

**Policy Template for Member Libraries**  
Challenge to Library Materials

INTRODUCTION:

It is an essential role of the public library to make all, including possible controversial materials, freely available to all patrons. This can mean that the views expressed in a material conflicts with a community member’s beliefs or tastes. Having a policy to guide library employees and volunteers in dealing with community challenges to a material ensures each complaint is dealt with fairly and every person in the library knows how to proceed.

[Member Library Name] Challenge to Library Materials Policy

[Member Library Name] supports all members of its community by collecting materials representing all viewpoints. However, it is not the role of the [Member Library Name] to advocate for or endorse any particular idea, opinion, or point of view; nor will the [Member Library Name] or any of its employees, volunteers, or trustees act *in loco parentis* (as a parent to library patron – either adult or minor).

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of providing a procedure whereby opinions from the public regarding materials selected can be voiced. A request for reconsideration must be made in writing on forms provided by the [Member Library Name]. These forms are available upon request from the circulation desk and upon completion, should be delivered to the circulation desk, or mailed to [Member Library Name] in care of the Library Director. Upon receipt of the signed form, the Library Director will convene a committee with the President of the Board of Trustees and two professional librarians not involved in the selection of the material.

Within two weeks the committee shall:

1. Examine the material in question, the issues raised and the circumstances involved.

2. Make a decision to remove or retain the material in question.

3. Notify the American Library Association (<http://www.ala.org/bbooks/online-challenge-reporting-form>) and the New York Library Association (contact the director, Jeremy Johannesen, [director@nyla.org](mailto:director@nyla.org)) of any challenges.

The [Member Library Name] Director will respond in writing by certified mail to the patron within 10 days of the committee’s decision.

Should the patron wish to appeal the decision, he/she may write to the President of the Board of Trustees to request a hearing by the Board. The Board will complete a review of the issue within 90 days and respond to the patron as soon as may be possible after such review. Any further appeal must be made to the Commissioner of Education in Albany, N. Y.

Adopted by the [Member Library] Board of Trustees [Date of meeting where adopted].