

CCPLS Policy Manual

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SECTION 0 - OVERVIEW: MISSION / CORE VALUE / HISTORY

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SECTION 0.1 - LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

Information is necessary for recreation, for life-long learning, for cultural enrichment, and for the support of the Democratic principles established by the founding fathers of our nation. The mission of the Cullman County Public Library System is to assist all residents of the county in meeting their basic human need for information.

SECTION 0.2 - OUR CORE VALUES

The Library System shall always strive to provide positive experiences for all persons who enter its doors seeking information. In fulfilling this important and essential public service mission, the Library System, The Public Library Board of Cullman County, the Administration and Professional Staff and CCPLS employees shall value the following:

We believe that reading improves lives.

We believe that the library's chief purpose is to support the individual pursuit of knowledge and life-long learning.

We believe that the library should be an institution for civic exchange and a community forum for ideas.

We believe that the bedrock of library service is a collection of reliable sources, preserving the best from the past and keeping current with new discoveries.

We believe that literacy and the ability to learn are basic tools of economic opportunity and personal success.

We are committed to children, youth, and their families.

We value our patrons, we respect them as individuals, and we benefit from the diversity of cultures they represent.

We support the wide range of the public's reading and research interests as a reflection of that diversity.

We believe that the freedom to read whatever one chooses is a right as profound as free speech, and we defend that right and protect the privacy of a person's use of the library as a sacred trust.

We take pride in our responsiveness to community needs and individual interests.

We strive for equity of access to library services across the entire county.

We embrace electronic information sources as new tools for extending the library's usefulness.

We believe that every library in our system is a community anchor, strengthening the community it serves and reflecting the culture of the surrounding residents.

We believe that every library facility should provide space and surroundings conducive to learning as a reflection of the value our community places on education.

SECTION 0.3 - LIBRARY HISTORY

The history of the Cullman County Public Library is an interesting story of failures and successes. Throughout its history, the library has worked to serve the citizens of our community and was fortunate to have those dedicated to maintaining this needed institution in our county.

The earliest known origins of a public library date back to 1890. Prof. S. A. Felter of the Cullman Polytechnic Institute headed the first library committee, which was appointed by Col. Cullmann to operate a public library on the campus of the Institute. Very little is known about this library except for the committee members and that Miss Marie Mohr was the first librarian. Within four years, the library apparently had moved to Allison's Drug Store.

In 1915, the Culture Club became active in supporting a library and convinced the City Council to rent two rooms in the Parker Building for its use. Virtually nothing is known of how successful the Culture Club was in this effort.

In 1928, Cullman had apparently lost its library again. Mrs. Bess Morrow saw the need for a library in the community. She lobbied the Coterie Club, to which she belonged, for assistance. The Coterie, under the direction of Mrs. Wilbur Green, took on the library as their project. Bridge parties were organized to raise funds and members solicited the community for books. The library opened in two rooms above Stiefelmeyers in 1928. While the library did not have a bookmobile until the 1950's, it seemed to be a "mobile library" –it moved over four times between 1928 and 1965. For many years, it was located in the basement of the Fuller Building and from 1964 until 1967 it was located in what is now the City Hall Annex.

In the 1940's, the Business and Professional Womens Club took the languishing library under its wing. Mrs. Bess was at it again. As a member of BPW, she and others pushed for keeping the library open and raised funds for its needs. Under her efforts, in cooperation with the state, the county's Board of Revenue appointed the first public library board in 1946. This board still exists, guiding the library based on the needs of the community it represents.

In 1950, the Home Demonstration Club began to work toward providing bookmobile service to outlying areas of the county. The state suggested that Cullman County join with Winston to form a regional library to provide this rural service. The Cullman-Winston Regional Library Board was formed in 1952 to provide service to both counties with a bookmobile provided by the state. Bookmobile service began on December 2, 1952, although it had been provided earlier by the county school system. In 1958, Winston County pulled out of the system and Cullman County continued to provide bookmobile service alone. It would continue to do so until 1981.

By 1958, the library had outgrown its Fuller Building location. Douglas Fuller designed a new library for the board. Despite their efforts, funding for this building was never obtained. The Board opted for use of the City Hall Annex Building in 1964.

The city also provided the library its first full time administrator in 1963. Mrs. Marguerite Rigsby was hired and began the library's first period of major growth. With Miss Bess backing her on the Board, Mrs. Rigsby pushed for better collections, more staff and a desperately needed new facility. By 1966, city and county officials gave the go-ahead and planning began. Construction for the new library, designed by Fred Rennaker Jr., began in March 1967 and the new library opened to the public in December of that year. Rennaker's building won the 1968 American Institute of Architects Award of Merit.

After working tirelessly for eleven years for the new library, more staff and books, and government funding for library services, Mrs. Rigsby retired in 1973. Bettina Pearson Higdon became the library's second administrator. From 1974 to 1983 Mrs. Higdon, now Mrs. James Burns, strove to upgrade the library's collections, particularly in local history and genealogy. Cullman's first professional librarian, Emily Eddy succeeded her, in 1984. John Paul Myrick, a graduate of the University of Alabama School of Library and Information Studies was appointed Cullman's fifth professional librarian in 1992. Myrick set the longevity record for all Cullman County librarians in 2002.

The library has grown steadily over the years. Currently, the Main Library and extension collections consist of over 70,000 volumes. The Garden City and Hanceville libraries joined the system in the 1970's. In the 1990's the Fairview and Bevill branches were opened. Bookmobile service was re-established in 1994. All libraries were renovated in the 1990s. The Crane Hill/West Regional Library opened in 2003, but closed in 2006. The Fairview branch closed in 2012, but was quickly replaced by the Holly Pond — Guy Hunt Library in 2013.

In 1997, the Gates Library Foundation awarded CCPLS one of its first grants for providing public computer access in all county libraries. CCPLS had added CD-ROM reference resources and basic dial-up Internet access in the 1990's, but not on the scale of that awarded by the Gates Foundation. Additional terminals at all libraries were added which not only provide more Internet access, but also access to word processing, spreadsheet, reference, and other educational products. The web site of CCPLS became operable in late 1997 and has since expanded into "one of the most comprehensive Alabama library sites on the web." Recognizing CCPLS's leadership in information technology applications, the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and the Appalachian Regional Commission awarded CCPLS the only technology demonstration grant given by the Commission to an Alabama public library in 1998. High-speed data access was provided at the Central Library in 2001, and plans are in the works to connect all county libraries to the Internet and to shared databases via a wireless network in 2004.

Being in the forefront of Alabama public libraries for technology, public service, and fiscal management, CCPLS was recognized for excellence and for achievement of public library standards on the basic level by the Alabama Public Library Service and the Alabama Library Association in 2002. The Library's commitment to efficient, effective, progressive management and to public service is known both at home and across the southeast: CCPLS employees are regularly called to consult with other city and county departments on their informational needs and fiscal operations. CCPLS library staff are regularly called on by other libraries and local and state government outside of Cullman County to provide consultative services, and CCPLS employees regularly serve professionally on local, state and national committees guiding library science and public service organization management. Examples of this outreach include management consulting services provided to the Oneonta, Arab, Blountsville, Addison,

Florence-Lauderdale County, Athens-Limestone County, and the Cook Memorial Library (Illinois), technology consulting provided to over 30 libraries in the state, and facility consultation provided to the Town of Florala, Alabama, the City of Memphis, Tennessee, and other communities. Clearly, CCPLS is a leader in providing quality public service and this leadership is recognized across the state and across the southeast.

The Cullman County Public Library System outgrew its central (Cullman) facility as early as 1978 and is in critical need of a new Main Library in the downtown Cullman area. Land was purchased during the administration of County Commission Chairman George Spear in 1998 at the corner of St. Joseph Drive and Cleveland Avenue for the new library. This land was later used by the County to construct the Department of Human Resources building.

As Cullman County enters the second decade of the second century of public library service, and CCPLS heads towards its 80th birthday, we look forward to a bright future resting on over a century of achievement.

SECTION 2 - PERSONNEL POLICIES

2.1 Basic Personnel Policy

2.2 Officer-In-Charge Defined

2.3 Administrative Memoranda

2.4 Employee Dress Code

2.5 Scheduling

2.6 Volunteer and Internship Policy

SECTION 2.1 - BASIC PERSONNEL POLICY

The Public Library Board of Cullman County shall hereby adopt and utilize the personnel policies set forth by the Cullman County Commission and the Cullman County Personnel Board as the official personnel policies which shall govern all employment-related operations of the Public Library System, including those set forth in the Cullman County Employee Handbook, most recent edition. The only exception to this policy shall be employees hired as part of external programs (such as the Senior AIDES program or the Foster Grandparents program). Employees of such programs will follow the personnel rules set forth by the employing organization.

In no instance is a policy, procedure, or directive of the Public Library Board or the administration to be interpreted as contrary to any policy or codes of the Cullman County Commission or the Cullman County Personnel Board. In case of any conflict between library and county policies, county policies shall prevail.

In the case of employees hired through external agencies under contract (such as Green Thumb, Senior AIDES program, Foster Grandparents Program), rules specific to those programs shall apply to their workers.

SECTION 2.2 - OFFICER IN CHARGE, DEFINED

The County Librarian or his/her designee may, at his/her discretion, appoint library employees to serve as Officers-In-Charge of a facility in his/her absence. Such persons will normally serve on nights and weekends.

Officers-In-Charge shall be responsible for overseeing all library or facility operations for a set time period.

In the event an Officer-In-Charge is not designated, the order of succession as outlined in Administrative Memoranda 2002-01 issued September 9, 2002 or subsequent revisions shall apply. This memorandum or its replacement shall be on file in the Office of the County Librarian.

SECTION 2.3 - ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDA

The County Librarian or his designee/successor may issue Administrative Memoranda which shall in-effect serve as policy until the Public Library Board can adopt such policy. Proper records shall be maintained of all memoranda issued. The Administrative Assistant to the County Librarian shall be the custodian of these records.

