



Request for Reconsideration Policy

Otis Library (the "Library") recognizes that some materials, displays, or programs may be controversial or objectionable to certain members of the community. The Library values patrons' right to express their concerns. At the same time, it is the Library's responsibility to provide access to a broad range of viewpoints and resources, while supporting the principles of intellectual freedom. To address concerns, the Library has established a process for Norwich residents to submit requests for reconsideration of materials, displays, or programs.

In accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323, Otis Library abides by the following statutory requirements:

1. All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the Connecticut General Statutes.
2. No library material or display shall be removed or program cancelled because of origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display or program or because of the origin, background or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display or program.
3. Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the Collection Development and Maintenance Policy, Display Policy, or Program Policy.
4. Any process for petitioners to challenge any library material, display or program shall never favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics.
5. Removal, exclusion, or censoring of any material, display, or program on the sole basis that an individual finds such material, display, or program offensive is prohibited.
6. Any Library material being challenged remain available in the Library according to its catalog record and be available for a resident to reserve, check out, or access until a final decision is made by the Library's Executive Director.
7. The Library's Executive Director may consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenged Library material.
8. Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

Procedures:

1. Request for Reconsideration Forms can only be submitted by residents of Norwich, Connecticut.
2. Individuals must complete the Request for Reconsideration completely to be considered, including full legal name, address, email address, and telephone number.

3. The request must include the title of the material, the specific concerns or objections, and any supporting arguments or reasons for reconsideration.
4. Reconsideration requests are not confidential patron records under Section 11-25 of the Connecticut General Statutes.
5. Upon receipt of the fully completed Request for Reconsideration form, the Library's Executive Director will evaluate the form, read the challenged material in its entirety, evaluate the challenged material against the Library's Collection Development and Maintenance Policy, which includes factors such as relevance, accuracy, demand, condition, and community interest, and provide the resident with a written decision on whether to remove the challenged material not later than 60 days from the date of receiving such request. The Executive Director shall provide a copy of the decision and report to the resident who submitted the form. The final authority regarding the removal or retention of library materials ultimately resides with the Executive Board and Library Board of Trustees.
6. The material in question will remain in circulation, the display will remain in place, and the program will continue during the reconsideration process.

Appeal Process:

1. If the requesting resident is dissatisfied with the decision, they may submit an appeal, in writing, to the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees within 15 days of receiving the written decision.
2. The Board of Trustees, after evaluating the challenged material under the Library's Collection Development and Maintenance Policy, shall consult with the Library's Executive Director, State Librarian or State Librarian's designee, a representative of the cooperating library service unit as defined in Section 11-9e of the Connecticut General Statutes, the president of the Connecticut Library Association or the president's designee, and the president of the Association of Connecticut Library Boards or the president's designee, who shall deliberate on such a request for reconsideration, provide a written statement of the reasons for the reconsideration or refusal to reconsider the Library material, and provide any final decision that is contrary to the decision of the Library's Executive Director.
3. Once a decision has been made by the Library's Executive Director or the Board of Trustees on the reconsideration of any library material, such material cannot be subject to a new request for reconsideration for a period of 3 years from the date of the final decision. Should the item be questioned in that following 3-year period, the Executive Director may summarize the previous decision in response to the new reconsideration request.

This Request for Reconsideration Policy and related form are available on Otis Library's website, otislibrarynorwich.org/policies/.