

SHEBOYGAN FALLS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

POLICIES AND BY-LAWS

March 2025

## Table of Contents

- I. Mission and Goal Statements
- II. Who May Use the Library
- III. Patron Responsibilities and Conduct
- IV. Services of the Library
- V. Responsibilities and Authorities of the Library Board, By-Laws
- VI. Volunteers and Friends
- VII. Personnel Policy
- VIII. Materials Selection/Collection Development Policy
- IX. Circulation Policy
- X. Reference Service Policy
- XI. Programming Policy
- XII. Public Relations Policy
- XIII. Equipment Use Policy
- XIV. Internet Use Policy
- XV. Meeting Room Policy
- XVI. Displays and Exhibits Policy
- XVII. Public Notice Bulletin Board Policy
- XVIII. Disasters Policy
- XIX. Investment Policy
- XX. Revision of Library Policies
- XX. Appendices
  - Form: Statement of Concern About Library Resources
  - Form: Internet Use Agreement
  - Form: Display and Exhibit Release
  - Form: Experience Passes
  - Form: Wi-Fi Access Point
  - Library Bill of Rights
  - The Freedom to Read Statement

## I. LIBRARY MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

### Library Mission:

Connecting Sheboygan Falls by providing exceptional staff, resources, and services to be:

- A hub for information literacy and learning support.
- A focal point for current topics, titles, and issues.
- A vibrant community gathering space.
- A center for cultural awareness.

### Library Vision:

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library is the bridge to information, ideas, and imagination, enriching and transforming lives.

### Guiding Principles:

Our core principles guide our actions:

1. Connect to Ideas: We connect people to ideas.
2. Open Access: We ensure free and open community access to knowledge, information, and creative works.
3. Promote Learning: We foster a commitment to literacy and learning.
4. Embrace Diversity: We honor individuality and celebrate diversity.
5. Exceptional Quality: We deliver superior quality in all services and programs.
6. Courtesy and Respect: We cultivate courtesy and respect in all relationships, internal and external.
7. Adapt and Innovate: We embrace change and technology, integrating them into our library culture and operations.

## II. WHO MAY USE THE LIBRARY

A. The library welcomes all residents of the community and the public library system area without discrimination based on religious, racial, social, economic, or political status, mental, emotional, or physical condition, age, or sexual orientation.

B. Library use may be denied for due cause, such as failure to return materials, destruction of property, disturbance of patrons, or objectionable conduct, including:

### 1. Illegal Activities:

- a. Carrying weapons.
- b. Damaging or stealing property.
- c. Possession or use of illegal substances.
- d. Smoking or vaping on library property.
- e. Harassment or threats.
- f. Panhandling or soliciting.
- g. Canvassing or proselytizing.
- h. Theft of materials or personal belongings.

### 2. Unsafe or Disruptive Activities:

- a. Behavior that interferes with library use.
- b. Leaving children under 6 unattended.
- c. Bringing non-service animals.
- d. Remaining after closing hours.
- e. Eating or drinking (except as permitted).

C. The library staff is responsible for upholding patrons' rights and enforcing guidelines to ensure full use of the facility by all. Questions about guidelines interpretation should be directed to the Library Director or designated staff.

D. Patrons violating others' rights or causing disturbances may be restricted from library use, and refusal to comply with staff instructions may result in legal action.

### III. PATRON RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

A. Patrons must maintain proper behavior to protect individual rights and those of others. Those causing public nuisances may be barred from library use, and failure to comply with staff instructions may lead to legal action.

B. Inappropriate conduct may prompt a verbal warning, with noncompliance resulting in expulsion from the library.

C. For recurring or serious misconduct, the Director, at their discretion or with the Board's recommendation, may restrict library access. Suspension periods typically range from two weeks to one year.

D. Permanent suspension may be imposed for ongoing or severe incidents, illegal activities, or situations requiring police involvement, with Board consent.

E. Young Children: Children under 6 must be accompanied by a parent or designated responsible person in the library. Parents must remain during library programs attended by their children.

F. Disruptive Children: While children are encouraged to use the library, those causing disruptions will be warned or asked to leave if disruptive behavior persists.

#### IV. SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY

The library provides materials and resources for information, entertainment, intellectual development, and enrichment of the people of the community, including:

1. Book Borrowing: Fiction, non-fiction, and reference materials.
2. Digital Resources: E-books, audiobooks, digital magazines, and academic journals through library websites or digital lending platforms.
3. Internet Access: Free internet access to the public, either through computer terminals or our Wi-Fi connection.
4. Computer Access: Public computers, equipped with productivity software, internet browsers, printers, and a scanner.
5. Research Assistance: Helping patrons find relevant materials, navigate databases, and evaluate sources.
6. Educational Programs: Workshops, classes, and lectures on a variety of topics, including literacy, technology skills, and job searching.
7. Children's Programs: Storytime sessions, educational activities, and summer reading programs aimed at children and families.
8. Teen Programs: Programs and services tailored to teenagers, such as study groups, gaming events, and workshops on relevant topics.
9. Community Events: Special events like book clubs, and movie screenings.
10. Language Learning Resources: Language learning materials, books, audio courses, and access to an online language learning platform.
11. Homework Help: Assistance with homework assignments and access to reference materials for students of all ages.
12. Special Collections: Special collections such as newspaper archives, and local history materials.
13. Accessibility Services: Services accessible to all patrons, offering accommodations, such as large-print materials, audio descriptions, and assistive technology.
14. Meeting Spaces: Spaces for community groups, non-profit organizations, and individuals to reserve for meetings or events.
15. Job Search Support: Resources for job seekers, including resume assistance, job listings, and workshops on job search strategies.
16. Interlibrary Loan: Materials from other libraries through interlibrary loan services, expanding the range of available resources.

17. Reader's Advisory: Recommendations for books and other materials based on patrons' interests and preferences.
18. Cultural Programs: Cultural events, performances, and exhibitions showcasing local artists and performers.
19. Community Information Services: Information about local resources, community organizations, and government services, laws, and regulations.
20. Literacy Programs: Adult literacy programs, tutoring services, and literacy outreach initiatives to promote reading and education within the community.

## V. RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES OF THE LIBRARY BOARD - Bylaws

### Article I – Name

This organization is called “The Board of Trustees of the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library,” established under Wisconsin law.

### Article II – Officers

The Board of Trustees will follow Wisconsin laws regarding its composition.

1. Officers: The board will have a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, elected from among its members at the annual meeting.
2. Nominating Committee: The president will appoint a nominating committee one month before the annual meeting to propose officers. Additional nominations can be made during the meeting.
3. Terms: Officers serve one-year terms starting from the annual meeting until their successors are elected.
4. President’s Role: The president leads meetings, calls special meetings, appoints committees, and performs other duties typical for this position.
5. Vice-President’s Role: The vice-president will take over the president’s duties if the president is absent or there’s a vacancy.
6. Secretary’s Role: The secretary keeps accurate records of meetings and performs related duties.
7. Treasurer’s Role: The treasurer manages financial reports and provides monthly and annual updates. If absent, other designated board members will assume these duties.

### Article III – Meetings

1. Regular Meetings: Held monthly, except in December, with the date set at the annual meeting.
2. Annual Meeting: This meeting for officer elections occurs during the regular July meeting.
3. Order of Business: Regular meetings will include:
  - Call to order
  - Approval of the agenda



- Appearances
  - Approval of minutes
  - Treasurer's report
  - Approval of accounts
  - Committee reports
  - Librarian's report
  - Old business
  - New business
  - Adjournment
4. Special Meetings: The secretary can call special meetings at the president's direction or upon request by four members.
  5. Quorum: Four members present in person constitute a quorum for meetings.
  6. Meeting Conduct: Meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order.

#### Article IV – Library Director and Staff

The board will appoint a qualified library director to oversee library operations. The director will recommend hiring other staff and ensure proper library management and maintenance. For part-time or temporary hires, the director can appoint without prior board approval but must report these appointments at the next meeting.

#### Article V – Committees

1. Committee Appointments: The president will create committees as needed. Committees will be dissolved after completing their tasks and reporting back to the board.
2. Progress Reports: Committees must report their progress at each board meeting.
3. Committee Authority: Committees will have advisory powers unless granted specific authority by the board.

#### Voting and Amendments

1. Voting: A majority of members present must approve any action. The president can vote and propose items.

2. Bylaw Amendments: Bylaws can be amended with a majority vote of members, provided they receive written notice of the proposed change in advance.
3. Suspension of Rules: Any rule may be temporarily suspended if a quorum is present and two-thirds of those present approve the suspension.