Administrative Memoranda may also serve as interpretations of policy or as guidance in procedural matters where documented precedent is required, or when the subject does not warrant Board policy.

SECTION 2.4 - EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE

The Public Library Board and the Administration encourages employees to dress comfortably for the work they are to perform. The Board and Administration does not want to require any strict policy regarding employee attire, but does issue and will enforce these guidelines:

1. Dress shall be appropriate for the work performed, and should always be clean and neat.
2. Employees are encouraged to bring a change of clothes if they perceive they will change work duties during the day to a task that is not appropriate for the way in which they are attired.
3. Employees have a responsibility to insure that the attire they wear is safe for the tasks they are undertaking.
4. Shorts, culottes and t-shirts are acceptable for wearing while on duty provided the hem of the shorts is not more than four inches above the knee, and printing on the T-Shirt is not distasteful and not disruptive to other employees or to library users. Male employees should assure that the tails of T-shirts are properly tucked into shorts or pants.

5. During situations of weather extremes, employees should dress in attire which will lead to their comfort, keeping in mind the regulations of item 4 above.

6. Sensible and appropriate shoes are encouraged.

7. Back braces or other safety equipment must be used in instances where heavy items are to be lifted. These items will be provided by the Library.

8. The Library may require that, in certain situations, employees dress in certain attire, such as in a dress or business suit or in library uniform for a specific function or event.

9. Keep in mind that the image projected by the employee reflects on the library. As such, discretion and good taste in the selection of work attire is expected.

SECTION 2.5 - SCHEDULING

In order to assure proper staffing for public service functions, schedules are prepared well in advance by the County Librarian, the Assistant County Librarian or a person so designated. In addition to county rules regarding leave and scheduling, the following policies shall apply.

EMPLOYEE/FAMILY ILLNESS

In cases of illness, it is the employee's responsibility to insure that the Department Head or supervisor is notified as soon as possible, prior to the absence preferably. For example, if an employee is scheduled to report at 9:00 A.M. and has fallen ill, he should insure the department head is notified not later than 9:05 A.M. at the very latest. Extenuating circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis. All employees should have their Department Head's off-duty contact numbers readily available in order to provide them with adequate notice of illness. Failure to provide proper notification can and will lead to disciplinary action.

EXCESSIVE USE OF SICK LEAVE

Once accumulated sick and annual leave is bankrupted, time taken off by employees will not be compensated by the county. If the employee or his family member/s is suffering from an extensive illness, other compensatory means, such as disability or allowances under the Family and Medical Leave Act should be considered.

The Library reserves the right to require that an employee who has taken an excessive amount of sick leave provide notification of their condition from a physician. The Library also reserves the right not to allow an employee to return to work with out verification from the employee's physician that working in their condition does not endanger their health or safety or that of others.

SCHEDULED LEAVE

All requests for various forms of scheduled leave must be submitted on Leave Request Forms which are available in the Administrative Offices. All leave must be approved by the Department Head or supervisor prior to the time they are submitted to the Assistant County Librarian for scheduling. Department heads will insure that appropriate staffing for public services is available prior to approving these requests. Requests for scheduled leave need to be submitted as far in advance as is possible. The Library reserves the right to reject leave requests if sufficient advance notice has not been given.

Scheduled leave may not be taken in increments of less than 1 hour.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

Department heads are allowed to institute flexible scheduling in their departments as they see fit to meet the work demands of the department or the employee, to save energy, or to meet other needs. Extended or short days, "four-tens," "three-twelves and a four" and other similar scheduling plans are acceptable as long as adequate staff are available to meet the public service needs of the agency as determined by the County Librarian or his/her designee.

Insuring that adequate staff is available to meet public service needs is the responsibility of the County Librarian or his designee. He/She has the final approval on any scheduling plans of any department. All approved departmental schemes are to be posted on the master schedule at the Main Library.

COMPENSATORY TIME

Under no circumstances may employees accrue "comp time" without prior approval of the County Librarian or his/her designee. Only under extenuating circumstance will the accrual of "comp time" be allowed.

SECTION 2.6 - VOLUNTEER AND INTERNSHIP POLICY

DEFINITIONS

A volunteer shall be considered as any individual, 16 years or older, who assists with work done at the Cullman County Public Library System, without remuneration. Exceptions to the age requirement may be made by the County Librarian.

A student intern shall be considered as any middle school, high school or college student who performs volunteer work as part of an authorized school program to earn academic credit. Individual Boy Scouts working on advanced awards are also classified as student interns.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Cullman County Public Library System shall use the services of volunteers to:

Supplement the efforts of paid library staff in meeting demands for quality public service.

Serve as a method for encouraging citizens to become familiar with their library and the services being offered.

Staff or support fundraising activities sponsored by the staff and/or the Library System, the Friends of the Cullman County Public Library, or the Cullman Area Library Foundation, Inc.

The Cullman County Public Library System shall make use of the services of interested volunteers to supplement and not replace the work done by library staff.

RECOGNITION

Recognition is an important component of a volunteer program and is often the only way in which the Library can say "thank you" to a volunteer. Although individual, informal recognition of volunteers should be ongoing, it is important that volunteers be recognized formally as a group on a regular basis, at least annually. The Library staff and Library Board shall find ways of recognizing volunteers throughout the year.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to create a contract between the volunteer or intern and the Cullman County Public Library System or any of the supporting governments. Both the volunteer and the Cullman County Public Library System have the right to terminate the volunteer's association with the Library System at any time, for any reason, with or without cause.

Neither the Public Library Board nor the Cullman County Public Library System will provide any medical, health, accident or worker's compensation benefits for any volunteer. Volunteers will not be eligible to receive any worker's compensation benefits for any injuries sustained while functioning as a volunteer.

Prior to engaging in any volunteer activity, each volunteer will be required to submit a Library application form for volunteer work, and visit with the Volunteer Services Coordinator (who is designated by the County Librarian) and/or a supervisory staff member. Upon approval of the Volunteer Coordinator, the volunteer may be scheduled for training and work assignments.

Volunteers may be asked to work on projects that are supportive of staff efforts. Examples include: shelving books, returning books, processing new materials, storytelling, helping to prepare for programs, assisting with maintenance of the vertical files, discarding materials, maintenance of periodicals, public relations activities, clerical work, maintenance work, et.al.

Hours of volunteer service will be determined by the supervisory staff member in discussion with the volunteer. If volunteers have set hours, volunteers are expected to arrive at the library in time to begin work as scheduled or call the library if they will be absent. All volunteer work must be completed within normal library hours. Exceptions may be made by the County Librarian or Volunteer Coordinator.

RECRUITMENT AND SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will be sought through a variety of methods (newspaper announcement, in-library publicity, requests through volunteer coordination organizations), to meet specific as well as general project needs.

Recruitment shall be the responsibility of the County Librarian, the Volunteer Coordinator, the Public Library Board and other assisting agencies.

Volunteers will work directly with library staff members to receive training and complete projects. All volunteers will be assigned one primary staff member to guide them in their work; however, staff members may offer guidance to any of the volunteers.

When appropriate and affordable, the Public Library Board, Friends of the Cullman County Public Library or the Cullman Area Library Foundation, Inc. may fund the cost of training for volunteers who have made and demonstrated a long-term commitment to the Library System. Examples of appropriate training classes are those sponsored by the Alabama Public Library Service or SoliNET, the Library Management Network, and other training opportunities. All volunteers shall be included in the Library System's annual Staff Institute.

There will be no formal evaluation process for volunteers, unless the volunteer requests such an evaluation. In such cases, the standard personnel evaluation form of the Cullman County Commission shall be used.

RECRUITMENT AND SUPERVISION OF STUDENT INTERNS

Student interns will be sought by the Adult and Youth Services supervisors through educational contacts in area schools and colleges. A job description will be tailored for each school program that may offer student interns. The job description must stress the value of the project for both student and Library. A representative of the school or college will usually be involved in developing the job description and outline of the project.

The staff member who shapes an individual project will be responsible for the training and supervision of the student intern. Interns can be very valuable to the Library, but the Library must also offer a genuine educational opportunity.

Because much staff time will be required, each project must be carefully planned and approved by the County Librarian before the intern is accepted. Participation in student internship programs shall be considered a privilege which may be revoked at any time by the Cullman County Public Library System or the student intern. All schedules will be worked out between the student intern and the supervising librarian and should not conflict with school schedules.

A method and schedule for evaluation will be agreed upon between the supervising librarian and the school or college representative before the student intern is accepted. The supervising librarian will follow this schedule and report student progress to the representative.

SECTION 3 - PUBLIC SERVICE POLICIES

3.1 Internet Access Policy

3.2 Membership Policies

3.3 Circulation Policies

3.4 Materials Selection Policy

3.5 Special Collections Policies

- 3.6 Policy on Services to Children and Young Adults
- 3.7 Policy on Services to Library Users with Disabilities
- 3.8 Information Services Policies
- 3.9 Bulletin Boards and Information Distribution Area Policy
- 3.10 Exhibits
- 3.11 Value Added Services and Related Fees

SECTION 3.1 - INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

The Library System, recognizing the need to provide a variety of informational resources in varying formats, shall provide the public with access to the Internet and other forms of electronic media. The Library's computer system and the Internet provide opportunities to integrate electronic resources from information networks around the world with other resources. Based on these premises, the Library System will provide access to the Internet to the public at no charge, other than charges normally levied for supplies (i.e. costs for copies or printouts).

DISCLAIMER

The Internet is a resource that enables the library patron to connect to information beyond that which is contained in library collections. However, the Internet is currently not subject to any regulation. The Library System can and will recommend interesting and useful Internet destinations and resources for patrons to explore. While the Internet does contain a wealth of information, it also provides access to sites containing materials that some patrons will find offensive and that may be illegal.

