

1 - General Library Policies

1.1 General Library Objectives

1.1.1 Mission Statement

The Georgia Public Library will foster a sense of community by bringing people together in a comfortable and friendly atmosphere for self-education, leisure reading, and research. The Library will be a year-round center of information and activities, appealing to patrons of all ages pursuing a wide variety of interests.

1.1.2 Community Involvement

The Library is committed to involvement and cooperation with the school and other town organizations.

1.1.3 Accessibility

In accordance with the ADA, the Library will be accessible to all patrons. Service will not be denied because of religious, racial, economic, sexual orientation, cultural background, or political status.

1.2 General Library Operations

1.2.1 Who May Use the Library Library facilities are available free of charge to both residents and non-residents of Georgia. To check out library materials, non-residents are encouraged to obtain a homecard from their local library. If their town of residence is not served by a homecard library, a non-resident card is available for a \$35 annual fee. Services for non-residents and homecard patrons do not include interlibrary loan, e-services, museum park or pool passes. Patrons wishing to obtain a library card must present two (2) forms of identification with their current mailing address, one of which is a photo ID, such as a driver's license or student ID. Details specific to confidentiality of persons age 12+ see Patron Registration Form.

1.2.2 Hours Open

A regular schedule of hours for the Library to be open will be maintained, complying with State Standards and the needs of patrons. As a general rule, the Library shall be closed on holidays as outlined in the Town of Georgia Personnel Policies and Rules.

1.2.3 Governance

a. The Town will hold elections for the Trustees of the Library. If a vacancy occurs, the Trustees will select an interested person to fill the opening, and the Chairperson will submit this name to the Selectboard for appointment. The Town will be responsible for maintenance of the Library building and grounds.

b. The Trustees are responsible for governance of the Library and any property, supervision of Library Director, setting the annual budget, adopting written policies for general operation of the Library, and encouraging use and growth of the Library.

c. The Library Director is responsible for day-to-day management of the Library, including supervision of employees and volunteers, working within the guidelines of the Board's policies.

1.2.4 Use of Facilities

Other organizations are encouraged to use the Community Room for meetings as long as they do not interfere with regular operation of the Library. Groups wishing to use the building must contact the Library Director to schedule the use of the facilities. Permission will be granted at the discretion of the Library Director and/or the Board of Trustees.

1.2.5 Safety

The Library is committed to maintaining a safe environment for staff and patrons. The GPL is equipped with cameras.

The GPL will make every attempt to have a minimum of two (2) employees staffing the library at all times.

Safety procedures will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

1.2.6 Patron Code of Conduct

In an effort to provide a comfortable environment for all library users, we have established a patron code of conduct policy for our patrons. The purpose of the policy is to define unacceptable behavior and to suggest conduct that is appropriate in the Library.

Violations of the policy will result in increasing levels of action, ranging from asking the patron to leave the Library for the remainder of the day, to the patron's permanent loss of all library privileges, to legal prosecution. The level of action will be determined on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the library director or his or her designee.

Unacceptable behavior causes excessive noise levels, creates disturbances, interferes with other patrons' use of the Library, damages library property, and is not permitted in the Library.

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Loud, disruptive conversations, including shouting.
- Use of profane or abusive language.
- Harassment of others, either verbally or by physical actions. This includes any actions that other patrons or staff members perceive to be harassing.

- Threatening others either verbally or by physical actions. This includes any actions that other patrons or staff members perceive to be threatening.
- Georgia Public Library is a substance free zone. Use of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and controlled substances are not permitted. Anyone under the influence will not be allowed on the Library premises.
- Cell phone use within the Library. All cell phone conversations should be conducted outside the building.
- Carrying weapons of any kind.
- Solicitation, vending and distribution of petitions or surveys are not permitted in the Library or on the grounds without the prior consent of the Library Director.
- Eating and drinking in the Library, unless it is part of a program. Food and drink spillage can damage valuable resources. Since care needs to be exercised, we ask that you refrain from having food and drink around any library materials, computer or electronic equipment, or in the restrooms. The patron is responsible for any damage done or mess made by their food or drink.
- Inappropriate use of computers or the Internet (see 1.12: Internet Access and Use).

