers. Also, Library staff has the right but not the obligation to monitor any or all computer usage. Displaying objectionable material will be cause for Library privileges to be limited, suspended, or revoked (Refer to Appendix D: Computer and Internet Use Policy).

#### **Meeting Room Policy:**

The meeting room (Chipley Branch only) is available to community organizations except when it is reserved for Library functions or being requested outside of facility operational hours. For more information on meeting room guidelines, refer to the application form

(Appendix E: Meeting Room Application). This completed document, submitted together with the established fee, is necessary for staff review prior to date/time acceptance.

### **Confidentiality of Patron Records:**

Staff members have the responsibility of protecting the privacy of its patrons while still responding to security concerns. The names of Library users, the materials they borrowed, and their telephone numbers and addresses, are not a part of the public record: therefore, these records will be confidential and undisclosed. Library staff will take stringent measures to uphold the confidentiality of patrons' free access to information. Guidelines for Library registration and circulation records are outlined in *Florida Statute 257.261* (Refer to Appendix F).

### **Exhibit Policy:**

Library staff are committed to presenting high-quality exhibits that support the facility's community mission. Exhibition content should possess educational merit, have a wide breath of public appeal, display certain thematic integrity, and not contain materials of high value or rareness. There will be no insurance attached to exhibits, and the Library assumes no responsibility for material damage or theft.

### **Posting and Handout:**

Most library locations in the Washington County Public Library System have community bulletin boards and/or space for handouts of public interest. These community posting areas are used to share information about local club and organizational meetings and events, and other information of interest to the general public. Information requested for posting should be left at the circulation desk for approval. All information must be approved by Library staff before posting. Library staff reserves the right to refuse to post material or remove posted material that is outdated, commercial in nature, or when sufficient space is not available.

### **Document Amendment and Update Policy:**

Washington County Public Library System is a department under the Washington County Board of County Commissioners. **This policy manual was approved by the BOCC on May 24, 2018.** Periodically, Library policies are reviewed, revised, and reissued to ensure that strategies are current within patron expectations and community standards. Also, the opinions and suggestions of Library users are important indicators essential to a cosmopolitan facility whose purpose remains keeping the world informed.

## **Appendix A: Washington County Public Library Collection Development Plan and Selection Criteria Policies**

### **WASHINGTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SELECTION CRITERIA POLICIES**

#### **Purpose:**

The plan's purpose is to offer present and future selectors developmental guidelines to form collection-building principles to meet the Library's ongoing commitment to the public. Special contingencies also are specified to provide staff and the public a structural format for the maintenance of a well-rounded collection.

#### **Principles:**

The Library staff endorses the American Library Association's (ALA) documents entitled: "Bill of Rights"; "The Freedom to Read"; "The Freedom to View"; and "Free Access to Libraries for Minors." Staff support an individual's right to access ideas and information that is representative of all points of view and every topic of choice.

Decisions to offer materials is based solely on a title's relationship to inventorial need and not on the approval or disapproval of those who use the Library. This policy applies to the purchase of materials for both adult and minor patrons alike.

#### **Maintenance:**

Staff recognizes their obligation to provide materials that enlighten patrons seeking informational and recreational sources. Some items may not be of enduring or meritorious value; however, they will be available regardless of communal assessment of their credibility. Since the collection is not archival in nature, it will be reviewed and revised (if necessary) periodically.

#### **Criteria:**

Based on the American Library Association's parameters outlined in *Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements* (1996), the primary objectives are to acquire, organize, and make available materials for public review. Evaluation of material is based on some of the following guidelines:

- Title popularity
- Item price
- Critical reviews

- Artistic merit
- Social significance
- Article scarcity
- Market availability
- Author reputation
- Publisher history
- Subject demand
- Topic relevance
- Subject endurance

### **Responsibility:**

The Library director is the final authority on collection materials but appoints staff to interpret and coordinate the application of policy. Public demand is a major factor in the selection process and staff should solicit community opinion openly and periodically. Vendors will be selected based on such elements as established credibility, past performance, pricing format, and inventory assortment. The Library's commitment to intellectual freedom and equity of access is supported by an up-to-date collection development policy based on the guidelines in *Intellectual Freedom Manual* (ALA, 1996).

### **Weeding:**

Systematic weeding of titles will identify damaged materials, out-of-date topics, extra editions not being circulated, inappropriate subject matter, and articles no longer of interest to patrons. The vitality of the collection requires that new items be added on a regular basis, and staff will evaluate what will remain and what is unnecessary. Also, the holdings of other area libraries will determine retention of titles so responsiveness to community need remains in place.