The Library System does not monitor and has no control over materials obtained on the Internet, and cannot be held responsible for its content. The Library System cannot control access to materials or protect patrons from materials they may find offensive. Selection policies, which serve to govern the Library System's purchase of materials, are not applicable to material accessed electronically. The Library System cannot censor access to material. It remains the responsibility of the user (or his parent or guardian if he is a minor) to determine what he or she determines appropriate. While federal laws

require the library to provide filtering software on Internet access to obtain federal funding for telecommunications and technology, the Library recognizes and hereby warns the public that no such software is fool-proof, and it will not guarantee that such software will block access to material that persons may find objectionable. The Library System assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from access to the Internet obtained in any Cullman County Public Library. The Library System reserves the right to enforce Internet usage rules that shall be included as a part of this policy.

INTERNET USAGE RULES

1. Library Internet computers are for library-related learning, research, and information.
2. All users of electronic information resources are expected to use these resources in a responsible manner, consistent with educational and informational purposes for which they are provided.
3. Usage time may be limited to 15 minutes when persons are waiting. Any person using the Internet will be notified they have 15 minutes to complete their research when a person is waiting.
4. Through signature, all persons must agree to the Internet Access Policy every time the Internet is accessed.
5. If computers are shared, all users must agree to the Library's Internet Access Policy.
6. Minors age 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult parent, guardian, or teacher when accessing the Internet.
7. A parent, guardian, or legal caregiver must, through signature, be responsible for the access of minors from ages 13 to 17. A copy of the initial authorization will be kept on file for future reference.

8. It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to determine what is appropriate for their own children.
9. Be considerate of your use of the Internet. You are in a public place where children may be present.
10. Library Internet terminals are for searches of the Internet for information only. Use of "chat lines" will not be allowed.
11. You may not send, receive, or display inappropriate materials, defined as text or graphics that may be reasonably construed to be obscene.
12. Respect the privacy of others.
13. Do not alter the hardware or software.
14. User is expected to abide all copyright and licensing rules regarding software.
15. Users of public access computers in any county library facility must hold an active Cullman County Public Library System library card with active borrowing privileges. Officers-In-Charge may authorize exceptions to this rule.

VIOLETIONS OF INTERNET USAGE RULES

Users violating these rules and/or this policy will be restricted from use of the Internet for a period to be determined by the County Librarian or Assistant County Librarian. The Library System reserves the right

to prohibit violators from future access or use of on-line services in the case of repeated violations of these rules. Illegal acts may subject violators to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

SECTION 3.2 - MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Membership in the Cullman County Public Library System of one of the following types is required to borrow materials from the library and/or to use certain services, as determined by the County Librarian, his/her designee, or by the Public Library Board of Cullman County.

General Membership:

Any resident of Cullman County over the age of 16 is entitled to free membership in the Cullman County Public Library System provided they can prove their identity and their address. Persons will have to renew their membership every two years.

Children under the age of 16 years are also entitled to general membership, provided that a responsible party (parent or guardian) agrees to be responsible for any and all items borrowed on the membership card. Proof of identity and address shall be required for the responsible party.

Student Membership:

Any student in a Cullman County educational institution is entitled to membership in the Cullman County Public Library System provided they can prove their identity and address, as well as proof of enrollment in a Cullman County educational institution. Membership is valid for the current term of enrollment only.

Worker's Membership:

Any person employed in a business, company or government agency with offices or facilities in Cullman County is entitled to membership in the Cullman County Public Library System provided they can provide proof of identity, address, and proof of employment at said business. Such membership is renewable after one year.

Institutional Membership:

Businesses, governmental agencies, institutions, etc. may be allowed institutional membership in the Cullman County Public Library System provided the chief executive officer/general manager of said agency makes such request in writing on company letterhead and agrees to be responsible for materials his/her employees borrows on the membership card. Such membership is renewable every two years.

Educator's Membership:

Teachers in Cullman County educational institutions are eligible for Educator's Membership, allowing them extended borrowing privileges for materials to be used in the classroom. Such membership is valid for two years and is renewable.

Honorary Membership:

Honorary membership in the Library System may be conferred by the County Librarian or the Public Library Board to government officials or others for meritorious service to the Cullman County Public Library System. Such membership is continuously valid for the life of the honoree.

Paid Membership:

Persons who do not fit any of the above criteria, including persons who live outside Cullman County may receive membership in the Cullman County Public Library System by paying a \$10.00 annual usage fee. Such membership is limited to one year and is renewable.

Any person with membership in the library system shall be required to follow circulation policies and rules and is responsible for any and all materials borrowed on their membership card. Failure to follow library circulation rules, pay overdue fines or other fees, or failure to be responsible for items borrowed on a membership card are grounds for revocation of membership as determined by the County Librarian or his/her designee.

SECTION 3.3 - GENERAL CIRCULATION POLICIES

The following policy statements outline how items are borrowed from the public libraries of Cullman County:

The Infocard

The "Infocard" is the official membership card of the Cullman County Public Library System. The card is required to borrow materials from the library as well as to access certain library services. Infocards should be protected by the holder and persons should not allow other persons to use their card. Any membership holder is responsible for all items checked out on their individual card.

Check Out Periods:

Generally, all circulating items are loaned for two weeks. Limitations are explained elsewhere in this policy.

Renewals:

Most circulating items may be renewed for an additional two-week period except where noted elsewhere in this policy.

Check out limits/Circulation Periods:

Due to the small size of library collections and heavy demand, the Library System is required to enforce checkout limits per card. The limits are:

Adult and Institutional Infocards: 15 items

Children's Infocards: 10 items

Educator's Membership Infocards: 25 items

The following items are limited by type to the circulation periods specified:

- Videos: 5 items per card, two-week circulation, no renewals
- DVD: 5 items per card, two-week circulation, no renewals
- Compact discs: 5 discs per card, two-week circulation, no renewals
- New Books/Popular Items: 3 items per card, two-week circulation: no renewals
- Audiocassettes: 5 items per card, 2 weeks: 1 renewal

- All other items: Check out limits as specified above, two-week circulation, 1 renewal

- Book items borrowed on Educator Loan cards will circulate for four weeks with no renewals.

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In order to insure equal access, the Library System will not renew items that another patron has placed on hold.

Items returned to the Library System often must be inspected or otherwise processed. Therefore, no items may be returned on one library card then immediately checked back out on another card belonging to the same or another person. The Library System reserves the right to limit the number of items checked out by one person or family in a particular subject area to not more than 4 items so as not to deplete the collection depending on current or anticipated need by the community as a whole.

Non-Circulating Items:

The County Librarian or his/her designee may designate certain items as Reference, Desk Reference, Special Collections, or otherwise non-circulating materials. Such items shall not circulate and must be used inside their designated facility.

Return of Items and After-hours book returns:

Items are to be returned on or before the date that they are due. Items may be returned to the desk or designated place at any Cullman County Public Library System facility. Outside after-hours book returns

are available for books only at certain branch libraries, and users of such returns should determine their availability at their preferred library.

Audio-visual items of any type must be returned to the desk at any library or to the after-hours video return located in the front doors of the Central Branch. Any audio/visual left in a regular book drop will incur a \$5.00 damage fee per item.

Circulation Under Deposit Materials:

The County Librarian, due to the cost or possibility of theft, may require that certain items be designated for "circulation under deposit" only. To borrow such items, a monetary deposit shall be required. Such deposits shall be no higher than the cost of replacement of the item. Deposits for such items shall be returned to the borrower when the material is returned to the Library. The County Librarian shall set procedures for the selection of such items and for collections and return of deposits and shall review such procedures on a regular basis.

Overdue Fines

Fines shall be levied for persons who fail to return items on time. For books and audiotapes, a \$.10 per day per item fine shall be levied. Fines for videos and compact discs are \$2.00 per day per item. Borrowing privileges are revoked when any and all fines reach \$5.00. The maximum amount of accruable/chargeable overdue fines is \$7.00 per card or the cost of the item plus processing charges, whichever is lower.

Work for Fines

In lieu of paying overdue fines, borrowers may volunteer to perform work at the library at the rate of 1 hour of service per dollar of fines owed, rounded to the next highest dollar. For example, if a person owes \$3.50 in overdue fines, they may volunteer for 4 hours. Once such work is verified, the fines shall be waived. Such volunteer work must be arranged with and/or supervised by the Coordinator of the Circulation Department, the Branch Manager, or his/her designee. The Work-for-Fines program is not applicable for restitution for lost or damaged items.

Lost or Stolen Membership Cards:

As Infocard membership cards can be used to borrow items of monetary value, and because members are responsible for all items borrowed on their cards, it is imperative that lost or stolen cards be reported immediately to the Circulation Department at the Central Library. Persons are responsible for items borrowed on stolen cards if they fail to report a card stolen.

Lost/Damaged items:

Borrowers are responsible for any and all items borrowed on their Infocard membership card, regardless of who actually borrowed the item. The charge for lost, stolen or damaged items shall be the cost of the item and a \$5.00 processing fee. In lieu of paying for the item, the borrower may choose to replace the item with another similar item with the approval of the County Librarian. The borrower shall still be responsible for any and all processing charges.

Overdue Notice Processing Charges:

The Library System will send a written notice via United States Mail to persons who have items more than two weeks overdue, and will send a second and third and final notice at two-week intervals thereafter. For each mailing, the Library System may levy a \$.50 fee for mailing and processing.

Materials Recovery

The Library System may employ an outside recovery firm or collection agency to recover library materials that have not been returned within a reasonable period of time. Costs associated with such recovery will be passed on to the borrower.

Revocation of Borrowing Privileges

The Library System reserves the right to revoke the borrowing privileges of a member provided that they continually fail to follow library circulation rules or regularly fail to return materials. A member may appeal such revocation to the County Librarian for administrative review. The County Librarian will review the situation and notify the member of his findings and subsequent decision on the matter. Should the County Librarian rule that privileges are to remain revoked, the member shall have a right to appeal his decision to the Public Library Board for administrative review. In either case, the repeal of borrowing privileges shall stand until the review process is complete.