In addition, the Library is not responsible for personal possessions. Shoes and shirts are required at all times.

1.3 Key Distribution Policy

The Board of Trustees will maintain a list of persons who are in possession of key cards, in conjunction with the Town office.

1.4 Collection Development

In accordance with 22 V.S.A. § 69, the Georgia Public Library adopts this collection development policy which includes both a materials selection policy and procedures for the reconsideration and retention of library materials

1. Introduction & Purpose

The Georgia Public Library (the library) maintains collections of resources to help library users pursue their intellectual interests and educational objectives, including material for leisure time enjoyment and practical problem solving.

The library strives to build a collection representing multiple points of view that reflect the community's diverse people and history, including a diversity of race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, religion, and political beliefs and a diversity of authors, creators, and media.

The library's collections reflect a commitment to intellectual freedom. Compliance with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Vermont laws prohibiting discrimination in places of public accommodation shall underpin the practices and practical processes of maintaining the library's collections.

The library remains committed to securing professional services, including legal counsel, as necessary to ensure that its collection development activities comply with the above-identified State and federal laws.

2. Materials Selection Policy

Multiple factors determine what materials are included in the library's collections: funding, space, staffing, and ongoing maintenance needs. Library staff weigh the following criteria when making collection decisions:

- Alignment with the library's mission and strategic plan
- Review in a standard reviewing source (e.g., *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, *Kirkus Reviews*) and/or reviews and discussion in national newspapers and magazines, local publications, broadcast media, and reputable online sources.
- Community interests, demand, and suggestions
- Representation by and of diverse individuals and groups
- Significance and relationship to the local community and State of Vermont
- Authority and qualifications of the creator(s), publisher(s), and/or producer(s)
- Price and availability
- Accessibility of format and content
- Anticipated viability and/or longevity of the format

The library encourages Library Users to recommend items for inclusion in the collection and accept donated materials. Suggested and/or donated materials will be evaluated by library staff prior to being included in the library's collection and must meet the library's selection criteria.

The library may provide access to subscription databases and shared online collections. The library may not have direct control over the inclusion or exclusion of specific titles within those shared collections.

3. Materials Retention Policy

Materials that no longer meet the needs of the community and/or no longer support the library's collection will be withdrawn from the collection. This may include materials that are damaged, that include obsolete information, or that have not been used within a reasonable length of time. Items withdrawn from the collection will be disposed of in accordance with all applicable laws and municipal policies.

4. Procedures for the Reconsideration and Retention of Materials

- An individual (Library User) with a concern about the inclusion of an item in the library's collection is encouraged to discuss their concern with the library director (the Director).
- If speaking with the Director does not resolve the concern, a Library User may initiate a formal request that an item be removed from the library collection or relocated within the library collection by completing a Request for Reconsideration form and submitting it to the Director.
- The item in question will remain in circulation; it will not be relocated or removed from the library collection during the review process.
- The library will review only one request for reconsideration of materials at a time and will do so in the order in which requests are received.
- The Director will notify the Library User that their Request for Reconsideration form has been received and will inform the Library User when they anticipate processing the form (based on the number of other requests that have been filed).
- The Director or their delegate will review the Request for Reconsideration form and the material in question. They will read, listen to, or view the item and will read reviews of the item in professional journals when available. They will evaluate the usage of the item by the public (circulation) and evaluate whether the selection of the item conforms with the library's Materials Selection Policy.
- The Director will notify the Library User of the library's decision regarding the request within 15 library business days of receipt of their Request for Reconsideration form, stating the reasons for the decision to the Library User who submitted the request.
- If the Library User is not satisfied with the library's decision, they may submit a written appeal to the Board of Trustees (the Board) of the library within 10 library business days of receipt of the decision letter.
- The Board will notify the Library User if their appeal will be heard by the Board. If the Board plans to address the appeal at a meeting, the Library User will be notified of when and where the next regular meeting of the board will be held.
- The decision of the Board is final. Once an appeal has been considered by the Board, it will not be reconsidered.