Weeding, too, acts as an indicator of what materials were checked but not returned. The publication, *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries* (2012), a guide from Texas State Library and Archives Commission, is an important resource in the collection evaluation process.

### **Revisions:**

Plan updates, revisions, and evaluations are needed to ensure the collection plan is contemporary in nature and progressive in scope. As community informational interests change, so should the plan's ingredients to maintain its quality and effectiveness. The Library director will review plan contents yearly and, if necessary, make amendments based on current situations.

### **Conclusions:**

The collection policy is intended to provide individuals of all ages, races, abilities, and income levels a source for educational advancement and personal growth. By continuing an active collection, in both electronic and tangible forms, the Library serves as a starting point for educational advancement as well as an institution for more advanced endeavors.

**Comments:**

When a patron wishes to comment on a segment of the collection development policy, a written request addressed to the Library director is recommended. Staff encourage and welcome the public's suggestions, ideas, and comments relating to collection development and management. The director values community input and will evaluate all suggestions based on Library betterment. If additional comments are required, written commentary can be submitted to the Library's governing authority, Washington County Board of County Commission.

## **Appendix B: Code of Patron Conduct**

Access to the Washington County Public Library will not be denied to any individual based on age, sex, education, philosophy, occupation, economic level, or ethnic origin. However; patrons who violate the rights of others or create disorder in a library may be asked to leave. The following Code of Patron Conduct will be available at each library facility in the system.

### **The following behaviors are NOT allowed in Washington County Public libraries:**

- Eating or drinking, except in designated areas
- Smoking or use of any tobacco product
- Consuming of alcoholic beverages, use of intoxicants or illegal drugs
- Carrying a weapon into the library, unless authorized by the law.
- Bringing animals into the library, except those needed to assist a patron with a disability.
- Engaging in disruptive/destructive behavior
- Interfering with another person's use of the library or with the library personnel's performance of duties.
- Wearing clothing that causes a disturbance. Shoes must be worn at all times.
- Interfering with patrons' use of the library through offensive or poor personal hygiene.

**A verbal warning shall be given to anyone exhibiting these prohibited behaviors. If the behavior continues, the patron will be asked to leave. If a patron fails to do so, local law officials will be contacted.**

### **Library privileges may be limited, suspended, or revoked, without warning, for the following reasons:**

- Damaging library property
- Stealing library materials
- Threatening, hostile or harassing speech or actions directed towards patrons or personnel
- Engaging in other illegal behavior
- Displaying objectionable material in violation of the Children's Internet Protection Act

### **Washington County Public libraries encourage all children to use their facilities and services.**

However, responsibility for children using the libraries rests with the parent/guardian or assigned chaperone. The library is not an authorized, licensed child care provider. Library personnel will not be responsible for unattended children. The presence of inappropriately unattended children will be reported to the proper authorities.

## **Appendix C: Unattended Child Policy**

Washington County Public Library System is dedicated to providing a welcome and safe environment for patrons of all ages. Children in the library should always be accompanied by a parent/guardian or assigned caregiver. **The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library rests with the parent / caregiver and not with the library personnel.** The following guidelines will be followed concerning the care and behavior of young library users.

**Children up to age thirteen** must have a parent/ caregiver in the immediate vicinity of, and in visual contact with, the child. The parent/caregiver must be an adult. If a child in this age group is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent/ caregiver in the library and inform him/her of the rules. If the parent / caregiver cannot be found, the police will be called for assistance. If a child in this age group has violated the Library Code of Patron Conduct, the child and the parent/caregiver will be informed of the rules. If inappropriate behavior continues, the family may be asked to leave the library.

**Children age thirteen (13) and older** may use the library on their own. However, parents are still responsible for the actions and the wellbeing of their child(ren). Children violating the Library Code of Patron Conduct will be warned but if inappropriate behavior continues parents will be notified and the child may be asked to leave the library.

**Closing time:** Law Enforcement will be notified and asked to take charge of the abandoned child(ren) under the age of 18 who does not have transportation home at closing time. Library staff follow guidelines established in *Florida Statute 39.201* concerning child patrons left unattended.

**Florida Statute 39.201** Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, as defined in this chapter, or that a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the department.

## **Appendix D: Computer and Internet Use Policy**

The Washington County Public Library System offers its patrons free public access to the internet. The Library is not responsible for the accuracy, or content of material found online. The Library participates in the federal erate program and is required to be compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act. Therefore internet computers are filtered. However, parents are encouraged to be with their children if they access the internet. Children accessing the internet without a parent or legal guardian must present their library card and must have the permission section of their registration card filled out by the parent or legal guardian.