#### Article VI – Volunteers and Friends

The Library Board welcomes individuals and groups to volunteer at the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library. We value their contributions and aim to organize volunteer activities and provide appropriate recognition for their support of the library and community.

A "Friends of the Library" group is a community-based association that helps plan and organize events, programs, and fundraising activities to support the library. They often manage book sales and work closely with the library director to align with the library's goals. Friends groups operate under the Library Board, which holds legal authority to set library policies.

## VII. PERSONNEL POLICY

Table of contents:

- A. Management Policy
- B. Administrative Policy
- C. Salaries
- D. Health Insurance Policy and Cobra
- E. Vacation Policy
- F. Holiday Policy
- G. Sick Leave
- H. Leave of Absence
- I. Bereavement Leave
- J. Military Leave
- K. Jury Duty
- L. Federal & State Family and Medical Leave
- M. Work Schedule Policy
- N. Meetings, Conventions and Workshops
- O. Disciplinary Policy
- P. Resignation and Retirement Policy
- Q. Grievance Procedure
- R. Equal Opportunity Employment Policy
- S. Drug Free Workplace Policy
- T. Sexual Harassment Policy

## A. Management Policy

The duly appointed library board shall have all management rights, authorities, and responsibilities as stated in Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 43.

1. The library board shall select, appoint, and when necessary for valid reasons, dismiss the director of the library.
2. The board shall establish all other positions and all wage and benefit levels for all library staff.
3. The library board shall provide an effective orientation for new directors to assure that the director understands a) the policies and processes related to the daily operation of the library, b) reporting and budgetary requirements that assure accountability and compliance with the law, c) the expectations of the board in regard to administrative processes and protocol, particularly as they relate to conducting effective and efficient board meetings, and d) rules and requirements for state certification and any assistance which is provided by the Library to acquire and maintain appropriate certification.
4. The library board shall conduct annual appraisals of the library director's performance, at which time personal and management goals can be discussed and negotiated.

## B. Administrative Policy

The person appointed as library director shall be charged with the sole administration of the library.

1. The director shall be responsible to the library board in matters pertaining to and concerning the library; be present at monthly board meetings and prepare and present such reports and meeting documents as requested.
2. The director shall maintain financial records in an efficient manner; present periodic reports to the library board and to the municipal governing body; prepare the draft of the annual budget to be presented to the library board and assist trustees with presentation of the adopted request for appropriation to the municipal governing body.
3. The director shall hold regular meetings with staff and/or volunteers for training and interpreting board policy.

4. The director will be responsible for preparing annual performance assessments for library staff and volunteers.
5. The director shall have the responsibility for collection development for all materials in the library; this includes selection, ordering, processing, weeding, and inventory of the collections according to the guidelines in the policy.
6. The director will recommend changes in or additions to library policies as needed.
7. The director will perform preparatory work to assist the board with regular library planning.

#### C. Salaries

A classification and salary schedule has been adopted by the library board. The plan is subject to regular revision so that it will remain equitable for both the library and the staff.

(Attached is Salary Schedule 2022)

#### D. Health Insurance Policy

The library subscribes to the City of Sheboygan Falls Health Insurance policy “301 Employer-Offered Group Health Insurance”.

The City of Sheboygan Falls provides eligible full-time employees the opportunity to participate in the health insurance plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between the City and the insurance carrier. Coverage is offered either on an individual or family plan basis. Please refer to the current labor agreement between the City of Sheboygan Falls and AFSME, Local 1749-B, for information regarding the employee contribution for this coverage. The City has established a Section 125 Plan to provide for pre-tax payroll deductions.

Newly employed, full-time employees who are eligible for health insurance coverage may enroll for coverage to begin on the first day following 90 days of employment.

Employees are urged to consult the insurance summary plan description for details of the plan benefits. The plan document controls plan participation and payment of

any benefits. If you would like an additional copy of the summary plan description, please contact the Director of City Services.

Retiree health insurance may be available to employees who have at least five years of service with the City of Sheboygan Falls and are eligible for benefits from the Wisconsin Retirement System. Please consult the Retired Employees Group Health Plan for details.

The library subscribes to the City of Sheboygan Falls COBRA Benefits “302 Employer-Offered Group Health Insurance”.

The City of Sheboygan Falls complies with the federal law, Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985, P.L. 99 272, and later amendments, otherwise known as COBRA. Covered employees and their dependents who lose insurance coverage for any of the following reasons are eligible to continue their coverage through COBRA: termination, reduction in working hours, divorce or legal separation, death of the employee, eligibility for Medicare or loss of dependent child status under the insurance plan. All administrative rules and processes as well as changes in plan benefits and premiums apply to those on continuation coverage.

In the event of divorce or legal separation, or the loss of dependent child status under the plan, a covered employee or dependent must notify the Director of City Services within 60 days to maintain the right to continue coverage. At that time, the Director of City Services will provide enrollment materials to the employee or covered dependent.

The covered employee or dependent has 60 days to elect continuation of coverage from either the date that coverage would ordinarily have ended under the plan by reason of a qualifying event or the date of notification, whichever comes later. Election of continuation of coverage is established by completing and returning enrollment materials to the Director of City Services.

The first premium will be due within 45 days of the date of election. Subsequent premiums must be received within the terms set forth by the provider. Failure to make timely payments will result in termination of coverage without notice.

COBRA continuation coverage will end for any of the following reasons: The City discontinues its insurance plan, the premium payment is not made in a timely fashion, and the person who elected continuation of coverage becomes covered under another insurance plan or Medicare. Continuation coverage will end after 18 months if the qualifying event was termination or reduction in hours, unless the

qualified beneficiary is disabled at the time of termination or reduction in hours, in which case coverage may extend to 29 months. Continuation coverage will otherwise end after 36 months.

#### E. Vacation Policy

Library employees shall be entitled to a vacation. Each regular employee who was compensated for one thousand three hundred (1300) hours or more during the twelve months preceding his or her anniversary date shall earn annual vacation based on their anniversary date of employment in the following manner.

##### --Full-Time Employees--

All vacation shall be computed on the basis of a forty (40) hour week, at the regular rate of pay of each such employee. Vacation time requiring an additional day or days shall be paid on the basis of an eight (8) hour day, at the regular rate of pay of each such employee.

One (1) week	-	after one (1) year continuous service
Two (2) weeks	-	after two (2) years continuous service
Two (2) weeks plus one (1) day	-	after six (6) years continuous service
Two (2) weeks plus two (2) days	-	after seven (7) years continuous service
Three (3) weeks	-	after eight (8) years continuous service
Three (3) weeks plus one (1) day	-	after eleven (11) years continuous service
Three (3) weeks plus two (2) days	-	after twelve (12) years continuous service
Three (3) weeks plus three (3) days	-	after thirteen (13) years continuous service
Four (4) weeks	-	after fourteen (14) years continuous service
Four (4) weeks plus one (1) day	-	after sixteen (16) years continuous service
Four (4) weeks plus two (2) days	-	after seventeen (17) years continuous service
Four (4) weeks plus three (3) days	-	after eighteen (18) years continuous service
Five (5) weeks	-	after twenty (20) years continuous service

Continuous service shall include all time an employee has been in continuous employment status in a regular position. The continuous service of an employee eligible for vacation shall not be considered interrupted if he or she:

1. was on an approved leave of absence.
2. was on military leave.
3. was absent due to injury or illness.

In determining the number of full years of service completed, credit shall be given for all time employed by the library in a regular position. Only the most recent period of continuous service may be counted in determining an employee's length of service.

#### --Part-time Employees--

Each regular employee working more than 20 hours per week, and who was compensated for one year (12 months) of part-time employment shall be eligible for 3 weeks of paid time-off (PTO). Following the first year of employment 3 weeks of PTO will be earned based on the completion of hours of service.

For all library employees PTO shall be taken during the current PTO year. Time off shall be scheduled by the Library Director.

#### F. Holiday Policy

##### --Full-time Employees--

Full-time Library employees shall be granted eleven (11) paid holidays each year as follows: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, December 24th, Christmas Day, December 31st. A Floating Holiday to be used between January 1st and December 31st each calendar year. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the succeeding Monday shall be observed as the holiday.



--Part-time Employees—

All part-time, regular employees shall be granted one (1) paid holiday each year for the Christmas Day holiday, allotted as follows: Librarians – 8 hours; Custodians – 4 hours; Pages – 4 hours.

G. Sick Leave

The library offers sick leave to full-time employees. The library subscribes to the City of Sheboygan Falls “403 Sick Pay Policy”.