SECTION 3.4 - MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

Purpose

The Cullman County Public Library System shall strive to provide citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and persuasions with a well-balanced collection of print and non-print materials to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community.

Responsibility for selection

Responsibility for materials selection, as for all library activities, rests with the County Librarian, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Public Library Board of Cullman County. Under the County Librarian's supervision, members of the staff who are deemed qualified by education, training, and/or experience may be assigned to participate in the selection of library materials.

General criteria for selection

The permanent book collection should reflect a strong, accurate, and up-to-date reference collection, a broad fiction selection of classics, as well as standard and popular items, and basic non-fiction titles covering a wide range of subject areas for the researcher and the recreational reader. If determined necessary by the County Librarian and/or the Board of Trustees, specialized collections may be developed to meet specific research, information, or recreational needs of the community.

Selection of materials will be influenced by:

A.) Anticipation of and response to continuing and changing needs and interest of the community and of individuals.

B.) Current and historical significance.

C.) The attention of critics and reviews.

D.) Budgetary considerations.

E.) Physical limitations of the facility/facilities.

F.) Needs for additional or duplicate materials in the existing collection.

G.) Availability of the materials through cooperating libraries in Cullman County, through inter-library loan, or in more comprehensive collections in the area (i.e. North Alabama).

H.) Patron demand.

I.) Professional judgment.

A general representative collection, for all ages at a variety of reading levels is selected, but the collection will be attuned to the specific needs of the community.

Materials selection sources, such as Library Journal or Booklist, will be utilized as guide for collection, development; but these references will not be solely relied upon. Patron demand and perceived needs must still be considered even if reviews for a particular item are not favorable. In most instances, the library will purchase a title if there are demands from the community for it, because the importance of on-demand purchasing is recognized.

Popular Reading will be given a strong emphasis. To provide timely works, a book-lease plan can be utilized and supplemented with purchases from local bookstores and jobbers. Paperbacks may be used to provide inexpensive recreational reading. Periodicals will reflect a selection of scholarly and lay publications, with an emphasis being on the latter.

Materials will be selected in a variety of formats, including books, serial publications and periodicals, online formats, audiocassettes, phonographic records, cassette tapes, compact disc, cd-rom resources, videotapes, film, filmstrips, digital videodisc, and any other appropriate format which is in current demand and use. Such materials will reflect the diversified needs and preferences of the community. The purchase of audio-visual materials will reflect educational and recreational needs of the community as funding is available.

Widely diverse points of view, including controversial and unorthodox subjects, will be available in the collection. Inclusion in the collection does not imply library approval or agreement with the contents. The Board and Staff recognize that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patron/s. Selections will not be made on the basis or merits of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building the collection and to serving the interests of all the patrons.

The Public Library Board of Cullman County and the Staff of the Cullman County Public Library System shall uphold the principles set forth in the Library Bill of Rights as amended January 23, 1980, the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association adopted May, 1953 and the Freedom to View Statement as endorsed by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association and the Council of the American Library Association in June, 1979. Furthermore, these statements shall be incorporated as part of this policy.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

While the selection of materials appropriate to the needs of the community is one of the basic duties of the library staff and of the County Librarian, it is not possible to read or view every item added to the collections of the Cullman County Public Library System. It is recognized that a member of the community may find an item personally objectionable or wish that an item be added to or deleted from the library's collection.

Since the library is a tax-supported institution, any citizen has the right to question the inclusion or exclusion of any title in the library's collection. Procedures have been established which will insure serious consideration of any request for removal, restriction, or addition of any item in or to the library's collection. However, until such an examination has been made, and a decision reached by the Public Library Board of Cullman County, no such removal, etc., shall take place.

Since all political, religious, and social opinions should be represented in a public library, no group or individual will be permitted to impose a partisan emphasis on the library's collection. Frankness of language, a widespread and contemporary phenomenon, will never, in itself, be considered sufficient justification to remove or restrict library materials. The responsibility of the library is to serve all the community, not to promote – and above all, not to censor-- any particular political, moral, philosophical, or religious conviction or opinion. It is not the purpose of the library to stimulate, nor to cater to anti-social, prurient, or immoral interests. But no one, least of all a free public library, has the right to judge what another may not read, see, or hear.

Patrons with complaints concerning material content shall be given the "Citizens Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form to fill out. Such forms shall be forwarded to the County Librarian and/or the Assistant County Librarian for his review. The County Librarian may take action to remove such items or move them to a more appropriate collection, or he may refer the matter to the attention of the Public Library Board of Cullman County at their next regularly scheduled meeting. A decision by the Board to keep an item in the collection will stand unless subsequent judicial decisions are rendered which prohibit housing the material in the library's collections. The library's philosophy is that censorship is a purely individual matter, and while anyone is free to reject for oneself any book or other material which he/she may find inappropriate, he/she cannot exercise the right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Evaluation of the Collection

Collection Development is an all-encompassing and on-going process. With this understanding, staff involved in collection development will continuously and vigorously evaluate existing collections and make recommendations to update and/or delete titles. Final decisions regarding deletion of titles shall rest with the County Librarian or his/her designee. The Assistant County Librarian and other staff shall evaluate the periodical collection annually and submit recommendations to the County Librarian for additions/deletions. Other library employees involved in Public Services may be consulted in this task.

Appendices:

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for Information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948; Amended February 2, 1961, June 27, 1967, and January 23, 1980 by the ALA Council.

The Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid, that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy; that the ordinary citizen, by exercising his critical judgement, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow-citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology. The expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free men will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until his idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one man can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author

A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free men can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that each individual must be directed in making up his mind about the ideas he examines. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society each individual is free to determine for himself what he wishes to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for his purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires of all bookmen the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association, Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers Association, American Civil Liberties Union, American Federation of Teachers
AFL/CIO, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Association of American University Presses, Bureau of
Independent Publishers & Distributors, Children's Book Council, Freedom of Information Center,
Freedom to Read Foundation, Magazine Publishers Association, Motion Picture Association of America,
National Association of College Stores, National Book Committee, National Council of Negro Women,
National Council of Teachers of English, National Library Week Program, National Board of the Young
Women's Christian Association of the U.S.A., P.E.N. – American Center, Periodical and Book Association

of America, Sex Information & Education Council of the U.S., Women's National Book Association, Public Library Board of Cullman County, Alabama

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

The Freedom to View

THE FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, we affirm these principals:

It is in the public interest to provide the broadest possible access to films and other audiovisual materials because they have proven to be among the most effective means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

It is in the public interest to provide for our audiences, films and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.

It is our professional responsibility to resist the constraint of labeling, of pre-judging a film on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.

It is our professional responsibility to contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Educational Film Library Association's Freedom to View Committee, and was adopted by the EFLA Board of Directors in February, 1979. It was endorsed by the American Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee and the ALA Council in June, 1979. This statement was endorsed by the Public Library Board of Cullman County in 1993.

SECTION 3.5 - SPECIAL COLLECTIONS POLICIES

The Library System, fulfilling its role of serving as the collective memory of this community, shall develop and maintain special collections of various formats to document the history and heritage of this community, its culture, its businesses and institutions, its artistic heritage, and the history and heritage of its people. As such, the System maintains the Burns Collection of Family History, the Library and Community Archives, and other various collections. As these collections are intrinsic, they may require special rules regarding their use and regarding the provision of information services using these resources. Public access to these collections shall be granted and the following rules shall apply:

General Usage Rules:

1. Persons using the Special Collections Area of the Library System must register prior to accessing the collections.
2. Pens are not allowed in the Special Collections area. Persons should use pencils only.
3. Certain items, due to preservation requirements, might not be available for photocopying. The County Librarian or his designee shall determine those items and mark them accordingly.
4. Archival Collections are open only by appointment. Persons using archival collections must follow preservation procedures as outlined by the Librarian at the time access is granted. This may include the wearing of special gloves, use of special papers and materials, or refraining from handling certain materials.

5. The copying of items from the Archives Department, particularly photographs and fragile or one-of-a-kind documents, is left solely to the discretion of the County Librarian or his/her designee. The Library may and likely will use a third-party vendor for such reproduction, and will charge market prices for such copying, along with a \$5.00 handling fee, collectable in advance. In no instance may a patron borrow an item from the Archives or the Special Collections to take it to a third-party vendor (or elsewhere) for copying or for other reasons without the written permission of the County Librarian.

6. The Library System retains copyright on all original items in the collection, including manuscripts and photographs. Permission to copy may be granted as long as proper credit is given to the Cullman County Public Library System.

Special Collections Department Service Standards:

1. Due to staffing, the Library System's employees cannot conduct in-depth genealogical or historical research for patrons by mail, telephone or from requests received via the Internet. Staff will assist patrons in any way possible who visit the Special Collections Department and are conducting their own research.

2. On requests for obituaries, a correct name and approximate date of death must be provided. Library staff will check "The Cullman Tribune" (weekly paper) for the week of the date given and for two following weeks and will copy the obituary, assuming that the material can be photocopied due to preservation needs.

3. Persons needing in-depth research work or assistance may be referred to a list of persons in the area who conduct genealogical research for a fee, or to the North-central Alabama Genealogical Society or the Cullman County Historical Society.

4. Staff may, on being asked a clear, specific historical or genealogical question related to a specific reference work, check that reference work for the information and provide such information to the researcher, providing that time and staffing permit.

5. The Service Standards of the Library System's Information Services Policy shall also apply to Special Collections Information Services where they do not conflict with preservation issues.

SECTION 3.6 - POLICY ON SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

The Cullman County Public Library System shall provide equitable service to persons of all ages, including children. Collection expenditures for children shall be a set portion of the Library System's operating budget annually, and the library shall provide programs and services for children consistent with the services it provides for other age groups.

Library Staff may designate certain areas of library facilities for children and young adults for purposes of segregation of materials only.

All service standards in place by the Library System shall apply equitably to children and Young Adults.

SECTION 3.7 - POLICY ON SERVICE TO LIBRARY USERS WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act gives civil rights protection to people with disabilities, including:

Equal access to employment

Public services

Public accommodations provided by public and private entities

Transportation

Telecommunications resources.

