



# **BEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY**

## **Library Program Policy**

### **Statement of Purpose**

The mission of the Bedford Public Library is to provide access to informational, educational, cultural and recreational library materials and services in a variety of formats and technologies; to be responsive to the public library needs of the community; and to uphold the public's freedom of access to information. The Library's mission also includes developing and maintaining the library as the cultural and meeting center of Bedford.

To fulfill that mission, programs are selected by library staff based on their relevance to community needs and interests, popular appeal, and suitability for the age group for whom the program is intended. The following criteria are used in making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources:

- Relation to library mission, vision, collections and resources
- Community needs and interests
- Presenter background/qualifications in content area
- Presentation quality
- Appropriateness of content for intended audience
- Availability of program space
- Budget and staffing considerations

### **Disclaimer**

The Library's philosophy of open access to information and ideas extends to Library programming, and the Library does not discriminate through its programming. Program topics, speakers and resources are not excluded from programs because of possible controversy.

Library sponsorship or co-sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by participants or speakers or the policies or beliefs of organizations affiliated with the speaker.

Participation in library programs implies acceptance of the Library's Rules of Behavior and Children's Safety policies.

### **Program Planning**

Types of Library programs include, but are not limited to:

- Book discussions moderated by library staff or NH Humanities presenters
- Story times for children presented by library staff, or on occasion, invited local officials
- Author visits
- Artistic and musical performances
- Film screenings
- Demonstrations and workshops
- Instructional classes
- Lectures and presentations
- Community forums or panel discussions
- Off-site visits to local schools, long term care communities, and other locations in Bedford
- Virtual programs

The Library may partner or co-sponsor programs with other agencies, organizations, and businesses provided the programs are compatible with the Library's mission. Library staff must be involved in the planning of co-sponsored program content.

Professional performers and presenters who offer specialized or unique expertise may be hired for Library programs.

Potential presenters who are interested in speaking or performing at the Bedford Public Library must complete a [Bedford Public Library Speaker Proposal](#) form. Submitting a form does not guarantee that the Library will schedule and sponsor the speaker's program. Submissions are reviewed by a programming committee that uses the criteria in this policy when selecting programs.

No Library programs that are purely commercial or are for the purpose of soliciting business are permitted.

### **Fees and Selling Items**

Events sponsored by the Library may on occasion involve a fee for materials and sale of literature.

### **Program Attendance and Age Limits**

Program attendance may be capped due to room capacity limits or to ensure the success of a program, especially for workshops. Attendance will be determined on a first come, first served basis with advanced registrations. Some adult and teen programs, and all children's programs, will be limited to Bedford Public Library cardholders.

The Library building cannot accommodate events that are expected to exceed our room capacity. The maximum capacity of the largest room, the McAllaster Room, is 75.

Some programs may be developed for a particular audience (i.e., attendees should be within the appropriate age group such as children or teens, or may require an accompanying adult). The Library reserves the right to set age limits or recommendations for programs. Programs designed for special audiences will be publicized as such.

Responsibility for what any individual reads, listens to, or views must lie with the individual. The Library may suggest certain age guidelines depending on the nature of a program, however, the Library does not act *in loco parentis* in selecting programs and restricting access. Responsibility for minors attending programs rests with parents and guardians.

### **Accessibility**

Programs taking place within the library building are accessible. Outdoor programs will be made as accessible as possible.

### **Photography**

The Library reserves the right to use video or photographs taken of adult program participants for internal use, publication, and use in library promotional outlets, and for evaluation purposes.

Participation in library programs indicates participants' willingness to be photographed. Identifiable photographs of minors participating in programs will only be used if library staff have received written permission from the minor's parent or guardian.

### **Virtual Programs**

The Bedford Public Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of its virtual events. By participating in virtual events, attendees understand and accept that all online activity comes with some degree of risk and agree that the Library is not liable for any emotional or financial damages that may result from attending a library virtual event.

### **Cancellation of Programs**

Library staff may cancel programs for a variety of reasons such as inclement weather, absence of the presenter, lack of interest as demonstrated by minimal registrations, or an insufficient number of staff to manage the event. The event will be listed as canceled on the library website and social media. The presenter and/or co-sponsor, if applicable, and any registrants will be notified. Canceled programs are not automatically rescheduled.

### **Request for Reconsideration of a Program**

Bedford, NH residents who believe a program does not meet the Library mission are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the library director. If the resident is not satisfied with the response to their request, the director will provide the patron with a copy of this policy and a Request for Reconsideration of Bedford Public Library Program, Exhibit, or Display form. When the director receives the completed form, they will evaluate the program using the criteria outlined in this policy. During the reconsideration process, the program will go on as scheduled. The director will provide a timely written response to the patron making the request. If the patron does not agree with the library director's decision, they may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will consider the request as their schedule permits. The Board of Trustees' decision will be final.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees 05/05/2023