Full Time employees shall earn sick leave, which shall accrue at the rate of one (1) day sick leave for each calendar month of service for which the employee was compensated for one hundred twenty (120) hours or more.

1. Sick leave allowance shall be accumulated in the employee’s sick leave account.

2. Eligibility for Sick Leave - Each employee who has earned sick leave credits shall be eligible for sick leave for any period of absence from employment which is due to illness, bodily injury, exposure to contagious disease, or attendance upon members of the immediate family (defined as father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, child/children and spouse).

3. Effect of Termination of Employment

a. Previously accumulated sick leave shall not be terminated by absence on approved leave, or if any employee is laid off due to lack of work or funds. Any unused accumulated sick leave allowance shall continue in effect if he or she is rehired by any City Department.

b. An employee with seven (7) or more years of service who quits shall receive fifty percent (50%) of one hundred twenty (120) days of his or her accumulated sick leave. In the event of retirement (must be eligible to collect from Wisconsin Retirement Fund) or death, the employee with seven (7) or more years of service shall receive monies equal to fifty percent (50%) of one hundred fifty (150) days of accumulated sick leave. In the event of death, said monies shall be paid to the employee’s spouse or estate.

c. Upon retirement, (must be eligible to collect from the Wisconsin Retirement Fund) the City will provide at the employee’s option a conversion of accumulated unused sick leave, as described above in 4(b), to credit which will be used to pay

for the full monthly cost of the health insurance premium for the employee and any eligible dependents. Should the credit become depleted, an employee may continue the health insurance provided they pay the premium no later than the first of each month.

4. Sick Leave on Holiday – In the event that a holiday falls on a regular workday within the week or weeks taken as vacation or sick leave, such holiday shall not be charged as vacation or sick leave.

#### H. Abuse of Sick Leave

Regular attendance is crucial to the success of this and any other business. Paid sick leave is provided as a financial buffer for employees who are too injured or ill to work, not as additional time off for employees who are well. Employees should be prepared to furnish a doctor's note or similar evidence of inability to work if the supervisor requests one. Abuse of sick leave is grounds for discipline, up to and including discharge.

#### I. Leave of Absence

Any Employee who wishes to absent him or herself from employment for any reason other than sick leave, funeral, jury duty, or any other reason specifically provided for must make application for leave of absence to the Library Board. Whenever possible, all requests for leave must be in writing, at least fifteen (15) days previous to the start of the leave. The Library Board shall determine whether or not justifiable reason exists for granting a leave of absence.

#### J. Bereavement Leave

In the event of the death in the immediate family of an employee, three (3) days of paid leave will be granted for the death of the husband, wife, children, brother, sister, parent of the employee or spouse; one (1) day of paid leave will be granted in case of death of other relatives, plus two (2) additional days, if needed, will be allowed using sick leave, vacation, or loss of pay, at the direction of the employee. All such days paid shall be on the basis of eight (8) hours per day at the employee's regular rate of pay.

In the event an employee is called upon to be pallbearer or to serve in a military funeral, one (1) day of leave will be allowed (sick leave, vacation, or loss of pay) at the discretion of the employee.

## J. Military Leave

**Leave for Annual Training:** An employee who is a member of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast Guard reserves or the National Guard shall be granted leaves of absence for the purpose of participating in reserve or National Guard training programs.

Employees shall be granted the minimum amount of leave needed to meet the minimum training requirements of their units. No employee will be required to use vacation time for military duty, but employees who do elect to schedule their vacations to coincide with military duty will receive their full regular vacation pay in addition to any pay from the military.

An employee who is a member of a United States Military Reserve and who may be called upon for reserve training shall be paid the difference between his or her regular rate of pay and the military pay, for a maximum of two (2) weeks per year.

**Leave for Active Reserve or National Guard Duty** Leaves of absence without pay shall be automatically granted for all full-time employees who are called, or volunteer, for military service, provided that application for re-employment is made within ninety (90) days of discharge.

## K. Jury Duty

An employee subpoenaed for jury duty shall be paid the difference between his regular rate of pay and the pay received for jury duty, provided they report back to work as soon as excused from jury duty.

Evidence of having served on a jury for the time claimed must be provided to your supervisor.

## L. Federal & State Family and Medical Leave

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library subscribes to the City of Sheboygan Falls Federal & State Family and Medical Leave policy for full-time employees. It is policy 408 in the City Employee Handbook and transcribed below.

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library complies with both the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act and the Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act.

The function of this policy is to provide full-time employees with a general description of their FMLA rights. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the applicable law, employees will be afforded all rights required by law.

The state and federal laws differ in a number of areas, and the Library will comply with both. When the reason for leave qualifies under both state and federal FMLA, it will be handled as follows:

- Leave taken which qualifies as family or medical leave under these laws will exhaust his/her entitlement under both laws concurrently to the extent the two laws overlap.
- The provision(s) most generous to the employee will apply.

### Eligibility for FMLA Leave

To be eligible for leave under this policy, an employee must have been employed by the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library for at least 12 months. In addition, in the 12 months immediately preceding the commencement of the leave, the employee must have worked at least:

- 1,000 hours to qualify under Wisconsin law; and
- 1,250 hours to qualify under federal law.

## Interaction Between State and Federal FMLA

An eligible employee is generally eligible for up to a total of 12 weeks of protected leave in any calendar year (January 1st through December 31st) for any combination of reasons. In the event that an employee qualifies only under Wisconsin law, which generally covers shorter periods of time than the 12 weeks provided by federal law, the situations will be discussed on a case-by-case basis with affected employees.

## Types and Amounts of Leave Covered Under Federal FMLA

An eligible employee may take up to a total of 12 weeks for the FMLA circumstances (A) through (E) below under this policy during a 12-month calendar year. An eligible employee may take up to an additional 14 weeks (not to exceed 26 weeks total) of family leave for the FMLA circumstance (F) below (military caregiver leave) during a single 12-month calendar year.

Under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, leave may be taken for the following reasons:

- A. Birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child.
- B. The placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child.
- C. To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition (described below).
- D. The serious health condition (described below) of the employee.

E. **Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave:** An eligible employee may take family leave while the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent (the covered military member) is on covered active duty or call to covered active-duty status for a qualifying exigency under federal law. This leave may be taken all at once or in smaller increments. It will be necessary to submit a completed certification for FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency. This type of leave would be counted toward the employee's 12-week maximum of FMLA in a 12-month period.

F. **Servicemember Family Leave:** An eligible employee may take family leave to care for a covered service member who is your spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty. You may take up to 26 weeks of family leave during a single 12-month period under this policy. Next of kin is defined as the closest blood relative of the injured or recovering servicemember. Servicemember family leave may be taken all at once or, when medically necessary, intermittently. The need for leave must be documented by the family member's treating healthcare provider through our medical certification process

## Types and Amounts of Leave Covered Under Wisconsin FMLA

Under the Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act, leave may be taken during any calendar year (January 1 through December 31) in the following amounts for the following reasons:

- A. Up to two (2) weeks due to your own serious health condition.
- B. Up to two (2) weeks to care for your spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law, domestic partner (registered or unregistered) and domestic partner's parent with a serious health condition. (An employee may be required to provide certification of domestic partner relationship.)
- C. Up to six (6) weeks for the birth of your child, or placement of a child with you for adoption. Leave for birth or adoption must commence within 16 weeks of

the birth or placement, and only six weeks of leave may be taken with respect to the birth or placement for adoption (even if more than one child is involved).

### Definition of Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition will generally occur when the employee or family member:

- Receives in-patient care at a hospital, hospice nursing home, or residential medical care facility.
- Suffers a period of incapacity of more than three full calendar days accompanied by continuing outpatient treatment/care by a health-care provider.
- Is pregnant, including severe morning sickness.
- Has a history of a chronic condition which may cause episodes of incapacity.
- Has a permanent or long-term condition which requires continuing treatment by a health care provider.
- Outpatient care requiring continuing treatment or supervision by a health care provider may be covered under Wisconsin FMLA only.

### Making a Request for Leave

Generally, an application for leave must be completed for all leave taken under this policy.

1. When the need for leave is foreseeable, you must make a request in writing at least 30 days in advance.
2. When this is not possible, notice should be provided as soon as the employee learns of the need for the leave.