Start of rights protection list

The Cullman County Public Library System shall make reasonable and necessary accommodations on request for physical access, communications or other needs that ensure our services, activities and employment are available to people with disabilities. In doing so, the Library System shall offer:

Sign-Language interpreters for Library programs (must be arranged two weeks before the event by contacting the Outreach Services Department at the System Headquarters).

Sign-language interpreters for meetings of the Public Library Board (must be arranged two weeks before the meeting by calling the Outreach Services Department at the System Headquarters).

Orientation to and escort within Cullman County Public Library System's branches.

Sign-language interpreted or sight-guided Library tours

Computer training for adaptive computer/s located at the Central Library.

Assistance in finding and removing material from Library shelves and files

Special interest programs and material about disability concerns for families, individuals and groups on request by groups.

Information about Cullman-area resources and services for people with disabilities

Transportation access to the facilities of the Public Library System by the handicapped through prior agreement with the Cullman Area Rural Transit System (CARTS). The Library shall work closely with CARTS in coordinating the services of the two agencies and shall assist CARTS in its efforts to serve the handicapped.

Books and information helpful to the handicapped on various topics.

Popular Fiction and Non-fiction materials in large-print format at all library service outlets.

Provide access and liaison services to the Regional Library for the Blind and Print Handicapped at the Alabama Public Library Service in Montgomery, including facilitating such services.

It is the policy of the Public Library Board that every employee shall insure that the disabled have as positive an experience as possible in its use of its public libraries and that equitable service shall be provided.

SECTION 3.8 - INFORMATION SERVICES POLICIES

Information Service Defined

Good information service involves identifying a person's information need and proceeding to fulfill it accurately, efficiently and pleasantly, using the resources available in the Library system, and including referral to resources in other libraries or agencies, if necessary. It also includes providing instruction in Library use.

Information Service Mission Statement

The Cullman County Public Library System regards as valid every reference and information question asked by any patron. All questions will be given equal consideration, and each will be answered as accurately and completely as possible within a reasonable time limit. Full library service will be available to all patrons and no questions asked by a patron will be considered unanswerable.

Statement of Objectives

General Objective:

Reference service will be provided through direct provision of information or through provision of instruction in the use of sources to each person to the degree that he or she individually requires. Patrons will have opportunity to receive instruction in the use of sources and facilities but will not be denied information on the basis of whether or not they learn or accept instruction. However, the Library will encourage patrons who will need to use reference tools repeatedly to learn the use of these tools.

Priority of Service and Reference Triage:

The following service will be offered to patrons (listed in order of priority):

1. Direct personal service to library users who come to the library. Patrons are served on a first come, first served basis.

2. Telephone/TTY/Relay Service inquiries

3. Library orientation and bibliographic instruction

4. Mail reference

5. Email reference

Simultaneous requests will be managed at the librarian's discretion with regard to urgency, complexity and availability of staff resources, following rules of service priority spelled out above and in the following standards.

Information Service Standards

1. Basic reference services (ready reference, homework resources and reader's advisory services) will be offered at all service outlets during all hours those service outlets are open. Detailed and extensive reference services may be limited to certain libraries (i.e. the Central Library) and to certain times (i.e. times when professional librarians are scheduled to be on duty, or by appointment).

2. All information requests are to be handled. If information is available, it is provided to patrons without making a judgment on its moral or aesthetic worth.

3. No effort will be made to determine whether library users are entitled to library cards before reference service is given except to decide whether or not information material will be checked out or

interlibrary loan requested. A current, valid Cullman County Infocard (library card) shall be required for Inter-library loan of materials.

4. The needs of every library patron will always be taken seriously and treated with utmost respect and confidentiality. Discussion of any individual or group of individuals, whether adult or child, or their inquiries, outside the professional context, is strictly prohibited without the consent of the patron.

5. While on desk duty, service to the public takes precedence over any other duties, and service to the patron in the library takes precedence over telephone inquiries.

6. It is not sufficient for the staff to wait for a patron to request assistance. Since many patrons are reluctant to request aid, it is the responsibility of staff to anticipate public needs and offer service when it appears needed.

7. Information given will always be based on accurate printed sources or learned from a reliable authority. The opinion, evaluation or interpretation of staff, even when requested, is never to be given as fact. Answers to reference questions will only be given after the answer has been verified and a source cited, even for the most common knowledge.

8. Neither the patron's nor the staff member's personal opinions and beliefs should influence the quality of service given.

9. Staff shall not offer their personal opinions on social issues, politics, religion, etc., to patrons.

10. No time limit should be put on searching. However, lengthy searches of periodicals, bibliographic sources, or searches through extensive reference materials are beyond the libraries resources to perform in most instances. The agency head should consult with the County Librarian before making an exception to this general rule.

11. Telephone reference service should be used for short, factual information questions that do not require extensive reading or (any) interpretation on the staff member's part.

12. In all in-person and telephone contacts, if the librarian cannot answer a request immediately, he or she will obtain contact information from the patron and see that the patron receives a follow-up contact detailing what research has been completed within 2 business hours, and an adequate, appropriate response within 24 hours.

13. Staff will always offer to make an appointment with a professional librarian for cases determined to be detailed or lengthy in nature.

14. In all cases, official requests from local, state and federal government agencies have the highest priority.

15. Every effort will be made to complete each reference transaction successfully, consulting with colleagues, colleagues in other libraries, or representatives of appropriate agencies when necessary.

16. Informational/Reference services in the subject areas of local history and genealogy shall generally follow these service standards, but may be subject to specific limitations as spelled out in this section.

SECTION 3.9 - BULLETIN BOARD AND INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION AREAS POLICY

The Cullman County Public Library System maintains in many of its facilities bulletin boards for the posting of materials and designated areas (such as literature racks and spaces on countertops and tables) for the passive distribution of information. This policy shall govern the use of those facilities.

A. Bulletin Boards and Distribution Areas That Are Reserved for Use by The Cullman County Public Library System

Some bulletin boards, literature racks, countertops, and tables are reserved for the exclusive use by the Library to post and distribute materials about Library services, programs, and events; from the Friends of Cullman County Public Library System and the Cullman Area Library Foundation (CALF), Inc.; and from other governmental entities such as the City of Cullman, Cullman County, and other local, state, and federal governments.

B. Other Bulletin Boards and Distribution Areas

A limited number of bulletin board and distribution areas may be available within the Library System for the posting and passive distribution of materials from other entities. In each facility, the branch or department manager (or designee) of a Library facility may designate specific areas as available for these purposes. A branch or department manager (or designee) must authorize all posting and distribution before it occurs. Authorization will be based upon the provisions of this policy and will not be based upon the viewpoint, beliefs, or affiliations of the non-profit group or the viewpoints expressed in the materials. Posting or distribution of any such materials in the Library does not indicate Library endorsement of the ideas, issues, or events promoted by those materials.

Community Bulletin Boards

Space may be available for announcements, for sale items, or other similar activities. Items placed on these Community Bulletin Boards are not moderated regularly by library staff and any event, product, service, issue, or idea promoted in such postings does not indicate Library endorsement. Such Community Bulletin Boards shall be clearly designated as such and include the statement that items posted on the Board are not endorsed by the Library System. Boards shall be cleared monthly, or on a regular basis. The Library shall not provide supplies to hang items on such boards. The Library reserves the right to remove anything from these Boards on a regular basis and/or at any time.

Distribution Areas

Non-profit organizations may provide dated materials related to their not-for-profit purpose for passive distribution only in areas designated for that purpose. Passive distribution means leaving the materials with Library staff for Library visitors, if they so choose, to review and/or take with them. Passive distribution does not include verbally or visually (by means of signs, placards, etc.) encouraging Library visitors to review or take any materials with them.

C. General Rules and Prohibitions

The following items may not be posted on bulletin boards or left in material distribution areas:

Materials that support or oppose any current or pending ballot measure or political candidate. The Library is not intended to be a forum for the support or opposition of political candidates or ballot measures. Official election information from the Board or Registrars, the City of Cullman and City of Hanceville, and/or the Alabama Secretary of State is often made available in the Library.

Because it is not consistent with passive distribution, materials asking Library visitors to sign a petition or letter are not permitted.

D. Terms for Use

All materials posted or distributed must comply with this policy and any other applicable Library regulations or guidelines. No other materials may be posted or distributed.

To ensure equitable access to limited display space available at each facility, a branch or department manager (or designee) may establish criteria for that facility regarding posting and distribution of material, including:

- the maximum size of material to be posted or distributed;
 - the maximum length of time materials may remain posted or displayed;
 - the maximum amount of time before or after an event a posting may occur;
 - the frequency with which material may be posted or displayed by the same non-profit organization;
- and
- consistent methods for allocating space should the amount of material exceed the space available for posting or distribution.

All posting and placement of materials in distribution areas shall be done by personnel from the Cullman County Public Library System. Individuals requesting posting or distribution shall not themselves post or leave materials in distribution areas. The public may post items on the Community Bulletin Boards where available, pursuant to the terms detailed under "Community Bulletin Boards" above.

Materials left for posting or distribution without authorization from the Library will be discarded.

The Library assumes no responsibility for the preservation or protection of materials posted or distributed. Materials will not be returned.

The County Librarian, or his/her designee, is responsible for the administration of this policy on a system-wide basis. Branch managers are responsible for the administration of this policy within their facilities.

SECTION 3.10 - EXHIBITS

The Cullman County Public Library System offers exhibits in library facilities. Library exhibits are used to assist patrons in their exploration of educational, cultural, intellectual and civic activities. The displays incorporate library materials whenever possible, as a means of informing users of the range of library resources and services. The Library endeavors to offer exhibits of diverse subject matter for children, adults and families.

The Library reserves the right to arrange exhibits in all library facilities and to make the final decision regarding content and physical presentation of all exhibits and displays.

