

Public libraries preserve and enhance access to a broader range of ideas than those held by any one citizen, publisher, organization, or government. There can be diverse opinions by individuals or groups as to what is appropriate for the library collection. Library collections are not limited to only those ideas and information one person or group believes to be true, good, and proper.

The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. While individuals may reject materials for themselves, they cannot exercise censorship or restrict access to materials for others. The Library does not remove materials because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

The collection is designed to serve the whole community. Parents/legal guardians who wish to limit or restrict the use of resources by their own minor children should personally oversee their selections and activities. The Library does not stand in the place of the parent/legal guardian (in loco parentis).

The right of individuals to question materials in the library collection is recognized. The Library welcomes comments and suggestions regarding the continued appropriateness of materials in the collection, especially concerning outdated materials, as well as, the appropriateness of services offered. Comments from community members about individual items, programs, or displays frequently provide librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the Library. The Library will give consideration to each patron's opinion.

Requests to add or remove materials or alter or eliminate programs or displays shall be considered within the context of these Marion County Public Library policies and the basic tenets of intellectual freedom. Staff is available to discuss concerns and identify alternate materials or services that may be available.

If a patron's concern is not satisfied through discussion with staff, a formal, written Statement of Concern may be submitted to the Library Director. The form must be completed in full. The patron submitting the request must be a resident of Marion County. An item will only be evaluated for reconsideration once in a twenty-four month period.

A Statement of Concern shall receive due process under this policy and procedures established to implement this policy. The Library Director shall make a decision on a Statement of Concern. Such decision will be final unless appealed within 30 days of the date of such decision by any patron who is a resident of Marion County. In the event of such appeal, the Board of County Commissioners will make a final decision. At the option of the Board of County Commissioners, a special master or hearing officer may be asked for a recommendation prior to the final decision. Any further appeal would then be a Circuit Court procedure.

Any item which is involved in the formal Statement of Concern process or which is subject to court consideration shall remain in use or circulation pending final action. If a court having jurisdiction over the Library decides that any material in the collection is not constitutionally protected, such material will be removed immediately.

The Marion County Administration and Library Administration will establish guidelines, regulations and procedures for the implementation of this policy including, but not limited to, library staff involvement, timelines, and a Statement of Concern form.