3. In cases of emergency, verbal notice should be given as soon as possible and the request for leave should be completed as soon as practicable.
4. In the case of foreseeable leave, failure to provide adequate notice may result in the delay of the leave.
5. Calling in “sick” without providing more information will not be considered sufficient notice to trigger the library’s obligations under FMLA. The employee must provide sufficient information regarding the reason for absence for the library to know that protection may exist under this policy. Failure to provide this information as requested will result in the employee’s forfeiting all rights under the policy, and the absence may be counted against the employee for disciplinary purposes.

### Required Certifications

The library will require that an employee’s leave to care for the employee’s covered family member with a serious health condition, or due to the employee’s own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform one or more the essential functions of the employee’s position, be supported by a certification issued by the health care provider of the employee or the employee’s family member. We also require that an employee’s leave because of a qualifying exigency or to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness be supported by a certification.

The appropriate certification form should be obtained from the Secretary of the Library Board and should generally be returned within 5 days before the next Board meeting. Failure to provide a complete and sufficient certification may result in the delay or denial of the leave.

Periodic recertification to verify that a condition is ongoing may be required as provided by law.



The library has the right to ask for a second opinion if it has reason to question the validity of a medical certification. The employee may be required to provide a second certification from a health care provider selected and paid for by the library. If necessary to resolve a conflict between the original certification and the second opinion, a third opinion may be required. The library and the employee will mutually select the third doctor, and the library will pay for the opinion. The third opinion will be considered final.

While on leave, you will be required to report to the library periodically on your status and return to work.

### Use of Paid and Unpaid Leave

Both state and federal FMLA mandate that an employer provide unpaid leave to eligible employees. Under state law, you may elect to take leave on a paid basis to the extent you have earned paid leave. To the extent your leave is governed only by federal FMLA, an employee or employer may elect to substitute a paid benefit for which the employee is eligible in order for the employee to receive pay during the leave. When paid benefits are substituted for the otherwise unpaid time, the employee is using the benefits concurrently with FMLA leave, and those benefits will not be available to the employee later. When paid benefits are substituted, the employee may be required to satisfy procedural requirements of the library's paid leave policy.

### Intermittent Leave or a Reduced Work Schedule

FMLA leave may be taken "intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule" under certain circumstances. In all cases, the leave may not exceed the total of 12 work weeks over a 12-month period for federal FMLA or the applicable Wisconsin FMLA allowances defined earlier in this policy.

Intermittent and reduced schedule leave must be scheduled with minimal disruption to the employee's job. When planning medical treatment, employees should make a reasonable effort to schedule treatments outside of working hours whenever possible. Otherwise, employees are expected to consult with the library in order to work out a treatment schedule which best suits the needs of both the library and the employee, subject to the approval of the health care provider.

### Benefits while on Leave

While on leave, employees will be permitted to continue their group insurance but must continue to pay their portion of the premium. This will be taken by payroll deduction during any periods for which the employee is paid; for any periods of leave which are unpaid, payment arrangements must be made with the library.

### Return to Work

An employee taking a medical leave for his/her own serious health condition for three or more consecutive days may be required to provide a fitness for duty certificate before returning to work.

An employee who takes leave under this policy will be returned to the same job or an equivalent position upon completion of the leave without losing any accrued seniority. If an employee has exhausted FMLA leave and is still unable to return to work, it will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine what rights and protections may exist under other Library policies.

An employee has no greater rights upon a return from leave than the individual would have had if they had continued to work. An employee may be affected by a job change or layoff if the action would have occurred had the employee remained actively at work.

## M. Work Schedule Policy and Attendance Policy

### A. Schedules

Major changes in the director's schedule or other circumstances may not be made without approval of the library board. Requests for such shall be made in writing to the library board. Requests for changes in the work schedule of other staff or volunteers shall be made in writing to the library director.

### B. Attendance

1. The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library expects that every employee will be regular and punctual in attendance. This means being at the library, ready to work, at their starting time each day. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on the Library.

2. If you are unable to report for work because of illness or for any other reason, please call before your normal start time. Explain the reason for the absence and when you expect to return to work

3. Any unjustifiable absence from work for more than three (3) continuous workdays shall be construed as automatic termination from employment.

4. If you become ill at work or must leave the office for some other reason before the end of the workday, be sure to inform the Director or a co-worker of the situation.

5. Should undue tardiness or absenteeism become apparent, disciplinary action up to and including discharge may be required.

### N. Meetings, conventions, and workshops

The director, staff and trustees attending continuing education opportunities to aid the library shall be allowed expenses at the discretion of the Director (some places have the Board ok these) according to the amount appropriated in budget for such. The director, staff and trustees are encouraged to attend and participate in continuing education activities.

## O. Disciplinary Policy

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library subscribes to the Disciplinary Action Policy, 501 of the City of Sheboygan Falls. Below is a transcription of the policy.

Whenever people gather together to achieve goals, some rules of conduct are needed to help everyone work together efficiently, effectively, and harmoniously. By accepting employment with us, you have a responsibility to Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library and to your fellow employees to adhere to certain rules of behavior and conduct. The purpose of these rules is not to restrict your rights, but rather to be certain that you understand what conduct is expected and necessary. When each person is aware that he or she can fully depend upon fellow workers to follow the rules of conduct, our organization will be a better place to work for everyone.

The manual contains our standards of conduct. Each employee is responsible for knowing about and complying with these standards and for directing any questions or misunderstandings about them to an appropriate supervisor.

These standards do not establish an implied or written contract. Rather, their intent is to communicate reasonably to employees the library's expectations in decisions affecting employment, continued employment, and termination. These standards may change in the future to reflect changes in laws, work environment, operations, and other circumstances affecting this Library's operational needs.

Employees are free to terminate their employment with Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library at any time, with or without reason. Likewise, the Library has the right to terminate an employee, with or without reason, at the discretion of the library. The publication of these standards does not change the existing rights of the library to make all employment, retention and termination decisions so long as they do not conflict with any applicable employment law or regulation.

The following factors are not intended to be included in management's decisions in disciplinary or termination cases:

- Illegal discrimination as defined by law and national and state fair employment practices.
- Violations of public policy as defined by current trends in employment laws.

The library intends to enforce violations fairly and consistently. That means management will strive to treat all members equally when making decisions about the appropriate type of intervention to use in correcting a performance deficiency. Solutions include training, discipline, reassignment, demotion, or termination. Whatever the management action, though, its amount and degree must be based on a review of the member's performance deficiency on a case-by-case basis.

The following will help determine the nature and degree of management action that will be taken:

- a. The seriousness of the deficiency or offense.
- b. Management's expectation that the type and level of management action will facilitate or deter the conduct, work proficiencies or behaviors of others.
- c. The member's overall conduct, work productivity, time between other violations (if other offenses occurred) and behavior record.
- d. Management's expectation – based on the member's overt behavior – that the type and level of management action will improve the member's future performance. In other words, does the member respond positively to discipline?
- e. The member's length of service.

To ensure that the business of Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library is conducted properly and efficiently, each employee must conform to certain standards of attendance, conduct, work performance and other work rules and regulations. When a problem in these areas arises, your manager may coach and counsel you in mutually developing an effective solution. If, however, you fail to respond to coaching or counseling, or an incident occurs requiring formal discipline,

disciplinary action may be any of the following steps: Verbal Warning, Written Warning, Suspension With or Without Pay, Termination of Employment.

All of these actions may not be followed in some instances. The library reserves the right to exercise discretion in discipline. Prior warning is not a requirement for termination. The library will look at how severe the problem is and how often it has happened when deciding which step to take. There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed. In very serious situations, some types of employee problems may justify either a suspension or termination of employment without going through the progressive discipline steps.

In addition to those situations discussed elsewhere in this handbook, the Standards of Conduct described below give examples where discipline, up to and including, termination could result. This list is general in nature and is not intended to be all-inclusive.

#### O. Standards of Conduct

1. Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.
2. Falsification of timekeeping records.
3. Dishonesty; verbal or written falsification or misrepresentation of any work record or document.
4. Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
5. Possession, manufacture, distribution, sale, transfer, dispensation or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace.
6. Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
7. Possession of firearms, weapons or explosives on library property.
8. Immoral actions or intimidating others.
9. Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace.
10. Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage or abuse of library-owned or customer-owned property.
11. Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.

12. Spreading malicious gossip and/or rumors; engaging in behavior which creates discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another employee on the job; restricting work output or encouraging other to do the same.
13. Violation of safety or health rules; committing unsafe acts or endangering self or others.
14. Smoking in the workplace.
15. Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment.
16. Obscene or abusive language toward any person, employee or customer; indifference or rudeness towards a customer or fellow employee.
17. Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice.
18. Unauthorized use of telephones, or other library-owned equipment.
19. Using Company equipment for purposes other than business (e.g., playing games on computers or personal Internet usage).
20. Unauthorized disclosure of business “secrets” or confidential information.
21. Creating a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest with the duties and obligations of an employee’s position within the library.
22. Gambling on work premises.
23. Violation of personnel policies.
24. Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.
25. Excessive use of personal cell phones while on duty. (Incidental and occasional personal use is permitted, but this privilege should not be abused and must not affect the performance of employment related activities.)