Certain areas of library service outlets may be designated as gallery space for regular exhibitions, particularly of the work of local artists. The County Librarian shall develop rules and procedures for the operation of such facilities subject to the review of the Public Library Board.

The County Librarian is responsible for administration of this policy.

SECTION 3.11 - VALUE ADDED SERVICES, RELATED FEES

PURPOSE

To provide a policy to charge patrons for the value-added service of computer printouts, faxes and photocopies. The policy must be equitable for our patrons and support the Cullman County Public Library System in its efforts to be good stewards of its resources. The Library System underscores its commitment to provide free basic library services. For the purposes of this policy, basic library services include, but are not limited to research and reference services and online searching of remote databases.

GENERAL POLICY

It is the policy of the Cullman County Public Library System to charge for faxes, photocopying and printing at public-access computers to defray financial costs, conserve resources and ensure equity-of-access standards. Discretionary guidelines will be established to help staff make exceptions to this policy in a uniform, unbiased, and non-discriminatory manner. The County Librarian shall regularly review such charges and recommend changes in policy to the Board as necessary.

FAX SERVICE POLICY & FEES

The Library System may elect to provide public fax service at any service outlet of the Library System. The Library System shall not be responsible for public misuse of fax services, and does hereby reserve the right to refuse to fax any item for any reason.

Outgoing Fax Service:

The Library shall fax outgoing items at a rate of not less than \$1 for the first page and \$.25 for every subsequent page. It shall be the senders responsibility to determine that appropriate addressing information is provided on a cover page or on the first page of the document. The Library makes no representation and does not guarantee that faxes will be received by the intended recipient. If requested by the sender, a receipt showing date and time of transmission may be provided.

Incoming Fax Service:

The Library will receive incoming faxes for users at the rate of not less than \$.10 per page. Incoming faxes will be held for recipients for 3 business days and will then be discarded. Library staff may require photo identification from the recipient before providing the incoming fax to them.

PHOTOCOPYING SERVICE & FEES

The Library System may elect to provide public photocopiers at any service outlet of the Library System. This may include equipment to print items from microfilm, microfiche, or other similar media formats. Public use of photocopiers and similar equipment shall not be routinely regulated and persons using photocopiers and similar equipment are responsible for any and all violations of federal copyright law and other related laws that inherently apply to the copying of documents. The Library System accepts no responsibility for public misuse of photocopying equipment.

Fees for photocopying service shall not be less that \$.20 per page.

COMPUTER PRINTOUTS & FEES

The Library System may elect to provide public printers and other similar peripheral devices at public computer workstations at any service outlet of the Library System. Public use of such equipment may be regulated to control waste and protect privacy, but for no other reason; and persons using photocopiers and similar equipment are responsible for any and all violations of federal copyright law and other related laws that inherently apply to the copying of documents. The Library System accepts no responsibility for public misuse of such copying equipment.

Fees for such printouts shall not be less than \$.10 per page.

The Library System reserves the right to utilize hardware or software to adequately control the use of printing systems, which may require users to identify themselves.

SECTION 4 - EMERGENCY POLICIES

4.1 Fire Safety Policy

4.2 Severe Weather Policy

4.3 Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Guidelines

4.4 Loss Prevention – Security Incident Reporting

4.5 Loss Prevention – Use of Security Systems and Equipment

SECTION 4.1 - FIRE SAFETY POLICY

The County Librarian shall be responsible for a plan of fire preparedness, prevention and action in conjunction with local and state fire authorities. He may appoint a Disaster Preparedness Coordinator among the staff and committees as are necessary to develop and implement fire prevention, preparedness and recovery plans. Such plans will be presented to the Board for approval as they are updated.

The Library System will conduct fire drills on a routine basis at facilities directly under its control.

All Staff will immediately assist in the evacuation of facilities upon the announcement of a fire drill, the announcement of an actual fire emergency, or on the sounding of corresponding alarm systems, and will themselves evacuate facilities.

Each Department Head or ranking employee per department shall insure that their respective areas are evacuated accordingly.

The assembly point for fire evacuees at the Central Library shall be Cullman City Hall front lawn or other area designated by the Cullman Fire/Rescue Service. Assembly areas at other library service outlets shall be determined by the incident commander of the fire department responding to the incident.

The Officer-In-Charge at their discretion may attempt to contain a fire with extinguishers while fire authorities are responding. By no means should any employee risk their health or safety.

Once a fire is contained, the Library's Disaster Preparedness Plan will dictate and govern recovery efforts.

SECTION 4.2 - SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

The County Librarian shall be responsible for development of plans and procedures to protect employees, library users and library property from severe weather, including severe thunderstorms and tornadoes, in conjunction with local, state and federal disaster preparedness officials. The County Librarian may designate a Disaster Preparedness Coordinator among the staff and committees as are necessary to develop and implement severe weather protection and recovery plans. Such plans will be presented to the Board for approval as they are updated.

In general, in the event of a Tornado Watch issued by the National Weather Service, library employees will be mindful of the potential for deterioration of weather conditions and be prepared to evacuate themselves and employees to a safe area of the facility.

Safe areas will be designated by the Cullman County Emergency Management Agency at each library facility.

In the event of a Tornado Warning issued by the National Weather Service, library employees will evacuate themselves and employees to designated safe areas. No library services will be provided during the duration of the warning period. Patrons may leave library facilities, but the Library is not responsible for their safety. Persons entering facilities during warnings will be asked to take shelter in safe areas or be asked to leave library facilities.

In the event of severe thunderstorm watches and warnings, the County Librarian or the Officer-In-Charge may take steps similar to the above depending on the severity of the situation. In the absence of the County Librarian, such decisions should be made in consultation with the Cullman County Emergency Management Agency.

The Cullman County Bookmobile and other mobile library services will discontinue routes during tornado or winter storm watches and warnings and return to their duty station immediately.

SECTION 4.3 - DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RECOVERY GUIDELINES, OTHER DISASTER POLICY STATEMENTS

The County Librarian, being responsible for the development and implementation of all emergency plans for the Library System may designate a Disaster Preparedness Coordinator and/or committee to assist in development and implementation of such plans. The development of any such plans should include the involvement of local, state and/or federal law enforcement, safety, fire, and emergency management officials. Such plans should be reported to the Public Library Board on a regular basis and shall be included as an appendix to this manual.

Plans for the salvage of library materials after a disaster must follow standardized national guidelines for the recovery of library materials.

Being an agency of the Cullman County Government, the Public Library System, in the event of a declared or undeclared emergency affecting the county, shall cooperate with any and all emergency response or government agencies in the dissemination of emergency information, providing assistance to response agencies and responders, or any other duty as may be directed by the Public Library Board, the Cullman County Commission, or state and federal emergency response agencies. In such cases, employees may be directed to work at facilities or undertake tasks that are not normally called for within their job descriptions.

SECTION 4.4 - LOSS PREVENTION – SECURITY INCIDENT REPORTING

The County Librarian and his designees shall be responsible for s systematic program of prevention of loss to the library due to liability involved in the normal course of operations. To monitor and prevent such issues, as well as log and record incidents which violate library security, a system of reporting is hereby required.

In the event in which library security is jeopardized, a library user or employee is a victim of a crime on library property, or in any event which may entail the library to incur some liability, the Officer-In-Charge shall fill out and file a “Security Incident Report Form” in the Office of the County Librarian. Such forms shall detail such incidents, parties involved, actions taken on the part of library staff and employees, and other pertinent information. The County Librarian will review such incident reports and take actions which may be necessary to protect the library system, including making recommendations to the Board for capital improvements, policy revisions, or other actions.

SECTION 4.5 - LOSS PREVENTION – USE OF SECURITY SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

Recognizing the need to protect the public’s investment in its library facilities and resources, the Cullman County Public Library System retains the right to utilize radio-frequency or electro-magnetic theft monitoring equipment, video-recording equipment, or other means to protect the Library System against theft, vandalism or other losses.

SECTION 5 - BRANCH-SPECIFIC POLICIES

5.1 Parking – Main Library

5.2 Closing Security – Main Library

SECTION 5.1- EMPLOYEE PARKING – MAIN LIBRARY

Employees assigned to or visiting the Main Library shall park in the East (3rd Avenue) Parking Lot whenever possible to provide for public parking spaces along Clark Street. In the case of overflow, parallel spaces along 3rd Avenue between Clark Street and Second Street should be utilized.

SECTION 5.2 - CLOSING SECURITY – MAIN LIBRARY

Upon closing of the Main Library, all employees are to leave the facility as a group. The Officer-In-Charge will insure that all employees have left the facility and grounds before he/she leaves the parking lot.

All employees will do whatever is necessary to insure quick egress from the building on closing.

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SECTION 6 - OTHER POLICIES

6.1 Meeting Room Usage Policy

6.2 General Rules of Conduct While Using CCPLS Libraries and Enforcement

6.3 Unattended Children Policy

6.4 Confidentiality of Library and Borrowers Records

6.5 Material Donations

SECTION 6.1 - MEETING ROOM USAGE

The Community Room of the Cullman County Public Library exists to primarily provide space for library programs and meetings. The room is available for public use at any other time. The room may be used by any non-profit, non-religious, and non-political organization or group free of charge.

For-profit entities, religious and political organizations and groups may use the room provided that it is not needed for library programs or already reserved by a non-profit, non-political, non-religious group, provided they pay a \$50 usage fee allowing up to 2 hours in meeting room space.

The Community Room must be reserved in advance. This is done on a first-come, first served basis. The room must be reserved for specific amounts of time. Often, more than one group is scheduled for a particular day, so the user must request precise periods of time. These time periods must include set-up and clean-up time. In all cases, time schedules will be strictly adhered to. Except in rare instances, the facility may not be booked for longer than a eight-hour period by the same group. If the facility is needed for longer periods, expressed written permission must be given by the County Librarian or the Chairman of the Public Library Board.

The facility will be set up based on requirements given by the group at the time of registration. Furniture may not be moved without prior approval by the library.

