



Programming Policy

Purpose of Policy

Bartholomew County Public Library's programming policy establishes guidelines for providing and sponsoring high quality programs for all ages in keeping with the library's mission, values and goals. The library functions as an intellectual and cultural resource for the community. Programs are a means through which the public can learn through shared experiences, appreciating special interests, and exchanging information. The policy serves three main purposes:

- To provide guidance for staff engaged in programming and program development.
- To provide transparency to the public regarding our goals, criteria, and reasons for having the programming we do.
- To provide common ground for library staff, library administration, and the public. The programming policy is written by members of the library staff and is approved first by library administration and then by the Library Board of Trustees who represent the public.

Library staff active in programming and program development will review this policy annually to ensure it is responsive to the changing needs of the library organization and the users it serves.

Library's Mission

The mission of the Bartholomew County Public Library (BCPL) is to be the community crossroads-connecting people, ideas, information, and experiences to empower everyone on their journey of lifelong learning.

About the Library and its Community

BCPL serves all of Bartholomew County and the more than 80,000 people who live in its city, small towns, and rural areas. Residents may belong to families that have lived in the county for generations or may be new to the state, region, or country. The county's diversity is evident in the various interests, affiliations, and backgrounds of its residents.

BCPL provides programs to the community at the Cleo Rogers Memorial Library in Columbus, the Hope branch, the bookmobile, the book express, and throughout the community in partnership with parks, schools, and other community agencies.

Philosophy and Principles

The library and the Library Board of Trustees adhere to and support the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read statement adopted by the American Library Association as of May 2022. (These documents can be requested from the staff or obtained online at www.ala.org.) The library also strongly believes in and defends the fundamental rights regarding the Freedom of Speech as outlined in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

The library affirms that it is a forum for information and ideas, and that the following basic principles will guide its services:

- Books, programs and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials and/or programs should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

- Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs that libraries offer. The library actively seeks to include a variety of programming options representing diversity of genres, formats, ideas, and expressions with a multitude of viewpoints and cultural perspectives that reflect the diversity in the community. Library-initiated programs that cross language and cultural barriers introduce community members to the library's resources and provide access to information
- The library should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of its responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

Programs Guidelines

As a part of achieving its mission, the Bartholomew County Public Library regularly offers educational and entertaining programs for patrons of all ages. Library initiated programs conducted will be developed with the following goals in mind:

- Being responsive to current interests
- Serving as a forum for idea sharing, information gathering and education
- Promoting cultural awareness
- Developing information literacy
- Offering training and assistance with new technologies
- Fostering a love for reading and learning
- Providing early literacy experiences to young children
- Fostering community awareness
- Providing entertainment

The Library will endeavor to include a broad spectrum of opinion and a variety of viewpoints in Library-initiated programs and exhibits. Community input to types and times of programs will strongly influence programming schedules and will be determined by mechanisms such as surveys, advisory committees, civic associations, and direct conversation with staff. The library draws upon other community resources in developing programs and actively partners with other community agencies, organizations, educational and cultural institutions, or individuals to develop and present public programs. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute or imply an endorsement of its policies, beliefs, or program.

All programs must be open to the public and offered free of charge, although at the discretion of the Library Director the following will be permissible at Library-initiated programs:

- Fund-raising to benefit the Library, sponsored by the Friends of the Bartholomew County Public Library
- The sale of books, music and general merchandise by speakers or performers as part of a Library program. Presenters are encouraged to donate a copy of their work to the Library for possible inclusion in the Library collection. Business cards and/or contact information may also be made available.
- A fee for materials used in the programming. Efforts will be made by the library to limit these costs and/or subsidizing as circumstances allow.

Every attempt will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend a program. However, when safety or the success of a program requires it, the number of attendees may be limited. When limits must be established, attendance will be determined on a first come, first served basis, either with advanced registration or at the door.

In some cases, the nature and success of a program may require a limited attendance based on age, especially programs intended for children and teens that are geared to their interests and developmental needs.

Specific groups and/or organizations may also request or be offered library tours and/or programming. The library will conduct these as needed and as long as it fits the library overall goals.

Timely and adequate public announcement shall be made of all programs. Organizations or individuals partnering with the library must coordinate marketing efforts with the Marketing and Community Relations Manager. Press releases, public notifications, and marketing publicities must be approved by the Marketing and Community Relations Manager or Library Executive Director

Program participants should expect that photographs/video will be taken at events and used on the library's social media sites, publications and/or website. The library will not identify members of the public in social media posts through accompanying text or photograph highlighting within the platform itself (typically called "tagging") without verbal or written consent. If the subject is under 18 years old, the library will make every effort to obtain consent of the parent or legal guardian. The library is not responsible for members of the public being identified by third parties either in comments or by tagging.

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 an educational, 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 to be used for the solicitation of business.

Programs evaluation forms may be distributed to the participants so that staff may know what has been successful and receive ideas for new programs.

Responsibility Statement

Ultimate responsibility for programming at the library rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Bartholomew County Public Library Board of Trustees. The Director, in turn, delegates the management of programs to the Professional Staff who use their expertise, knowledge of the library's collections, services and facilities in developing and delivering library sponsored programs.

Reconsideration

The Bartholomew County Public Library recognizes that many topics are controversial and that any given program may offend some patrons. Program selection will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this program selection policy.

Responsibility for the exposure of children to library programs rests with their parents or legal guardians. Library programming will not be inhibited by the possibility that children will be exposed to the content.

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion from any patron concerning programming. If a customer questions a library program, they should first address the concern with the Library staff member responsible for the program. Customers who wish to continue their request for review of Library programs must submit the Request for Reconsideration form. A formal response will then be issued by the Library staff member responsible for the program. If the patron wants to appeal the decision, the petition will be delivered to the Library Director whose decision will be final. The program will remain on the library calendar throughout the process.