

Library-Initiated Programs Policy

General Statement of Policy

The *Library-Initiated Programs Policy* describes the Northwest Regional Library System's guidelines and philosophy regarding the selection of topics and presenters for programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library and available to the public. Library-initiated programs may include, but are not limited to, lectures, community forums, performing and visual arts, participatory workshops, technology instruction or demonstration, author visits, story times, continuing education, book clubs, or discussion groups. Library-initiated programs may take place on-site, off-site, or online. Library-initiated programs support the mission of the Northwest Regional Library System by providing the public with additional opportunities for accessing information, education, and recreation. All attendees are required to comply with the Northwest Regional Library System's *Customer Code of Conduct*.

Regulations related to programs organized by community groups using Library meeting space, but which are not co-sponsored by the Library, are included in the Northwest Regional Library System's *Meeting Room Use Policy*.

Mission Statement

The Northwest Regional Library System's mission is to provide a safe and comfortable space where all visitors can find the books they want to read, access current technology, and locate the resources and assistance needed to support lifelong learning and recreational goals.

Guiding Principles and Intellectual Freedom

The Northwest Regional Library System offers programs for all ages in order to provide public access to informational, educational, and recreational content. The Northwest Regional Library System does not promote particular beliefs or views, and the inclusion of a subject or presenter does not imply an endorsement of the author's or presenter's viewpoint.

All members of the public are welcome to attend Library-initiated programs unless the program has been created for a specific age group or audience based on educational suitability and audience interest. Parents and guardians may restrict their own children's access to and participation in Library programs but no person or organization can interfere in others' access and participation.

Responsibility for Library-Initiated Program Selections

Library branch managers are responsible for the content and presenters selected for Library-initiated programs in the locations they supervise.

Selection Criteria

Libraries regularly receive program offers and suggestions from members of the public, publicists, and authors and are unable to accommodate many of these requests. Library staff reserves the right to decline program suggestions, and all Library-initiated program decisions solely rest with the Library. Library staff determine topics and presenters for Library-initiated programs based on several criteria.

- a) Popular interest (past popularity of similar programs or significant current interest in a subject or author/presenter)
- b) Suitability of format, subject, location, and level for intended audience
- c) Qualifications of presenter(s)
- d) Information of local, state, and regional interest
- e) Relevance to the library's mission
- f) Relevance to community needs
- g) Cost

Programs do not need to meet all of these criteria to be selected.

Registration

Registration or reservations for Library-initiated programs may be required in order to limit attendance due to supply or space limitations. Names and other information collected for this purpose are retained by the Library for a minimum of 30 days per the *State of Florida General Records Schedule for Public Libraries (GS15)*. Library staff will only collect the minimum of information required for the intended purpose of the registration.

Solicitation and Sales

The *Customer Code of Conduct* prohibits solicitation or the sale of merchandise on Library property without the approval of the Library Director or designee. Presenters may not require information or payment from attendees. If registration is required to limit attendance, the registration process will be handled by Library staff.

Approval for the sale of items, such as books during an author visit, must be requested in advance by the program presenter or representative. If approved, all sales will be handled in their entirety by the presenter or designee. Library staff will not assist in the acquisition of books or other items for sale, storage for merchandise, or sale of these materials.

Reconsideration of Library-Initiated Programs

Comments from members of the community related to Library-initiated programs are welcome. Patrons with questions or concerns are encouraged to discuss them with a staff member. If a patron wishes to make a formal request for the Library to review a Library-initiated program, the request will be handled following the Northwest Regional Library System's *Reconsideration of Library Materials* process, outlined in the *Collection Management Policy*.

Adopted June 6, 2023