If a group is meeting after library hours, it is the groups' responsibility to pick up keys for the facility before the library closes. The individual who registers for the room on behalf of the group is responsible for seeing that the library is locked after the meeting concludes and that the key is returned in the bookdrop. That person is also responsible for lost keys and a charge of \$10.00 will be levied in the event that the key is lost.

Lights should be turned off after the use of the room. Thermostats are not to be changed, as they are set on the most comfortable and energy efficient level.

Refreshments may be served in the room. However, a non-refundable cleaning fee of \$100.00 will be charged at the time the application is approved. These charges are not refundable and must be paid prior to use of the room. The registering individual is responsible for the insuring that the room is straightened up after use and insuring that the room is left in order consistent with the way it was found. Trash must be removed from the building and tables must be wiped clean of any spills or debris

There are no facilities or equipment for cooking, preparing, serving, or storing food and drinks. Use of alcoholic beverages and smoking is prohibited in public buildings in the City of Cullman.

SECTION 6.2 - GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT WHILE USING CCPLS LIBRARIES AND ENFORCEMENT

The Cullman County Public Library System is supported by the taxes of the people of Cullman County and its various municipalities who expect each of our facilities to be clean, comfortable, and safe places for selecting materials, reading, researching, studying, writing, and attending Library- or community-sponsored programs and meetings. To this end, the Library is responsible for establishing rules of conduct to protect the rights and safety of Library patrons, volunteers, and staff, and for preserving and protecting the Library's materials, equipment, facilities, and grounds. In addition, the Library has a strong commitment to intellectual freedom and to freedom of access to information.

Enforcement of these rules will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner. Library staff and/or law enforcement officers will intervene to stop prohibited activities and behaviors. Failure to comply with the Library's established rules, regulations, and policies could result in removal from the premises and expulsion from the Library for a period of one day to one year, or in arrest or prosecution. Violations could also result in the restriction and/or termination of Library privileges, including the use of Library computers and other equipment.

Individual patrons have the right to request an administrative review of an expulsion, which shall be referred to the County Librarian or the Public Library Board (See enforcement below).

For the comfort and safety of patrons, volunteers, and staff, and the protection of Library property, the following actions are examples of conduct not allowed on Library property:

- Engaging in any activity in violation of Federal, State, local or other applicable law, or Library policy.
- Carrying firearms and dangerous weapons of any type (except by law enforcement officers and authorized security personnel of the Cullman County Public Library System).
- Being under the influence of alcohol/illegal drugs, and selling, using, or possessing alcohol/illegal drugs.
- Verbally or physically threatening or harassing other patrons, volunteers, or staff, including stalking, staring, lurking, offensive touching, and obscene acts such as sex acts and indecent exposure.
- Soliciting or conducting surveys not authorized by the Library.
- Stealing, damaging, altering, or inappropriate use of Library property in Library facilities or on Library grounds, including computer hardware and software, printers, or other equipment or furnishings.
- Trespassing in nonpublic areas, being in the Library without permission of an authorized Library employee before or after Library operating hours, or camping or loitering on Library grounds, including before or after library operating hours.
- Fighting or challenging to fight, running, pushing, shoving, horseplay or throwing things.
- Creating disruptive noises such as loud talking, screaming, or banging on computer keyboards.
- Gambling and group activities which are disruptive to the Library environment.
- Using audible devices without headphones or with headphones set at a volume that disturbs others. Using cell phones, pagers, and other communication devices in a manner that disturbs others.
- Using restrooms for bathing or shampooing, doing laundry, or changing clothes.
- Littering.
- Smoking, chewing, and other tobacco use in Library facilities.
- Entering the Library without shoes and/or a shirt, with offensive body odor or personal hygiene, or being otherwise attired so as to be disruptive to the Library environment.
- Consuming food or beverages in public areas of the Library, including restrooms (except for drinking fountain use, baby bottles, nursing, and authorized use in meeting rooms and auditoriums).
- Bringing in articles that are too large to fit under one Library chair.

- Using wheeled devices in Library property or on Library grounds, except in designated areas, including skateboarding, roller-skating, bicycling, scooters, and shopping carts (except for wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers).
- Moving Library furniture from where it is placed by Library staff.
- Lying down or sleeping in the restrooms or on any floor, couch, table, or seat in the Library, and by blocking aisles, exits, or entrances by sitting or lying down in them.
- Neglecting to provide proper supervision of children (see Unattended Children Policy).
- Bringing pets or animals, other than service animals necessary for disabilities, into the Library, except as authorized by the County Librarian.
- Otherwise using library facilities, grounds, or property, including equipment and materials for purposes other than their obvious purposes.

Enforcement

The Public Library Board formally delegates to Library management and/or Security Officers and local law enforcement the authority to enforce the Rules of Conduct, including the withdrawal of permission to remain on Library premises and the barring of certain persons from trespassing on library grounds or facilities. Patrons shall have the right to submit a written request for an administrative review of an exclusion order which is for a period greater than seven days. Patrons shall include in the request any written documentation they seek to have considered in the review process. The exclusion order shall remain in effect pending administrative reviews or until it expires, whichever comes first.

If a patron timely requests an administrative review, the County Librarian shall review the barring and provide the patron with a decision in writing. If the County Librarian withdrew permission to remain on Library premises or barred a person from Library property, the request will be forwarded by the County Librarian to the Public Library Board for review of the County Librarian's decision. The Chairman of the Library Board, or another Board member acting as the Chairman's designee, shall review the exclusion order, considering only the written record and the patron's written administrative review request, and shall issue a final decision. If a patron is unhappy with that decision, the patron may then request an administrative review of the matter at the next scheduled regular session of the Board. As such a review would involve discussion of the good name and character of individual/s, such a review would be held in an Executive Session of the Board.

The County Librarian is authorized to develop procedures for the implementation of this policy including appropriate timelines for filing requests for administrative and Library Board reviews. Generally, such requests should be filed within 3 business days.

Related Policy Statements

Library or security employees, at their discretion, may search bags, briefcases, purses or any other similar item brought into the library by visitors, either on the visitor's entry to or exit from the library.

SECTION 6.3 - UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY

The Cullman County Public Library System welcomes library use by children. Staff members are available to assist children with library materials or services. The Library desires to provide a safe and appropriate environment for visitors of all ages. The Library, however, is a public building with staff trained to provide public library services. The Library is not equipped-and it is not the Library's role to provide long- or short-term child care. In no way shall the library or its employees accept this role or take responsibility for a child.

For the safety and comfort of children, a responsible adult or caregiver should accompany children while they are using the Library. While in the Library, parents and caregivers are responsible for monitoring and regulating the behavior of their children.

Library staff members will be guided by this policy in situations, such as:

- An unattended child is found frightened or crying in the Library.
- An unattended child is perceived to be endangering him or herself, or that another person in the library poses a perceived threat to the unattended child.
- An unattended child violates other Library conduct policies, or commits an illegal act.

- An unattended child exhibits specific inappropriate behavior
- An unattended child has not been met by a responsible caregiver at closing time

After evaluating the situation, Library staff members will attempt to contact the parent or guardian of an unattended child. In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the child will be placed in the care of the appropriate local law enforcement agency.

For the protection of the child but particularly for the protection of the library employee, in absolutely no case is an individual library employee to be left alone with a child without another person or persons present. Any employees finding themselves in such a situation must call for the assistance of another employee immediately.

SECTION 6.4 - CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY AND PATRON RECORDS

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Confidentiality Policy is to ensure confidentiality of borrower information in the Cullman County Public Library System and to provide library users with information on the state and federal laws which protect their privacy or make access to their private library records available.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Cullman County Public Library System to protect the privacy of those who use the Library. Staff members and volunteers shall protect information about Library borrowers, their requests for information and materials, the online sites and resources they access, and their loan transactions, and shall not transmit such information to individuals or to any private or public agency without an order from a court of competent jurisdiction, or as otherwise required by law. A borrower 13 years or older may indicate which party or parties can act on his or her behalf to pick up waiting holds by sending his or her Library Card or notice with another party. A borrower may allow a party to act on his or her

behalf for checkout of materials by sending his or her Library Card with another party. Library users should take into consideration that they are responsible for all materials borrowed on the card, whether or not they were the person who checked the materials out when making decisions about sending their library cards with third parties.

STATE LAW ON PRIVACY OF LIBRARY RECORDS:

The Code of Alabama, 1975, Title 48-8-10 amply protects of privacy of public library records in Alabama. It specifically states:

It is recognized that public library use by an individual should be of confidential nature. Any other provision of general, special or local law, rule or regulation to the contrary notwithstanding, the registration and circulation records and information concerning the use of the public, public school, college and university libraries of this state shall be confidential. Registration and circulation records shall not be open for inspection by, or otherwise available to, any agency or individual except for the following entities: (a) the library which manages the records; (b) the state education department for a library under its jurisdiction when it is necessary to assure the proper operation of such library; or (c) the state Public Library Service for a library under its jurisdiction when it is necessary to assure the proper operations of such library. Aggregate statistics shown from registration and circulation records, with all personal identification removed, may be released or used by a library for research and planning purposes. Provided however, any parent of a minor child shall have the right to inspect the registration and circulation records of any school or public library that pertain to his or her child.

To the degree that it is allowed under federal law, the staff and employees of the Cullman County Public Library System and the Public Library Board of Cullman County shall follow the Alabama law.

The USA PATRIOT Act:

The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act (USA PATRIOT Act) became law on Oct. 26, 2001. Under provisions of the act, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and law enforcement officials may seek court orders for Library records for investigations relevant to national security or terrorism. Libraries or librarians served with these search warrants may not disclose, under penalty of law, the existence of the warrants or the fact

that records were produced as a result of the warrants. Patrons cannot be told their records were given to law enforcement agencies or that they were the subjects of FBI investigations.

Many provisions of the PATRIOT Act, including the section that relates to libraries, expire automatically on Dec. 31, 2005, unless renewed by Congress.

