

CENSORSHIP AND RE-EVALUATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS POLICY

- The Independence Public Library supports the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement and the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights.
- The Independence Public Library recognizes that censorship is an individual matter. While individuals are free to reject for themselves materials of which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom to read to other patrons of the library system. The disapproval of an item by an individual or a group shall not be a means of denying that item to other individuals or groups, if by library selection standards it belongs in the library's collection.*
- Occasionally, objections to a selection may be made by the public, despite the care taken to select the best materials to be included in the library's collection. When this occurs, the principles of freedom to read and the professional responsibilities of the selection staff must be defended.
- If a complaint is made, the procedures are as follows:
 - The library staff should not discuss the complaint with the patron, but should direct the patron to the Library Director.
 - The Library Director will discuss with the patron the cause of the complaint, but will not make any firm commitment to the patron regarding the item's disposition. If the patron requests that further action be taken, the patron must complete the "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form.
 - If the patron completes the "Request for Reconsideration" form, it will be given to the Library Director.
 - Copies of the completed "Request for Reconsideration" form will be sent to all board members and the city attorney. Copies of the questioned item will be held for the Library Board's examination.
 - Report the challenge to the appropriate Iowa Library Association (ILA) Intellectual Freedom Committee/s.
 - The Library Board will examine materials referring to challenged materials, check reviews of the item in standard selection tools, and form an opinion based on the item as a whole rather than on isolated passages. The Library Board will meet to discuss the matter, notifying the concerned patron of the meeting date. The library board will be responsible for rendering a decision.
 - The Library Board president will announce the board's decision regarding the challenged material. The patron will receive this announcement by means of an official letter. A copy of this letter will be kept on file in the Library Director's office.

CENSORSHIP AND RE-EVALUATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS POLICY

- The Independence Public Library understands that not every item in the library's collection will be agreeable to every member of our community. The Library Board hopes that the community will feel free to voice its opinions on the library's collection, but recognizes that the library as a public institution must continue to advocate free inquiry and the pursuit of information and knowledge to all members of its library community.

~~*Refer to Iowa Intellectual Freedom Resource Guide, by Iowa Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee, May 2017.~~

*See the library's Collection Development Policy for more information.