Georgia Public Library Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form

The Georgia Public Library (the library) has established a procedure for the reconsideration of an item in the library collection.

Requests for reconsideration may be discussed publicly by the library's Board of Trustees and may be subject to public records requests.

Any individual (Library User) with concerns about the inclusion of an item in the library's collection is encouraged to discuss their concern with the library director (the Director).

If speaking with the Director does not resolve the Library User's concern, the Library User may initiate a formal request that an item be removed from or relocated within the library collection by completing this form and returning it to the library or mailing it to: 1697 Ethan Allen Highway, Georgia, Vermont 05454

The library will review only one request for reconsideration of materials at a time and will do so in the order in which requests are received.

A. Library User Information (All fields Required)

1. Name:

2. Address:

3. City:

4. Zip:

5. Phone:

6. Email:

B. Format of Material (Required)

- ☐ Physical
- ☐ Electronic

C. Material Type (Required)

- ☐ Book
- ☐ eBook
- ☐ Movie/DVD
- ☐ Movie/Streaming
- ☐ Audio/CD

- ☐ Audio/Streaming
 - ☐ Magazine/Newspaper
 - ☐ Electronic Database
 - ☐ Game
 - ☐ Other:
-

D. Material information (All fields required)

1. Title, Author:

2. Where in the library is the material located now?

3. Material barcode number:

4. Please describe your concerns regarding this material:

5. Have you examined the entire work? If not, what specific sections did you review?

6. Do you have a suggestion for an alternate title for the information contained in the material?

7. What would you like the library to do with the material?

- ☐ Remove the material from the collection entirely
- ☐ Relocate the material to another area of the collection, specifically:

Other:

Date:

Signature:

1.4.1 Intellectual Freedom

The basis for selection of materials is the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement. Of paramount concern are the interests and needs of the general public. Materials will not be removed from the Library because of pressure or displeasure of groups or individuals. Parents are responsible for determining what their children may read up to age 12. The selection of materials will not be restricted by the possibility that young people 12 and over may obtain materials that their parents consider inappropriate. A patron may protest a particular item in the collection by filling out and handing in a Citizen's Request for Reconsideration Form, which the librarian will refer to the Board of Trustees for appropriate action.

1.5 Policy on Donations

The Library is open to consider materials or funds. Funds donated to the Library for a particular purpose will be allocated to that purpose by the Board of Trustees. Any undesignated funds received will be used at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. Please contact the Library Director for more information on donations.

1.6 Circulation Policy

1.6.1 Material Loans

A patron must obtain a card to borrow materials. Patrons are responsible for the materials they borrow and may be charged for damaged or lost materials, including audio books, DVDs, games and puzzles. All new materials and AV materials will circulate for two (2) weeks. All other materials will circulate for three (3) weeks. Any item on loan may be renewed up to two (2) times, unless it is reserved.

1.6.2 Restrictions on Use

Certain valuable or irreplaceable materials will be restricted to in-library use and will not be loaned out. These materials may be photocopied, except in the case of delicate or aged materials, which may be damaged by doing so, at the Library staff's discretion.

1.6.3 Inter-library Loan

Library materials that are not available in the Georgia Public Library's collection may be requested through inter-library loan (ILL).

The Library will hold the materials for one (1) week from the date of the first notification.

1.6.4 Homecard

The Georgia Public Library is a member of the Homecard library system, a cooperative lending program of twenty-nine (29) libraries in Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle and Lamoille Counties.

Library patrons, in good standing, and residing in Georgia may obtain a Homecard

endorsement on their library card and check-out materials from the Homecard libraries. Homecard provides users with expanded library hours and a large collection of books, magazines, videos, music, and recorded books available for check-out. Items must be returned by the date due to the library where they were checked out by the patron.

