



Lancaster Public Library Program Policy

PURPOSE:

Programming plays a vital role in furthering both the mission and vision statements of Lancaster Public Library (further referred to as the Library).

Mission Statement: Lancaster Public Library inspires, empowers, and strengthens our community by connecting people with information, ideas, and enriching experiences.

Vision Statement: By providing equitable access to vital educational resources, exceptional programming, and community building opportunities, the Lancaster Public Library is recognized as a dynamic center of knowledge and a cornerstone of a thriving Lancaster community.

By developing and presenting programs, the Library furthers its mission and vision by providing additional opportunities for learning and entertainment by:

- Expanding the Library's role as a community resource
- Introducing resources to both active patrons and non-users of all ages and backgrounds
- Providing entertainment and lifelong learning opportunities
- Connecting with other community programs, events, or topics
- Increasing the Library's visibility

The Program Policy guides the development and presentation of programs which not only anticipate but also meet patrons' needs. This policy aligns with the [American Library Association's principles](#), including the [Library Bill of Rights](#), the [Freedom to Read Statement](#), and the [Freedom to View Statement](#), as well as upholding the [First Amendment](#) and opposing censorship.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

The process of developing and presenting programs at the Library involves experienced and knowledgeable staff members designated by the Executive Director. These staff members utilize their library training, community knowledge, relationships with patrons, library resources, experience with previous programming events, and existing collections to make programming decisions. They consider factors such as the suitability of the program's materials, format, presenter, and relevance for the intended audience. Children's and Young Adult programming must be approved by the Manager of Children and Teen Services, while adult programming is approved by the Director of Library Services. If further discussion is needed, the Management Team will be included, with the Executive Director ultimately responsible for all programming decisions.

Programming decisions are based on the following criteria:

- Alignment with the Library's Mission and Vision
- Relevance to community needs, interests, and issues
- Presentation quality
- Appropriateness and the treatment of the content for the intended audience
- Presenter's qualifications and expertise of the subject
- Connection to other community program and events
- National and local observances, celebrations, and initiatives
- Relation to Library collections and resources
- Library program timelines
- Availability of program space
- Staffing considerations
- Budget

The Library's programming staff relies on three types of resources for program development: in-house presenters, partnerships curated by the Library, and partnerships curated by outside organizations or individuals, for which the Library is the host of those programs. All programs, including those hosted by the Library, must align with the Library's mission and vision as well as its program policy, and may involve hiring professional performers and presenters without discrimination based on origin, background, views, or possible controversy, as long as they align with the Library's [Statement of Welcome and Respect](#). The Library's philosophy of open access to information and ideas extends to its programming, and it does not knowingly discriminate.

Library programs do not necessarily reflect the views of the Library, staff, or Board of Trustees. Topics that may be viewed as controversial will receive equal consideration. As a 501(c)(3) organization, we are prohibited from funding, participating, or intervening in any political campaign, or supporting or opposing any candidate for elective public office.

When partnering with outside organizations, agencies, institutions, or individuals, the Library ensures program content aligns with policy standards. If programming staff determines that a program does not align with policy, they may cancel it up to the start of the program and even after it has started.

Performers or authors may sell items at the conclusion of the program with prior approval, but they are encouraged to donate a portion of their sales to the Library.

Programs are open to all and may present alternative theories or beliefs. However, they may not devalue alternative choices, theories, or beliefs.

LIBRARY PROGRAM ACCESS:

All Library programs are open to the public with certain programs potentially requiring a fee. Parents or guardians are responsible for their child's access to programs, as stated in the [Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#). The intended age for each program will be clearly listed with the program on the Library's events calendar. [Children under 11 years of age must be accompanied by someone who is 14 years old or older](#). Adults not accompanying age-appropriate children for Children's or Young Adult programs may only attend with permission from the program staff member.

The Library strives to accommodate all patrons interested in attending programs but may limit attendance based on available resources or safety concerns. Limits, if any, will be communicated through advance registration on the Library's online calendar at lancasterpubliclibrary.org. A waitlist may be available, and patrons will be notified if spots become available. Patrons are invited to come at the time of the program to find out if space has become available. The Library reserves the right to deny attendance to individuals who are being disruptive or those violating the [Patron Conduct Policy](#).

Those interested in partnering with the Library should contact a programming librarian.

Program participants should expect that photographs/video will be taken at events and used on Library communications.

This program policy refers to programs that are open to the public and does not apply to private programs held at the Library by a community member or group renting a [Meeting Room](#).

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