These rules apply to any and all interactions with customers, fellow employees or anyone else associated with the workplace.

#### P. Resignation and Retirement Policy

A library employee wishing to resign or retire from employment must notify the director or the Library Board as soon as practicable. The library requests a

minimum notice of two weeks. For the Library director a notice of at least one month is preferred.

The employee must submit a formal, written resignation statement giving the exact date that employment is to be terminated. Between the time of notice and the time when employment ends a final performance appraisal will be conducted.

If the employee is entitled to benefits (such as earned, unused vacation) a lump sum payment can be made to the employee.

#### Q. Grievance Procedure

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library expects all employees to create an atmosphere free of discrimination and respect the rights of their co-workers.

In the event an employee experiences any job-related discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, amnesty, veteran-status, or believe they have been treated in an unlawful, discriminatory manner or have been unlawfully harassed, promptly report the incident to the Director. If an employee believes it inappropriate to discuss the matter with the Director, it should be directly reported to the President of the Library Board. Once made aware of your complaint, the library is committed to commence an immediate, thorough investigation of the allegations. Complaints will be kept confidential to the maximum extent as possible.

If, at the completion of an investigation, the library determines that an employee is guilty of discriminatory or harassing behavior, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the offending employee.

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library prohibits any form of retaliation against any employee for filing a bona fide complaint under this policy, or for assisting in the complaint investigation. However, if, after investigating any complaint of unlawful discrimination, it is determined that an employee intentionally provided false information regarding the complaint, disciplinary action may be taken against the one who gave the false information.



## R. Equal Opportunity Employment Policy

It is Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library policy to provide equal employment opportunity to all individuals. We are committed to a diverse workforce. We value all employees' talents and support an environment that is inclusive and respectful. We are strongly committed to this policy and believe in the concept and spirit of the law.

We are committed to assuring that:

- All recruiting, hiring, training, promotion, compensation, and other employment related programs are provided fairly to all persons on an equal opportunity basis;
- Employment decisions are based on the principles of equal opportunity. All personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, transfers, training, and participation in social and recreational programs are administered without regard to any characteristic protected by state, federal or local law; and employees and applicants will not be subjected to harassment, intimidation, threats, retaliation, coercion or discrimination because they have exercised any right protected by law.

We believe in and practice equal opportunity. The Director of the Library serves as our Equal Opportunity Coordinator and has overall responsibility for assuring compliance with this policy. All employees are responsible for supporting the concept of equal opportunity and diversity and assisting our Library in meeting its objectives.

## S. Drug-free Workplace Policy

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library subscribes to the City of Sheboygan Falls Drug-free Workplace Policy. It is policy 503 in the City Employee Handbook and transcribed below.

### Purpose and Goal

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library is committed to protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of all employees and other individuals in our workplace. We recognize that alcohol abuse and drug use pose a significant threat to our goals. We have established a drug-free workplace program that balances our respect for individuals with the need to maintain an alcohol and drug-free environment.

### Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

This organization encourages employees to voluntarily seek help with drug and alcohol problems. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to employees and their families to provide confidential help with a wide variety of personal problems, issues, and concerns, including alcohol or drug dependence. Please see Section 307 for additional information.

### Covered Workers

Any individual who conducts business for the organization, is applying for a position or is conducting business on the organization's property is covered by our drug-free workplace policy. Our policy includes, but is not limited to executive management, managers, supervisors, full-time employees, part-time employees, off-site employees, contractors, and applicants.

### Applicability

Our drug-free workplace policy is intended to apply whenever anyone is representing or conducting business for the organization. Therefore, this policy applies during all working hours and whenever conducting business or representing the library.

## Prohibited Behavior

It is a violation of our drug-free workplace policy to use, possess, sell, trade, transport, manufacture, dispense, distribute and/or offer for sale alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia or intoxicants.

It is also a violation of our drug-free workplace policy to be under the influence of alcohol or to have a detectable amount of an illegal or controlled substance in the blood or urine. (“Controlled substance” means a drug or other substance as defined in applicable federal laws on drug abuse prevention.)

Prescription and over-the-counter drugs are not prohibited when taken in standard dosage and/or according to a physician's prescription. Any employee taking prescribed or over-the-counter medications will be responsible for consulting the prescribing physician and/or pharmacist to ascertain whether the medication may interfere with safe performance of his/her job. If the use of a medication could compromise the safety of the employee, fellow employees, or the public, it is the employee's responsibility to use appropriate personnel procedures (e.g., call in sick, use leave, request change of duty, notify supervisor) to avoid unsafe workplace practices.

The illegal or unauthorized use of prescription drugs is prohibited. It is a violation of our drug-free workplace policy to intentionally misuse and/or abuse prescription medications. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken if job performance deteriorates and/or other accidents occur.

## Drug Testing

To ensure the accuracy and fairness of our testing program, all testing of employees will be conducted according to Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Services Administration (SAMHSA) guidelines where applicable and will include a screening test; a confirmation test; the opportunity for a split sample; review by a Medical Review Officer, including the opportunity for employees who test positive to provide a legitimate medical explanation, such as a physician's prescription, for the positive result; and a documented chain of custody.

Each employee, as a condition of employment, will be required to participate in pre-employment, reasonable suspicion testing upon selection or request of the Library Board. Employees testing positive for drugs and/or alcohol may also be subject to return-to-duty and follow-up testing. Drug and alcohol testing will be carried out in compliance with any applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

### Consequences

One of the goals of our drug-free workplace program is to encourage employees to voluntarily seek help with alcohol and/or drug problems. If, however, an individual violates the policy, the consequences are serious and may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

An employee who registers an alcohol concentration of 0.04 on any test administered by or for Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library, or who tests positive for prohibited substances, or who engages in other alcohol misuse or substance will be immediately removed from duty, suspended without pay for a period of 30 days, referred to a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) for assessment and recommendations, required to successfully complete recommended rehabilitation including continuing care, required to pass a return-to-duty test and sign a return-to-work agreement, subject to ongoing, unannounced, follow-up testing for a period of five years. The employee will be terminated immediately if he/she tests positive a second time, fails to successfully complete the rehabilitation program, or violates the return-to-work agreement. Nothing in this policy prohibits the employee from being disciplined or discharged for other violations and/or performance problems.

An employee will be subject to the same consequences of a positive test if he/she refuses the screening or the test, adulterates or dilutes the specimen, substitutes the specimen with that from another person or sends an imposter, will not sign the required forms or refuses to cooperate in the testing process in such a way that prevents completion of the test.

### Return-to-Work Agreements

Following a violation of the drug-free workplace policy, an employee may be offered an opportunity to participate in rehabilitation. In such cases, the employee must sign and abide by the terms set forth in a Return-to-Work Agreement as a condition of continued employment.

### Assistance

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library recognizes that alcohol and drug abuse and addiction are treatable illnesses. We also realize that early intervention and support improve the success of rehabilitation. To support our employees, our drug-free workplace policy:

- Encourages employees to seek help if they are concerned that they or their family members may have a drug and/or alcohol problem.
- Encourages employees to utilize the services of qualified professionals in the community to assess the seriousness of suspected drug or alcohol problems and identify appropriate sources of help.
- Offers all employees and their family members assistance with alcohol and drug problems through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Allows the use of accrued paid leave while seeking treatment for alcohol and other drug problems.

Treatment for alcoholism and/or other drug use disorders may be covered by the employee benefit plan. However, the ultimate financial responsibility for recommended treatment belongs to the employee.

### Confidentiality

All information received by the organization through the drug-free workplace program is confidential communication. Access to this information is limited to those who have a legitimate need to know in compliance with relevant laws and management policies.

### Shared Responsibility

A safe and productive drug-free workplace is achieved through cooperation and shared responsibility. Both employees and management have important roles to play.

All employees are required to not report to work or be subject to duty while their ability to perform job duties is impaired due to on- or off-duty use of alcohol or other drugs.

In addition, employees are encouraged to:

- Be concerned about working in a safe environment.
- Support fellow workers in seeking help.
- Use the Employee Assistance Program.
- Report dangerous behavior to their supervisor.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to:

- Inform employees of the drug-free workplace policy.