Georgia Public Library patrons that have been placed on the restricted list through Homecard will lose privileges until the matter is rectified.

Libraries participating in the Homecard system include:

- Bixby Memorial Library (Vergennes)
- Brownell Library (Essex Junction)
- Burnham Memorial Library (Colchester)
- Carpenter-Carse Library (Hinesburg)
- Charlotte Public Library
- Deborah Rawson Memorial Library (Underhill)
- Dorothy Alling Memorial Library (Williston)
- Essex Free Library (Essex Town)
- Fletcher Free Library (Burlington)
- Fairfax Community Library
- Georgia Public Library
- Grand Isle Free Library
- Huntington Public Library
- Ilsley Public Library (Middlebury)
- Jericho Town Library
- Lawrence Memorial Library
- Lincoln Library
- Milton Public Library
- New Haven Community Library
- Orwell Free Library
- Pierson Library (Shelburne)
- Richmond Free Library
- Russell Memorial Library (North Ferrisburg)
- South Burlington Community Library
- Starksboro Public Library
- Varnum Memorial Library (Cambridge/Jeffersonville)
- Westford Public Library
- Winooski Memorial Library
- Worthen Library (South Hero)

1.7 Policy for Overdue Materials

No fines or fees will be charged to patrons of the Library.

In the case of overdue materials, patrons will be contacted as follows: For materials that are overdue, an automated reminder is sent via email 3 days before an item is due and when an item is overdue. If the materials are not returned, a reminder call will be made two (2) weeks after the item due date. Three (3) weeks after this, if the materials still have not been returned, a bill will be sent.

Any patron who has been billed for overdue items will no longer be able to check out items until the overdue items have been resolved.

The Library Director has the authority to review this policy on a case by case basis.

1.8 Policy for Lost or Damaged Materials

Patrons must replace lost or damaged library materials. Please consult the Library Director about the cost of replacement.

In the case of damaged materials, the librarian has authority to decide how bad the damage is and whether the materials must be replaced.

Installment plans may be implemented if the patron is unable to pay all at once. The librarian has authority to decide how this should be managed, on a case-by-case basis. During installment payment of lost/damaged materials, or until the patron is able to pay in full, s/he may continue to check out materials from the Library. However, in the case that said patron loses/damages additional materials in the interim, his/her card may be revoked, according to the decision of the librarian.

If patrons have repeat occurrences of losing or damaging materials, or prove to be unwilling to respect this policy, the librarian should bring this situation to the attention of the Library Board of Trustees.

In the event that a patron pays for lost materials and finds them, and the Library has purchased replacements, s/he may keep the original items but no refund will be given.

1.9 Vulnerable Persons Policy

Parents, guardians and caregivers should remember that the Library is a public building open to all, and that unattended vulnerable individuals are potentially at risk. This policy has been designed to communicate the concern of the Trustees and staff for the safety and welfare of all patrons who use the Georgia Public Library.

All children 8 years or under, and any person who is vulnerable, must have a qualified adult in attendance with them for their enjoyment and safety.

Parents or legal guardians are always responsible for the well-being, safety and conduct of their charges. This includes:

- **Accessing Library Items:** The Library is not responsible for enforcing the restrictions a parent/guardian deems appropriate in terms of the materials the child may access.
- **Supervision:** The Library staff is not responsible for supervising or caring for children while their parents, guardians, or caregivers are outside the Library or in another part of the building. The staff does not monitor children leaving the building, nor is it their responsibility to know if a child is leaving with a parent, guardian, relative, friend, or stranger.
- **Transportation:** Parents, guardians, and caregivers are expected to be aware of the opening and closing times of the Library, and to make suitable arrangements to meet or transport their children. If the Library is closing and a child has been left unattended, the staff may assist the child in calling home to arrange for transportation. However, if the child is not picked up within fifteen (15) minutes after closing, the police will be called to take responsibility. The Library staff is not permitted to take a child out of the building or to transport them to another location.

