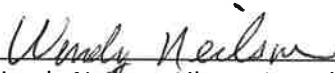




LIBRARY PROPERTY USE, SIGNATURE SOLICITATION, AND LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION POLICY

1. The Library strives to promote a neutral environment conducive to personal study, leisure reading, and the search for information. Library buildings also strive to maintain a safe and convenient flow of traffic into and throughout the building. Obstructing or impairing access or unfettered passage by patrons, staff, or volunteers on Library grounds or in a Library building is prohibited.
2. The Library prohibits solicitation for commercial purposes in all areas of the Library and on Library grounds. This includes the distribution of literature promoting a particular product or service as well as the actual selling of products or services to Library patrons, staff, or volunteers. Selling products or services, or soliciting for funds, donations, or customers, is prohibited.
3. Pursuant to law, the Library permits individuals or organizations to use outdoor spaces on Library property to gather signatures, display hand-held signs, distribute fliers or literature, or engage in other expressive activities protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Use of Library grounds does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the subject matter promoted by any such individual or organization. The following time, place, and manner restrictions apply to First Amendment-protected activities as follows:
 - a. Approval by the Library branch manager or supervisor shall be granted on a first come, first serve basis;
 - b. Behavior that annoys, alarms, or harasses others is prohibited;
 - c. Literature, signs, or other items left unattended are prohibited and will be discarded.
 - d. The passage of Library patrons, staff, or volunteers to and from the facility may not be impeded. Accordingly, the Library prohibits the distribution of literature, the solicitation of signatures, and other similar activities in the following areas: i. Public service areas and common areas of the Library; ii. Foyers, entrance ways, or exit ways of the Library; iii. All walkways immediately adjacent to the Library; iv. All areas reserved for staff; and iv. All Library parking areas.
4. Available spaces, based upon the physical configuration of each Library location's entrances and exits, and the need to maintain unimpeded ingress and egress, will be made available to the public for the purposes described in this policy. Maps of locations for First Amendment-protected activities will be designated for each branch along with a written physical description of those designated areas. The Library will not provide supplies, tables, or chairs although groups or individuals are welcome to do so as long as they remain in designated spaces.
5. Those wishing to distribute literature, solicit signatures, or undertake similar activities also may reserve a Library meeting room or conference room. The meeting rooms are made available for civic, educational, informational, or cultural purposes upon application and in accordance with the Library's Meeting Room Policy. Those engaged in the above activities may not stand outside Library meeting rooms to distribute literature or solicit signatures.

6. This policy does not apply to voter registration initiatives conducted by Washington County officials or by governmental entities for local, state, or federal voting activities.
7. Individuals wishing to distribute literature, solicit signatures, or engage in similar activities are asked to register with Library managers or supervisors prior to beginning activities.
8. Registration includes the completion of a form with the following information:
 - a. Name of sponsoring organization;
 - b. Name and contact information for the individual in charge (current phone number or email address) in the event complaints are received;
 - c. Description of the type of activity, the purpose of the solicited signatures, and copies of the literature to be distributed.
9. Registration does not guarantee that space for the activity will be available as other groups or individuals may already be using it. Registration is available on a first come, first serve basis.
10. Failure to register will not preclude an organization from conducting its free speech activity, provided it does not create a public safety issue or interfere with a previously scheduled free speech activity, and provided all other requirements of this policy are met.
11. Use of Property
 - a. Signage promoting petitions or activities may not be placed on or affixed to Library property, which includes the Library buildings and grounds. Temporary signage is permitted in designated outdoor areas and inside meeting and conference rooms.
 - b. Petitioners must in no way affiliate themselves with the Library either through written policy, signage, or verbal statements.
 - c. In the event individuals or organizations fail to limit their activities to designated spaces, Library staff will first request that the individual or members of the organization comply by remaining in designated spaces, as indicated on the map and physical descriptions for that location.
 - d. Failure to comply may result in the staff asking the individuals to leave Library property. Staff will inform the Library Director, who will confer with the County Attorney's office regarding possible further action.
 - e. Those whose activities have been limited as a consequence of their failure to remain within designated spaces, or who have not been provided with requested space, may appeal the decision to the Washington County Library Board of Directors in writing through the Library Director, and it will be presented at the next available regularly scheduled meeting of the Library Board.


Wendy Neilson, Library Board Chair


Alan Anderson, Interim Library Director

Adopted by the Washington County Library Board June 7, 2023