
Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources Policy

The Merrimack Public Library (“MPL”) is committed to upholding the American Library Association’s Right to Read Statement and state and national library organizations’ resolutions concerning Internet use. MPL defends the Constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use library resources and services. We affirm the right and responsibility of all parents and guardians to guide their own children’s use of the library, its resources and services.

The MPL Board of Trustees is the governing board of the library. According to state law, RSA 202- A:6: “The library trustees shall have the entire custody and management of the library and all the property of the town relating thereto...” Only the Board of Trustees, or those specifically authorized by the Board of Trustees in this policy, may remove or restrict materials in the collection in response to a patron’s written request. Any resource which is the subject of a request for reconsideration shall remain in the collection, in use, while resolution of the request is pending.

MPL protects the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services. We encourage dialogue and discussion about any material in the collection or program held by the library. Every patron shall have access to the material selector, department head and/or director to engage in this discussion.

If, for any reason, the discussion cannot take place or the patron is not satisfied, the patron may file a Request for Reconsideration of Materials or Programs Form (“Request for Reconsideration”). Only residents of the Town of Merrimack and individuals who are entitled to a free MPL library card under MPL’s Circulation Policy are entitled to file a written Request for Reconsideration. The procedure for responding to the written request shall be as follows:

1. The Request for Reconsideration shall be sent to the MPL Director (“Director”) who will initial and date it. The Director, or their designee, will contact the patron to acknowledge its receipt.
2. The Director will appoint a Materials and Program Review Committee (“Committee”) consisting of the selector, department head, and such other staff as the Director deems advisable. Each Committee member will be provided with a copy of the Request for Reconsideration and will review any material in question. The Committee shall convene to deliberate on the Request for Reconsideration at the earliest possible date, and prepare a written response.

3. If the Committee majority disagrees with the patron, the Director or their designee shall provide a written response to the patron indicating such. The patron shall also be informed of their right to appeal the Committee's verdict on the Request for Reconsideration to the Board of Trustees.
4. If the Committee majority agrees with the patron, or the patron requests an appeal to the Board of Trustees, the Director will notify the Trustee Chair and provide each trustee with copies of the Request for Reconsideration and Committee recommendation. A Committee response shall not be sent to the patron in this situation. The Director, or their designee shall instead notify the patron of the date and time of the Board meeting when the Request for Reconsideration will be discussed.
5. The Trustees shall review the Request for Reconsideration as soon as practicable. Discussion and vote shall be held at a public Board meeting, and a written decision shall be executed by the Board. One copy of the Board decision will be sent to the patron, and another will be retained. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.

An individual may submit no more than two (2) written Requests for Reconsideration in any given month, and no more than ten (10) in any calendar year.

Materials in the MPL collection for which judgments have been rendered through the Request for Reconsideration process by the Committee or Board of Trustees will not be reconsidered again for a period of three (3) years following a judgment.

Approved by the Merrimack Library Board of Trustees 6.18.24