

Saxton B. Little Free Library, Columbia, CT

Library Programming Policy

Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for the development, management, and oversight of programs presented by the library. In keeping with the library's mission, the Saxton B. Little Free Library (SBL) regularly offers free programming for all ages as a resource for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, independent thought, and entertainment. SBL provides programs that are relevant to the research, interest, enlightenment, and informational and educational needs of all residents.

Definitions

A library program is a free event, virtual or in-person, planned by the library staff for the benefit of members of the public who opt to attend. It may involve outside presenters, facilitators, speakers, or performers.

Note: Reservation or use of a public meeting room by an organization or individual to hold a public event is not considered a library program.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Library Board delegates development, presentation and oversight of programs to the Library Director and staff. The final responsibility for the library program is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by employees throughout the library that are professionally trained to curate and develop programs. Program attendees are expected to comply with the library's Behavior Policy.

Program Selection

Programming held at SBL will represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints. All library programs are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

Library programs must have an educational, informational, cultural or recreational value to the community. Programs of a purely commercial nature or those designed for the solicitation of business will not be offered by the library. Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be offered by the library.

Approved by the SBL Board 9/22/25

Approved by the CT State Library 9/22/25

Programs that support or oppose a specific religion will not be approved or offered. Educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates, may be offered. Library programs that address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe or proselytize a particular religious conviction may be offered. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of Library patrons.

SBL Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop programs and displays.

Note: In addition to those created by SBL staff, the library may include displays and programs that are created by members of the community. Displays and programs provided by community members or organizations will be labelled as such.

Program Development, Coordination and Supervision

In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization depending upon the timing and venue of the program. All programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the library, however, must abide by this policy regardless of where they are hosted.

Program Access

Library programs are free and open to the public on a first-come first-serve basis. Registration for some programs may be required in advance. For programs targeted to a specific audience, e.g. children or teens, and promoted as such, preferential admission may be offered to those groups on a first-come first-serve basis, limited to those individuals as the library deems appropriate. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a library program should contact the library in advance of the program.

Virtual Programs

Some library programs may be offered using a Library-approved virtual meeting platform that patrons may use to access the virtual program from their own internet-enabled devices.

Patrons attending virtual programs are expected to adhere to the Library's Behavior Policy and failure to do so may result in their immediate removal from said program. The library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of virtual events, however attendees must understand that all online activity carries some degree of risk.

Patrons are required to provide their own equipment and internet connection to attend virtual programs. The library will make a good faith effort to utilize platforms that will be compatible with the widest array of hardware and software but makes no guarantee that every patron will be capable of accessing every Library program successfully. Nor can the library guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees.

Program Materials

Books, CDs, DVDs or other ancillary materials related to the content of a program may be offered for sale at a library program as a convenience to attendees.

Program Evaluation

Library staff may collect and record data and other information about programs. Outcomes, such as how well the content of a program helped attendees learn about the program's topic, will be gathered at times when such data is required for grant reporting or would be helpful in evaluating a new program topic or format. Outputs, such as the number of attendees at a program, will be gathered for all or almost all programs.

Requests for Reconsideration of Library Displays or Programs

Saxton B. Little Free Library welcomes expression of opinion concerning materials, programs, or displays at the library. Any resident of Columbia, Connecticut who wishes to request that a specific item, display, or program be reconsidered is asked to complete the Request for Reconsideration form and return it to the Library Director.

See Library Materials, Display, and Program Reconsideration Policy and Form.