- Observe employee performance.
- Investigate reports of dangerous practices.
- Document negative changes and problems in performance.
- Counsel employees as to expected performance improvement.
- Refer employees to the Employee Assistance Program.
- Clearly state consequences of policy violations.

## Communication

Communicating our drug-free workplace policy to both supervisors and employees is critical to our success. To ensure all employees are aware of their role in supporting our drug-free workplace program. All employees will receive a written copy of the policy.

## T. Harassment Policy

It is the policy of the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library to provide a work environment that is free from harassment. Therefore, we will not tolerate harassment based on age, race, gender, color, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, covered veteran status, sexual orientation, status with respect to public assistance, and other characteristics protected under state, federal, or local law. Such conduct is prohibited in any form at the workplace, at work-related functions, or outside of work if it affects the workplace. This policy applies to all employees, clients, customers, guests, vendors, and persons doing business with the library.

Sexual harassment, one type of prohibited harassment, warrants special mention. Sexual harassment has been defined according to our guidelines as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Examples of conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual flirtation, advances, or propositions;
- Verbal comments related to an individual's age, race, gender, color, religion, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation;
- Explicit or degrading verbal comments about another individual or his/her appearance;
- The display of sexually suggestive pictures or objects in any workplace location including transmission or display via computer;
- Any sexually offensive or abusive physical conduct;
- The taking of or the refusal to take any personnel action based on an employee's submission to or rejection of sexual overtures; and
- Displaying cartoons or telling jokes which relate to an individual's age, race, gender, color, religion, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.

If you believe that you are being subjected to workplace harassment, you should:



1. Tell the harasser that his or her actions are not welcome, and they must stop, if you feel comfortable enough to do so.
2. Report the incident immediately to your supervisor/manager, the Director of the Library, or the President of the Library Board.
3. Report any additional incidents or retaliation that may occur to one of the above resources.

Any reported incident will be investigated immediately and thoroughly. Complaints and actions taken to resolve complaints will be handled as confidentially as possible, given the library's obligation to investigate and act upon reports of such harassment. Appropriate actions will be taken by the library to stop and remedy any and all such conduct, including interim measures during a period of investigation.

Retaliation of any kind or discriminating against an employee who reports a suspected incident of harassment or who cooperates in an investigation is prohibited. An employee who violates this policy or retaliates against an employee in any way will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

## VIII. MATERIALS SELECTION/COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### A. Objectives

The purpose of the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library is to provide all individuals in the community with carefully selected books and other materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, research, pleasure, and the creative use of leisure time.

Because of the volume of publishing, as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a selection policy with which to meet community interests and needs.

The materials selection/collection development policy is used by the library staff in the selection of materials and also serves to acquaint the general public with the principles of selection.

The Library Bill of Rights and The Freedom to Read Statement have been endorsed by the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library Board of Trustees and are integral parts of the policy.

The materials selection/collection development policy, like all other policies, will be reviewed and/or revised as the need arises.

### B. Responsibility for Selection

The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the library director who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library Board of Trustees. This responsibility may be shared with other members of the library staff; however, because the director must be available to answer to the library board and the general public for actual selections made, the director has the authority to reject or select any item contrary to the recommendations of the staff.

## C. Criteria for Selection

1. The main points considered in the selection of materials are:

- a. individual merit of each item
- b. popular appeal/demand
- c. suitability of material for the clientele
- d. existing library holdings
- e. budget

2. Reviews are a major source of information about new materials. The primary sources of reviews are Library Journal, Booklist, Publisher's Weekly and New York Time Book Review. Secondary sources of review will be considered as needed.

3. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting a title which is in demand. Consideration is, therefore, given to requests from library patrons and books discussed on public media. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.

## D. Interlibrary Loan

Because of limited budget and space, the library cannot provide all materials that are requested. Therefore, interlibrary loan is used to obtain from other libraries those materials that are beyond the scope of this library's collection.

In return for utilizing interlibrary loan to satisfy the needs of our patrons, the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library agrees to lend its materials to other libraries through the same interlibrary loan network, and to make an effort to have its current holdings listed in a tool that is accessible by other libraries throughout the state.

## E. Gifts and Donations

The library accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be added to the collection only if appropriate and needed. If they are not needed because of duplication, condition, or dated information the director can dispose of them as he/she sees fit. The same criteria of selection which are applied to purchased materials are applied to gifts. Memorial gifts of books or money are also accepted with suitable bookplates placed in the book.

Specific memorial books can be ordered for the library on request of a patron if the request meets the criteria established by the Board. It is desirable for gifts of or for specific titles to be offered after consultation with the library director. Book selection will be made by the director if no specific book is requested. The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library encourages and appreciates gifts and donations.

By law, the library is not allowed to appraise the value of donated materials, though it can provide an acknowledgment of receipt of the items if requested by the donor.

## F. Weeding

An up-to-date, attractive, and useful collection is maintained through a continual withdrawal and replacement process. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent upon current demand, usefulness, more recent acquisitions, and availability of newer editions. The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library relies on “the CREW Method” by A.L.A. for most of its weeding criteria. This ongoing process of weeding is the responsibility of the library director and is authorized by the Board of Trustees. Withdrawn materials will be handled in a similar manner and under the same authority as donated materials.

## G. Potential Problems or Challenges

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of

materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy.

Responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be sequestered except to protect it from damage or theft.

## H. Challenged Materials

Although materials are carefully selected, differences of opinion regarding suitable materials do occur. Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection may complete a "Statement of Concern About Library Resources" form which is available in the library. The inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library Board of Trustees.

## IX. CIRCULATION POLICY

### A. Registration

All borrowers must be registered and must have a valid local or system patron card to borrow library materials.

Patrons must fill out an application form to register for a new library card. The following statement will be printed on the registration form for the patron's information and acceptance:

I apply for the right to use the library and agree to obey all rules, take care of all materials I use, pay all charges, and give prompt notice of a lost card or materials or of any changes of this information. I understand that the library is not responsible for damage to personal property that occurs when using library materials. I agree that this card is the property of the library and may be revoked if warranted.

Signature of applicant or guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Identification is required. A driver's license or student ID is preferred, however, any other official ID or recent nonpersonal piece of mail may be acceptable.

Applicants under 13 years of age must have a parent or guardian give their consent on the application form before a new card can be issued. This parental signature is not required for children who are renewing cards.

Materials cannot be checked out until a library card is issued.

All library cards expire after 3 years. In order to renew a library card, patrons must produce identification and must clear all outstanding fines and bills.

#### B. Lost or forgotten cards

If a patron loses his/her library card, he should notify the library as soon as possible and request a replacement.

All patrons, adult and juvenile, are expected to bring their library cards with them if they intend to check out items. An individual who repeatedly ignores this expectation may be denied the privilege of checking out materials until they present their card at the library.

#### C. Loan periods

1. 4 weeks for books which includes books on CD.
2. Generally, reference books do not circulate. Upon request, some reference materials may be checked out overnight.
3. Interlibrary loans are due the date indicated by the lending library.
4. Books may be renewed once if there is not a waiting list for the title.
5. Current issues of periodicals do not circulate.
6. Non-current periodicals may be checked out for two weeks.
7. Two weeks for compact discs and DVDs.

The director may establish the loan period for special collections, materials which are temporarily in great demand, such as for student projects, or materials added to the collection which are in a new format, e.g., Blu-ray discs.

There is a limit of 100 items a patron can have out at one time.

#### D. Holds

Holds may be placed by patrons online, in person or over the phone. Patrons will be notified when the materials are available. There is no charge to the patron for placing a hold or for interlibrary loan services.

#### E. Fines and charges

There are no fines for overdue materials. A first notice is sent after the material is due. If the material is not returned within a designated period, a bill will be sent for the material with the cost of replacement of the material and a service charge for processing, cataloging and postage. Patrons who have accrued \$100 in overdues shall be denied borrowing privileges until those overdue materials are returned or paid for if lost and/or damaged. The balance owed must be reconciled to zero.

#### F. Damaged materials

If materials are damaged so as to be judged by the library as being unsuitable for the collection, the patron must pay the replacement cost. A notice of these charges will be sent to the borrower; a sample of the notice follows:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ At the time a library patron borrows materials from the public library collection, the patron assumes the responsibility for the care and timely return of the materials. Recently materials checked out on your library card were returned to the library damaged beyond the point of being usable in the Library's collection. The titles and costs of these materials are listed below:

----- \$-----

Your assistance in clearing this matter promptly will be appreciated and will be necessary in order to retain your borrowing privileges.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response to this matter.

