

## Open Access to Ideas and Information Policy

### A. Intellectual Freedom:

The Dover Public Library recognizes its responsibility to provide open access to the widest possible range of ideas and information for its patrons. To that end, the Library provides a collection of materials, displays and exhibits, library-sponsored programs, and space for programs sponsored by others. All of these form the package of services in support of the Library's mission.

1. The Dover Public Library endorses the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the various interpretations of these set down by the American Library Association.
2. The Library pledges to maintain the confidentiality of those who use the Library, and to resist any attempts by individuals or institutions to break that confidentiality.
3. The Library will resist attempts to remove or restrict the use of any material, or cancel any program, because some party objects to its content.
4. The Library will not attempt to bias patrons through prejudicial labeling for any reason.
5. The Library will strongly support and defend the rights of all persons in the community to engage in the free flow of ideas, however unseemly or objectionable they may be to other persons.
6. The choice of which materials from the Library's collection should be read, viewed, or heard is the responsibility of each individual for him/herself. Parents are responsible for the choices their children make. The Library will not limit selection on the possibility that someone might object to content.
7. All library services will comply with local, state, and federal laws.
8. No library service shall be rejected or curtailed because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, or creed of the author, editor, illustrator, or presenter.
9. Selection and not censorship will be practiced. Services will be provided based on their ability to fulfill the Library's needs, and shall not be excluded because of certain components taken out of context.

### B. Reconsideration:

It is the belief of the Dover Public Library that censorship is a purely individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject material of which one does not approve, one cannot exercise the right to restrict the freedom of others.

1. Requests for removal of books from the open shelves, for reconsideration

of the placement and/or handling of materials, for alteration of displays or exhibits, or for the cancellation or alteration of a program must be written and signed prior to the consideration of the Board of Trustees.

2. The objection will be reviewed by the Trustees in open session at their next regularly scheduled meeting.
3. The objection will be reviewed to determine if the service in question conforms to this policy and any others the Library has currently adopted.
4. During reconsideration, no changes will be made to the service as presented. Materials challenged will remain in circulation, programs will continue as scheduled, and displays and exhibits will remain intact.
5. A written response to the objection will be made within 30 days of the filing.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees

Date 9/2/99