All patrons are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct. All library users are required to respect library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the Library.

Any patron who is not using the Library appropriately, who is engaged in disruptive or other inappropriate behavior, or who requires excessive staff attention, will be asked to leave the Library after proper warning.

1.10 Policy on Cell Phone Use

The Library is a cell phone-free zone. Cell phones need to be silenced or put on vibrate when in the Library. If a patron needs to use their cell phone, they are required to please step outside.

1.11 Policy on Confidentiality of Records

The Georgia Public Library respects the right of privacy of all its patrons regarding the use of this Library. Library records are protected under Vermont Statute, Title 22, Chapter 4, Sections 117-173.

The Trustees affirm the confidentiality of all library records, as outlined in the ALA's Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records. The records identifying the names of patrons will not be available to anyone except by court order. Library procedures have been developed to ensure patrons' privacy at all times.

1.12 Internet Access and Use Policy

1.12.1 Mission Statement for Internet Use

Internet access at the Georgia Public Library is an extension of the Library's commitment to meeting the community's information needs. In addition to using the Internet as an information resource, the Library seeks to provide the opportunity for Internet use, with limitations, to members of the public. Access to the Internet is consistent with the Library's endorsement of the Freedom to Read, Freedom To View and the Library Bill of Rights statements from the American Library Association and the Library's collection development policy.

1.12.2 Acceptable Use

The Georgia Public Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. The Internet is a worldwide community with a highly diverse user population, and it is the patrons' responsibility to use this resource wisely. The Internet and its resources may be erroneous, out-of-date, illegal, or considered offensive, controversial or sexually explicit.

All Internet resources are provided equally to all library users. Parents/guardians, not the library staff, are responsible for the Internet information accessed by their children. A parent or guardian must provide written permission before a child under the age of 12 will be allowed to use the Internet workstation.

The Internet workstation must be used in a responsible manner, respecting the rights of others, and taking care of the equipment. The public must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws governing the transmission and dissemination of information while accessing the Internet, and with all library policies and procedures. Computer and Internet settings may not be changed.

It is the patrons' responsibility to be aware of the display of any notices concerning the copyright of information accessed on the Internet and to respect the copyright laws of the United States.

Patrons are signed on to the Internet on a first-come, first-serve basis. No reservations will be taken for the use of this workstation.

Computer use by a patron is limited to one (1) hour at a time. Extension of the one (1)-hour limit may be granted at the librarian's discretion and only if the computer does not need to be accessed by other patrons or library staff for the Internet or other resources. Due to limited resources available for provision of public access to computers and the Internet, the Library reserves the right to limit the amount of time an individual user can devote to a single session.

Internet use by patrons at the Georgia Public Library does not include sending or receiving e-mail through POP 3 accounts (web based accounts may be used), access to listservs, newsgroups, online chats, Instant Messenger, or File Transfer Protocol.

Patrons may not use USB sticks or software programs other than those provided by the Library. No information may be stored on the hard drive.

There is a fee of 15 cents (\$0.15) per black and white copy and 25 cents (\$0.25) per color copy for each side page printed from the workstation or copied at the copier. Please see library staff for more information.

Internet access may not be available due to technical problems with computer equipment or the Library's Internet provider.

The Georgia Public Library reserves the right to suspend or terminate access to the Internet or other network services without prior notice at any time and for any reason. Violations of the law, such as destruction or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the Library or other users will be dealt with in a serious and appropriate manner.

Additionally, users may not:

- Use the network to make unauthorized entries into other computational, informational or communication services or resources.
- Distribute unsolicited advertising.
- Invade the privacy of others.
- Make any attempt to damage or alter computer equipment or software.
- Engage in any activity that is harassing or defamatory.
- Use the Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other rights of third parties, or in a manner inconsistent with the Library's tax-exempt status or its proper operation.
- Engage in the public display, via computer screen or printed copy, of obscene materials.