Sincerely,

Patrons may choose to keep materials that were damaged and paid for.

## G. Confidentiality

As specified in Wisconsin Statutes 43.30, "records of any library which is in whole or in part supported by public funds, including the records of a public library system, indicating the identity of any individual who borrows or uses the library's documents or other materials, resources or services may not be disclosed except by court order or to persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library or library system, to persons authorized by the individual to inspect such records, or to libraries authorized under subs. (2) and (3)."

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library adheres strictly to all sections of this Statute regarding the protection of the confidentiality of its users.

## X. REFERENCE SERVICE POLICY

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library:

- will provide information in the form of short answers to specific questions and guidance in locating material for patrons who appear in person, call on the telephone, or request information through correspondence, including e-mail;
- will assist patrons in the use of the library and teach basic research methodology, when appropriate (this includes providing help in developing a research strategy and advice on whether a trip to the library would be worthwhile for individuals who telephone or e-mail);
- will provide bibliographic verification of items both in the library and not owned by the library and will assist patrons in obtaining materials through MonarchCat or interlibrary loan, when appropriate;
- may refer library users to other agencies and libraries in pursuit of needed information;
- may use not only the library's resources in printed form, but consult appropriate digital resources as well as the regional resource library and other agencies in pursuit of "ready reference" information.



## XI. PROGRAMMING POLICY

A "program" is a planned activity or interaction between the library staff and the program participants which is sponsored or co-sponsored by the library for the purpose of promoting library materials, facilities, or services, as well as offering the community an informational, educational, entertaining, or cultural experience.

- Programming includes such activities as storytimes, films and activities on no-school days, summer library program for children, speakers for young adults, and book or author discussion groups for adults.
- The board, in conjunction with the library director, will establish a budget and goals for programming to facilitate the effective implementation of this service.
- Programs shall not include activities whose purpose is to sell, advertise, or promote products or services, except for those products or services provided by the library or approved by the library director or library board.

## XII. PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY

A. Public relations goals of the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library are:

- to promote a good understanding of the library's objectives and services among governing officials, civic leaders, and the general public;
- to promote active participation in the varied services offered by the library to people of all ages.

B. The Board recognizes that public relations involves every person who has connection with the Library. The Board urges its own members and every staff member to realize that he or she represents the library in every public contact. Good service supports good public relations.

C. The director will be expected to make presentations and to participate in community activities to promote library services. A reasonable amount of library time will be allowed for preparation and speaking. Materials to be used by press, radio, or television will be approved by the director.

D. The board will establish a publications budget to cover costs related to printing, publication, supplies, and miscellaneous needs related to the public relations effort.

### XIII. EQUIPMENT USE POLICY

- Computers are available to patrons on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no charge for use of the computer; however, in order to make the service available to as many patrons as possible, a time limit for usage has been imposed. That time limit is 30 minutes. Library staff is available for general assistance in using the computer. However, staff is not expected to train patrons in the use of application programs. Tutorial manuals will be provided when available.
- A printer is available. A photocopy machine is available to patrons who wish to copy materials at the rate of \$.15 per page.
- Printer and copy machine users are advised that there are restrictions on copyrighted materials. Any violation of copyright is the responsibility of user.

### XIV. INTERNET USE POLICY

The Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library is providing access to the Internet as a means to enhance the information and learning opportunities for the citizens of the library's service area. The Board of Trustees has established the Internet use policy to ensure appropriate and effective use of this resource.

Access to the Internet is available to all patrons; however, this service may be restricted at any time for use not consistent with the guidelines. Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of the library's Internet service; prior to being granted access to the Internet, anyone under 18 years of age, along with a parent or guardian, must sign the Internet Use Agreement. All users must sign the log-in chart prior to beginning their session.

Expectations:

Users should be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources can be a violation of local, state, and federal laws and can lead to prosecution. The user will be held responsible for his/her actions using the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the policies below which include generally accepted

rules of network etiquette. Unacceptable uses of the service will result in the suspension or revocation of Internet use privileges.

#### Warnings:

The Internet is a decentralized, unmoderated global network; the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library has no control over the content found there. The library will not censor access to material nor protect users from offensive information, and it is not responsible for the availability and accuracy of information found on the Internet.

The library cannot assure that data or files downloaded by users are virus-free. The library is not responsible for damages to equipment or data on a user's personal computer from the use of data downloaded from the library's Internet service.

The use of the Internet and e-mail is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the proper authorities.

#### Guidelines:

- Users may use the Internet for research and the acquisition of information to address their educational, vocational, cultural, and recreational needs
- Users may use the Internet for the receipt and transmission of electronic mail (e-mail) as long as they use a free e-mail service which will establish and maintain an account for them; the library is unable to manage e-mail accounts for any organizations or individuals
- Internet use is offered in thirty (30) minute sessions on a first-come, first-served basis; each user is allowed one session. If there is no patron waiting for the service at the end of a session, the user can have another session, but once having had the service for 30 minutes the user must abandon use of the Internet if another patron requests use of the service. Users completing a session must wait a full session before reentering the cue.
- Users will respect and uphold copyright laws and all other applicable laws and regulations; they will not use it for illegal purposes
- Users will respect the rights and privacy of others by not accessing private files

- Users agree not to incur any costs for the library through their use of the Internet service
- Users shall not create and/or distribute computer viruses over the Internet
- Users shall not deliberately or willfully cause damage to computer equipment, programs, or parameters
- Users will not display graphics which may reasonably be construed as offensive to others.

## XV. MEETING ROOM POLICY

- The room is available to all individuals, organizations, or groups located within the library service area for non-profit, charitable, educational, or cultural purposes. Exceptions may be made by the Library Director or Library Board if it is determined that extenuating circumstances are involved.
- The fact that a group is permitted to meet at the library does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs by the library staff or Board.
- The room may be reserved no more than ninety days in advance.
- It is understood that library or City of Sheboygan Falls programming will have first priority in room use.
- There will be no charge for use of the meeting room.
- No admission may be charged by the group.
- Refreshments may be served and shall be provided by the group. No smoking is allowed.
- The people using the room shall leave it in neat, clean, orderly condition; if not, the group/individual will be given notice that continued offense will result in denied access to the meeting room.
- The library is not responsible for any equipment, supplies, materials, clothing, or other items brought to the library by any group or individual attending a meeting.

- The Library Board and staff do not assume any liability for groups or individuals attending a meeting in the library.
- All programs, meetings, or use of the room must be open to all members of the public.

## XVI. DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITS POLICY

- As an educational and cultural institution, the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library welcomes exhibits and displays of interest, information, and enlightenment to the community. Displays of handiwork, historical material, nature study, or any other material deemed of general interest may be exhibited. The director shall accept or reject material offered for display based on its suitability and availability.
- The library assumes no responsibility for the preservation or protection, and no liability for possible damage or theft of any item displayed or exhibited. All items placed in the library are there at the owner's risk.
- Areas available to the public for displays and exhibits are the two glass exhibit cases and the gallery areas in the general library. A release must be signed by the exhibitor before any artifact can be placed in the library.

## XVII. PUBLIC NOTICE BULLETIN BOARD POLICY

- Bulletin board materials may be submitted for posting by nonprofit organizations for civic, educational, or cultural purposes. Such organizations may submit literature publicizing a specific event. Limited space generally allows only short-term notices. The director or designee must approve all postings and may prohibit postings which do not meet library standards. Library staff will place and remove postings promptly.
- Each item posted must be dated and signed. A request for return of items, along with name and telephone number of person to be contacted, should be printed on the back of each article. Unless such arrangements are specified, items must be picked up the day following the date of the publicized event if the owners want them returned. Otherwise, the library will not be responsible for returning materials.