By including information about the USA Patriot Act in its policy, the Public Library Board of Cullman County and the Cullman County Public Library System neither endorses or condones the USA Patriot Act. It is made available simply as a matter of public notification.

Minimum records kept:

The Cullman County Public Library System keeps the minimum number of records necessary for maintaining operations. For example, when a customer logs off a Library computer, no information is retained that identifies the customer to the computer session. Also, when a customer returns materials to the Library, information about what was checked out is automatically deleted, unless the customer has fines.

SECTION 6.5 - MATERIAL DONATIONS

The Library System welcomes donations of books and other materials and accepts monetary contributions toward the purchase of materials. The Library reserves the right to decide the disposition of all gifts received. Gifts accepted for addition to the Library's collection become the property of the Cullman County Public Library System and will be placed where most appropriate. Materials containing mold or which are damaged may be discarded. Material not utilized in the Library's collection may be sold in Library book sales or will be transferred to the Friends of the Cullman County Public Library, a non-profit organization, for use in their book sales. The proceeds from both the Library and Friends of the Library book sales are donated to the Library in support of our mission, programs, and to enhance the Library's collections.

SECTION 7 - POLICIES FOR OPERATION OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF CULLMAN COUNTY

7.1 Establishment Resolution by the Cullman County Commission

7.2 Bylaws of the Public Library Board of Cullman County

SECTION 7.1 - ESTABLISHMENT RESOLUTION BY THE CULLMAN COUNTY COMMISSION

This document is taken from the Minutes of the Cullman County Board of Revenue, the forerunner of the current Cullman County Commission:

Monday, January 7, 1946

CULLMAN LIBRARY BOARD: The Chairman stated that the board of Revenue had received under previous date a letter from the Business and Professional Women's Club of Cullman, Alabama, stating their desire to establish a library board in this county as provided by law, Alabama Code, and that the same had been hanging fire for some time. After a discussion of the matter the following resolution was offered by Mr. Gable who moved its adoption.

WHEREAS, the Board of Revenue of Cullman County, Alabama has authority as provided by Section 286, Title 55 of the Code of Alabama, 1940 to appoint a library board, and

WHEREAS, the Business and Professional Women's Club of this city desired to establish a library recognized by the State of Alabama, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Revenue realized the need of said library for the people of Cullman and Cullman County,

IT IS, THEREFORE ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED BY THE board of Revenue that the citizens selected by the Library Board Appointing Committee of the Business and Professional Women's Club be and they are hereby appointed as follows:

Mrs. Elizabeth Schaeffer to serve a term of four years

Mrs. Francis Clisby, to serve a term of four years

Mr. Robert W. Sapp, to serve a term of two years

Mr. William Griffin, to serve a term of three years

Mr. J. G. Kramer, to serve a term of one year

and all appointments to be effective January 7, 1946 until the date of the expiration of their term.

The motion to adopt the foregoing resolution was seconded by Mr. Trimble and the following voted in favor thereof: E. T. Knight, D. S. Trimble, W. R. Gable; and the following voted against the same: None. Thereupon the Chairman declared that the resolution had been duly adopted.

Signed,

Erasmus T. Knight, Chairman

D. S. Trimble

W. R. Gable

Cullman County Board of Revenue

SECTION 7.2 - BYLAWS OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF CULLMAN COUNTY

PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF CULLMAN COUNTY

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1: NAME

This organization shall be called the Public Library Board of Cullman County, existing by virtue of the Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 11-90-1, et seq., and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute.

ARTICLE 1: OFFICERS

Section 1: The officers shall be chairman, vice chairman, and treasurer. These shall be elected from the appointed trustees at the annual October meeting of the board held in the meeting room of the library.

Section 2. A nominating Committee shall be appointed by the chairman in August, three months prior to the annual meeting. The Nominating Committee will present a slate of officers at the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Section 3 Officers shall serve a term of one (1) year from the annual meeting at which they are elected or until their successors are duly elected. They shall not serve more than three consecutive terms.

Section 4. Members of the Board shall be appointed for a four-year term, and the Board shall have five members. The present members shall recommend names for appointment to the board to be submitted to the appropriate governing body for approval and appointment.

Section 5. The Board shall notify the appropriate governing body when there is a vacancy or when a member's term expires.

Section 6. The chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board, have authority to co-sign checks, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board, serve as ex-officio voting member of all duties associated with office.

Section 7. The vice-chairman, in the event of the absence or disability or vacancy in the chairman's office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the chairman.

Section 8. The treasurer shall be the disbursing officer of the board, have authority to co-sign checks, and shall perform such duties as generally devolve upon the office. In the absence or inability of the treasurer, the duties shall be performed by the vice-chairman of the board.

Section 9. The County Librarian shall serve as the Executive Secretary for the Board and will keep an accurate account of all meetings, prepare correspondence for the board, issue notices, and have custody of the minutes and any other material as the Board may direct. The County Librarian shall mail the agenda for the next meeting and a copy of the minutes from the previous meeting to all Board members at least five days before the regular meeting. The County Librarian, as the acting executive, shall have authority to co-sign checks.

ARTICLE III: REGULAR SESSIONS

Section 1. The regular meetings shall be held each month or as determined by the Board, but no less than one per quarter; the Board will set the date, hour, and location. Three sequential absences by a member will be considered resignation.

Section 2. The annual meeting, which shall be for the purpose of the election of officers and the adoption of an annual report, shall be held at the time of the first regular meeting after October 1 of each year.

Section 3. At the direction of the Chairman or at the request of three board members, special meetings may be called by the County Librarian for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting.

Section 4. A quorum for the transaction business at any meeting shall consist of three board members in attendance.

Section 5. Conduct of meetings: Proceedings of all meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws.

Section 6. Notice of all meetings shall be given by the County Librarian to all members one week before each meeting. Any member unable to attend should notify the director at least one day prior to the meeting.

Section 7. All meetings are open to the public as required by law. Notice of regular meetings shall be posted in the library one week before such meeting.

Section 8. As all regular sessions are opened to the public, anyone may attend such a meeting of the Board. Persons wishing to address the Board must adhere the following procedures:

A. To be placed on the agenda, an individual will secure the Appropriate form from the County Librarian. This form must be completed and returned at least (5) days prior to a scheduled meeting. The request must then be approved by the Chairman of the Board or a quorum of Board members.

B. Consecutive requests to address the Board of Trustees pertaining to the same subject matter shall be limited to two appearances, and controlled by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees or a quorum of Board Members.

C. A limit of ten (10) minutes for the first appearance and five (5) minutes for the second appearance, pertaining to the same subject, shall be imposed. Additional time may be allowed by the Chairman of the Board or by a quorum of Board Members.

D. Members of the Cullman County Commission, the mayors of municipalities in Cullman County, and members of the Cullman County Legislative Delegation are exempt from these procedures.

Section 9. During an open meeting the board shall not hear complaints against personnel, patrons, or any other persons connected with the library. Complaints regarding staff or personnel shall be directed in writing to the County Librarian. Complaints regarding the County Librarian, patrons, or other persons connected with the library, shall be directed in writing to the board chairman. Discussion of such complaints shall be conducted in a closed session of the board.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS: EXECUTIVE AND SPECIAL SESSIONS

Section 1. Executive sessions of the board may be held by virtue of the provisions of Title 13A, Chapter 14, section 2, of the Code of Alabama, 1975. The board will meet in Executive Session when discussing the good name or character of an individual.

Section 2. At the direction of the chairman or at the request of three board members, special sessions may be called by the County Librarian for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting. Such meetings will generally be held in cases of emergency or for pressing business matters that must be addressed by the full board rather than by a standing committee and cannot be delayed until the next scheduled regular session.

ARTICLE V: THE COUNTY LIBRARIAN AND STAFF

The board shall elect a qualified person to serve as County Librarian, who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the library on behalf of the board and under its review and direction. The County Librarian shall be held responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff, for the care and maintenance of library property, for an efficiency of library service provided to the public, and for fiscal operations within the limitations of the budgeted appropriation and library policies. The County Librarian shall select, appoint and/or dismiss employees consistent with the policies set forth by the Cullman County Commission and the Cullman County Personnel Board, and will notify the Public Library Board of the appointment or termination of all employees. The County Librarian shall attend all board meetings and shall make a regular report of the operations of the library, including recommendations to improve its efficiency to the Board.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Standing Committees shall be Finance, Public Relations, Personnel, and Building and Grounds. The Committees shall be appointed by the incoming chairman of the board at the first general meeting following taking office.

Section 2. The Finance Committee shall prepare and present to the board by September 1, a budget for the ensuing fiscal year. The committee shall work with the treasurer and County Librarian on periodic analysis of the budget expenditures throughout the year.

Section 3. The Public Relations Committee, along with the County Librarian, shall act as a liaison between the library and the community. They shall seek to ascertain the library needs of the community and through appropriate publicity inform the members of the public about resources and programs available. It is vital that the County Librarian have a planned public relations program for the library which makes public relations an integral part of every library function. The committee shall work closely with the organization and perpetuation of a "Friends of the Library," the library foundation, or other supporting groups.

Section 4. The Personnel Committee shall work with the County Librarian on staff development and recruitment, and in developing personnel policies and procedures consistent with those instituted by the Cullman County Commission and the Cullman County Personnel Board.

Section 5. The Building and Grounds Committee, together with the County Librarian, shall ascertain the needs for equipment, building and grounds improvement.

ARTICLE VII: EXPENDITURES

Other than items designated in the budget, no expenditure of more than one-thousand (\$1,000) in any month shall be made by the director without the advance approval of the board.

ARTICLE VIII: GENERAL

Section 1. An affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The chairman may vote upon and may move or second a proposal before the board.

Section 2. The Bylaws may be amended by the majority vote of all members of the board provided written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to all members at least five (5) days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

Section 3. Any rule or resolution of the board, whether contained in these Bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily by a majority of the board members, in connection with business at hand; but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which at least three members of the board shall be present and at least three members shall so approve.