1.13 Wireless Access

This service is free of charge and subject to the terms and conditions of use outlined in the Internet Access and use policy above.

Wireless access is provided as a public service free of charge on an as-is basis with no guarantee and no warranty. The Library's wireless network is subject to periodic maintenance and unforeseen downtime.

There are risks involved with connecting to a public wireless connection, such as possible viruses, malware, loss of data, possible hacking/snooping by others connected, and possible hardware/software failure. It is the user's responsibility to protect his/her information from all risks associated with using the Internet, including any damage, loss, or theft that may occur as a result of using the Library's wireless access.

All Library Wi-Fi users should have up-to-date antivirus software installed on their computers/devices.

The laptop computer/device owner is responsible for setting up his/her own equipment to access the Library's wireless network. Library staff are not permitted to handle patron laptops, devices or peripheral equipment. Library staff is not permitted to configure patrons' laptops/devices; nor can the Library provide more than general assistance in connecting to the wireless network.

The Library assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment; users must keep their equipment with them at all times.

In using this free Internet access, users agree and hereby release, indemnify, and hold harmless, the Georgia Public Library, its officers and employees, and any affiliate, from any damage that may result from a patron's use of the Library's wireless access. While using this wireless access, users acknowledge that they are subject to, and agree to abide by all laws, and all rules and regulations of the Town of Georgia, the State of Vermont, and the federal government that is applicable to Internet use.

At its sole discretion, the Library may terminate this public service at any time without prior notice.

Any attempt to circumvent library procedures or any unauthorized attempt to access or manipulate library equipment may result in suspension of use of the Library's Wi-Fi network.

1.14 Library Community Room/ Facility Use Policy

1.14.1 Please refer to the Town of Georgia Facilities Use policy.

1.14.2 Library Community Room

All parties requesting the use of the Town Library Meeting Room shall contact the Library Director 802-524-4643 for scheduling. A representative of the Library Director may conduct a tour of the Meeting Room with the lead contact person prior to use of the facility.

The Community Room is only available during the Georgia Public Library's scheduled open hours.

The maximum number of people that can use this room is 35.

Use of the building is limited to the Library and the Community Room and restrooms. Use of all other areas is prohibited.

Windows are to remain closed at all times.

At no time should anything be taped or tacked to the walls.

The tables and chairs may be moved to meet your function's needs. Please put them back as you found them.

Computers, copiers and phones are for Library personnel only. Use of the books and all other library materials are NOT part of this agreement and renter is to exercise control of all their participants to ensure these items are not disturbed.

Place trash/recycling/returnables in appropriate receptacles outside by the pavilion.

Please leave the Library and the Community Room clean, and take all items brought with you when you leave or you may forfeit your security deposit.

Please turn off lights, coffee pot, etc., in the Library and the Community Room, and all the lights in the Library at the end of the event.

Be respectful of the people working in the Library. The visiting group is responsible for supplies, technology and other meeting needs.

The only animals allowed in the library are service animals, or part of a library program, at the discretion of the Library Director.

1.16 Donation Solicitation Policy

The Library will not allow outside monetary donation boxes to be left in the Library. If a specific group is holding a function in the Library Community Room or on library property, they may, at the time of their function, have a donation box set up for those people attending their function.

1.17 Policy on Records Accessibility

- (a) Library minutes of Trustee meetings shall be available on the Town of Georgia and Library websites.
- (b) Library financial reports are available upon request.
- (c) Library personnel records are confidential. Please see the Town of Georgia Personnel Policy for more information.
- (d) For Patron records, see Section 1.11: Policy on Confidentiality of Records.
- (e) Requests for copies of records are available upon public request; a fee will be assessed after 15 pages.

1.18 Policy Revision

All policies may be reviewed throughout the year by the Board of Trustees and the Library Director. Policies may be revised yearly at any one regular meeting, by a majority of the Board members and following the proper procedures.