## XVIII. DISASTERS POLICY

- Fire
  - Do not panic, but do not under-estimate the potential danger to customers or staff represented by a fire. At the first indication of smoke or flame, investigate the situation to determine location and extent of the fire. If the fire can obviously be contained and extinguished quickly and safely by staff, proceed to do so. However, if there is any doubt about whether the fire can be controlled, immediately call 911 or the fire department and then clear the building.
  - The time to think about fires is before they happen. Familiarize yourself with the type, location, and application of the fire extinguisher(s) in the building. Orient all staff and volunteers to this information. If you share a building with another agency and it occasionally initiates fire drills, library staff should respect those training exercises and respond as they would in the case of a real fire.
- Health emergencies
  - Staff members should exercise caution when administering first aid of even a minor nature because of the safety of the injured individual and the potential liability of the staff member. Without specialized training it is not advisable for staff to undertake more than keeping the sick or injured patron comfortable and protected from needless disturbance until medical help can be obtained. Since each case is unique, staff members should use their own judgment to do what is prudent and reasonable.
  - The Rescue Squad/Police (911 if available) should be called immediately in the event of any serious problem. Injured individuals should be consulted regarding rescue calls.
- No medication, including aspirin, should ever be dispensed to the public.
- Bomb threats
  - Keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message and try to write down every word spoken by the person.
  - If the caller does not indicate the location of the bomb or the time of possible detonation, **ASK FOR THIS INFORMATION.**

- Pay particular attention to peculiar background noises such as motors running, background music and any other sounds which may indicate where the location from which the call is originating.
- Listen closely to the voice (male, female), voice quality (calm, excited), accents and speech impediments.
- Immediately after the caller hangs up, call the police. Clear the building. The police will handle the actual bomb search.
- Snowstorms and extreme cold
- The library will follow the recommendation and actions of the city or school between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Closing during other days and hours will be at the discretion of the Library Director. Delayed opening or closing later in the day are options that can be used if needed.

## XIX. INVESTMENT POLICY

### A. Policy Statement and Scope

It is the policy of the library to invest funds in a manner that will maximize the security of the principal while satisfying cash flow demands using approved methods that will provide the highest possible return. All investments will conform to applicable laws and regulations of the State of Wisconsin.

### B. Investment Objective

Conservation of the principal will be the primary goal of any investment. Income generation and principal growth are secondary investment goals.

### C. Authorized and Suitable Investments\*

The following investments are deemed to be suitable for inclusion in the library's investment program: time deposits; government securities; the State Investment Fund (SIF); certain mutual funds or other highly-rated, investment-grade securities.

### D. Prohibited Investments

The fiscal officer may not purchase securities on margin or open a securities margin account for the investment of Library funds. Investment in high yield "junk bonds" or individual stocks is not appropriate.

#### E. Maturity of investments

No investment shall have a maturity date of more than five years from its date of purchase by the library, unless an investment is matched to a specific obligation of the library.

#### F. Diversification of Investments

The library shall diversify its investments to the best of its ability based on the type of funds invested and the cash flow needs of those funds. Diversification can be achieved by the type of investment, number of institutions, and length of maturity.

#### G. Deposit Requirements

Whenever feasible, the Library's Board of Trustees shall choose to invest with any public depositories designated as such annually by the City of Sheboygan Falls Common Council.

#### H. Delegation of Authority

Management responsibility for the library's investment program is delegated to the Treasurer who is considered the library's chief financial officer. In the absence of the Treasurer, the Board President, and/or Library Director may be authorized by the Treasurer to act in his/her stead.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the implementation of the investment program and the establishment of investment procedures consistent with this policy. No person may engage in an investment transaction except as provided under the terms of this policy and the procedures established by the Treasurer .

#### I. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Those involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with the proper execution and management of the library investment program, or that could impair their ability to make impartial decisions .

#### J. Liability

When investments are made in accordance with this policy, no Library Trustee with investment authority shall be held liable for a loss resulting from default or insolvency of a depository of Library funds.



#### K. Investment Advisors, Qualified Brokers and Dealers and Financial Institutions

All brokers, dealers and other financial institutions that transact investment business with the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library or give advice regarding its investments, must receive, read and comprehend the policy and agree to comply with it before providing any services or transacting any business with the library. This is to be evidenced by a signed statement of receipt of the policy by those identified above .

#### L. Reporting

A summary of the status of the library's current investments shall be provided in the Treasurer's annual report which clearly provides an understanding of how the library's fiscal status related to the current budget by providing information on our revenue, expense and overall fiscal status. The Library's Board of Trustees will be informed of unusual financial activity when it becomes a concern.

\*As permitted by Wis. Stat. sec. 66.0603

#### References:

Wisconsin Trustee Essentials, Ch. 9 & 10

Wisconsin Statutes (see 43.58; 66.0603; 112.11)

League of Wisconsin Municipalities, Investment FAQ 1, 2

## XX. REVISION OF LIBRARY POLICIES

The preceding statements of Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library's policies shall be subject to review and needed revision at least every five years by the Library Board. Individual policies will be reviewed or added as needed.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

XXI. Appendices

**Form: Statement of Concern about Library Resources**

Sheboygan Falls Public Library

STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT LIBRARY RESOURCES

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Resource on which you are commenting:

\_\_\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_\_\_ Audio-visual Resource

\_\_\_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_\_\_ Content of Library Program

\_\_\_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Publisher or Producer/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What brought this resource to your attention?
2. To what do you object? Please be as specific as possible.
3. Have you read or listened or viewed the entire content? If not, what parts?
4. What do you feel the effect of the material might be?
5. For what age group would you recommend this material?
6. In its place, what material of equal or better quality would you recommend?
7. What do you want the library to do with this material?
8. Additional comments:

**Form: Internet Use Agreement**

Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library

**INTERNET USE AGREEMENT**

I understand and will abide by the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library's Internet Use Policy. I further understand that any violation of the regulations is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges will be revoked and appropriate legal action may be taken.

User's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

User's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent or guardian of this individual, I accept full responsibility for my child's use of the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library's Internet service and agree to oversee my child's use of this service. I have read the attached Internet Use Policy, and I understand that the library's access to the Internet is intended and designed for educational and informational purposes. I will not hold the library responsible for materials or information acquired by my child through the use of the library's Internet service. I hereby give permission for my child to use the library's network for Internet access and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent's/Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Form: Display and Exhibit Release**

Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library

I, the undersigned, hereby lend the following works of art or other material to the Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library for exhibit purposes only. In consideration of the privilege of exhibiting them in the Library, I hereby release said Library from responsibility for loss, damage, or destruction while they are in the possession of the library.

Exhibition to be held in the \_\_\_\_\_

During \_\_\_\_\_

Description of materials loaned \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Form: Educational Institution Pass Policy

### Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library

The library is pleased to offer passes to institutions from the surrounding area to help meet the educational, recreational, and informational needs of our patrons. To ensure fair use by all patrons the following guidelines apply:

- Borrower must be at least 18 years of age with a valid Monarch Library System card in good standing.
- Passes must be checked out from and returned to the circulation desk staff member at Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library during normal operating hours. Passes may not be placed in the book drop. If you return a pass in the book drop, you will be assessed a \$5 fee.
- A household may borrow only one pass at a time.
- No holds or reservations are allowed on the passes.
- Passes circulate for five (5) days and are not renewable. A \$5 fee will be assessed for each day the pass is late.
- Any borrower who loses a pass will be charged the full replacement cost of the pass.
- Any pass not returned within 1 week of its due date will be considered stolen. The normal overdue policy will not apply, and the case will be forwarded to the Police Department.
- The library reserves the right to limit the use of passes for individuals or families in the case of abuse as determined by the Director.
- The patron will place on file at the library a signed copy of the library's Educational Institution Pass Policy.
- The patron hereby releases, absolves, and agrees to hold harmless the organizers, supervisors, city employees and participants from any claims arising out of injury to them or other guests admitted with this pass.

Patron Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Barcode No. \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Form: Wi-Fi Hotspot/Access Point Policy

### Sheboygan Falls Memorial Library

The library is pleased to offer this portable Wi-Fi hotspot/access point to help meet the educational, recreational, and informational needs of our patrons. To ensure fair use by all patrons the following guidelines apply:

- 1 device per patron, 7-day checkout. No renewals.
- 1 week between checkouts. No reservations.
- Access points must be checked out from, and returned to, circulation desk.
- Do not place Wi-Fi device in the book drops.
- Replacement cost is **\$100.00**, billed 1 day after device is due.
- Device will be disabled at due date.
- Staff will verify all materials are present at check-in or issue a bill for replacement cost.

The patron hereby agrees to this policy and releases, absolves, and agrees to hold harmless the library from any legal or technical issues relating to their personal use of this access point.

Patron Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Barcode No. \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **The Library Bill of Rights**

As adopted by the American Library Association in 1939, revised in 1948, and amended in 1961, 1967, and 1980, reads:

I. 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.

II. 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.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. 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.



## **The Freedom to Read Statement**

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 or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, 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 counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. 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.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. 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 or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. 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 the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice

from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that 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 toward 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 people 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 that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that 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 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 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 those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

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 people can flourish that 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 expression 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 values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that 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 the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its 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 others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. 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; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.

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 individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish 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. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

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, they 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 the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's 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 the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties and deserves of all Americans 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 the written word. We do so because we believe that it is 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.

---

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.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.