All patrons are required to sign in at the front desk and must present a library card or photo identification before using the computers. Use of the internet will be limited to one (1) hour if someone is waiting. Computer users must agree to follow the computer use policy. Printing is available from all internet computers. The cost is \$.20 cents per page for black & white copies. Library staff can assist with computer use as time allows but for in-depth training, users are encouraged to participate in computer classes offered at the library and elsewhere.

A visitor who does not have a library card may use a computer by presenting his or her photo identification. Patrons should see a staff member at the Front Desk if they need to take a test or fill out a form that requires more than an hour of computer use.

Illegal activities or activities that interfere with or disrupt the network, services, equipment or other users are prohibited. Software and other files downloaded from the internet may contain viruses or spyware that may infect other computers. Providing internet access does not constitute any endorsement of Internet resources by the Washington County Public Library System or Washington County. The WCPL or Washington County shall have no liability for any direct and/or indirect damages relating from the use of computers or information accessed on the internet from Library computers.

Any patron who feels another customer is in violation of this policy should notify a staff member immediately.

**Misuse of library computers may result in loss of computer privileges, loss of library privileges and/or prosecution. Patrons who violate this policy and/or engage in misuse of the computers will be warned and then banned from using the library computers.**

WASHINGTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
1444 JACKSON AVENUE CHIPLEY, FLORIDA 32428  
850 638 1314 850 638 9499(FAX)  
MEETING ROOM POLICIES

The meeting room at the Washington County Public Library in Chipley is available to organizations. The organization must appoint a responsible adult to complete the application below.

The fees for use of the meeting room will be as follows:

\$25.00 for 4 hours

\$50.00 for 5 or more hours

No fund raising or charges of any kind may be attached to the use of the room by the organization without prior consent from the Library Director.

Meeting Room is not available on Friday afternoons, or on weekends. No Exceptions.

The Library reserves the right to refuse use of the meeting room.  
The event space used by the client must be left in its original condition. The client will be held responsible for any damage or failure to restore the space and clean the area. Any such damage to the Library building, furnishings, equipment, or materials during the hours of the event will be assessed and charged to the client named on the agreement and will be due and payable before the client may be granted use of the facilities in the future  
The Library does not provide a computer or projector.

- 1. Responsible party must be present in building at least 30 minutes before closing if the meeting room is to be used after hours.
- 2. No commercial or political activities may occur in this facility.
- 3. This is a DRUG-FREE facility. Smoking or alcoholic beverages are NOT PERMITTED.
- 4. Please turn off the lights and make sure the thermostat on heating and cooling unit is set to auto and 76 degrees.

Name of organization \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible adult appointed by the organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date requested to reserve the meeting room: \_\_\_\_\_

Time the event will begin \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM      Time the event will end \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

Purpose of the meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of the organization, I agree to these terms and will follow the policy as it is stated above.

Signature of responsible party \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Approved and recorded by : \_\_\_\_\_ (Library Personnel)

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

Paid: CASH or CHECK # \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix F: Florida Statute 257.261**

Florida Statutes, 257.261 Library registration and circulation records.— (1)All registration and circulation records of every public Library, except statistical reports of registration and circulation, are confidential and exempt from the provisions of s. 119.07

(1) and from s. 24(a) of Art. I of the State Constitution.

(2)As used in this section, the term “registration records” includes any information that a Library requires a patron to provide in order to become eligible to borrow books and other materials, and the term “circulation records” includes all information that identifies the patrons who borrow particular books and other materials.

(3)(a)Except in accordance with a proper judicial order, a person may not make known in any manner any information contained in records made confidential and exempt by this section, except as otherwise provided in this section.

(b)A Library or any business operating jointly with the Library may, only for the purpose of collecting fines or recovering overdue books, documents, films, or other items or materials owned or otherwise belonging to the Library, disclose information made confidential and exempt by this section to the following:

1. The Library patron named in the records;
2. In the case of a Library patron less than 16 years of age, the parent or guardian of that patron named in the records;
3. Any entity that collects fines on behalf of a Library, unless the patron is less than 16 years of age, in which case only information identifying the patron’s parent or guardian may be released;
4. Municipal or county law enforcement officials, unless the patron is 16 years of age, in which case only information identifying the patron’s parent or guardian may be released; or
5. Judicial officials.

(4)Any person who violates this section commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083. History.—s. 1, ch. 78-81; s. 1, ch. 89-18; s. 1, ch. 96-220; s. 112, ch. 96-406; s. 1, ch. 2003-13; s. 6, ch. 2003-126.