

HALL MEMORIAL LIBRARY PROGRAMMING POLICY

Purpose

The Hall Memorial Library offers programs and events in support of its mission to serve and support the members of the community by providing materials and experiences for their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs. With a dedicated focus on encouraging the love of reading, lifelong learning, and creativity, we work to establish responsive connections between the diverse needs of our community, our varied collections, our digital services, an array of engaging programming and thoughtfully curated displays.

Programming Definition

A library program is defined as an event or activity presented by the Library, conducted in a group setting, developed to meet the educational, social, recreational, cultural, or informational needs of an anticipated audience in the community. Programs can be a single event, a series of events, or ongoing.

Programs may originate from Library staff, partnering institutions, or members of the public.

Programs are resources for voluntary inquiry, and the dissemination of information and ideas, which promote free expression and free access to the ideas of residents.

Events held in the library by non-profit groups using library meeting rooms are not Library programs.

Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute endorsement of the program content or the views expressed by the presenters or participants.

Programming Development, Coordination and Supervision

Responsibility for program development, coordination and supervision rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Library Trustees. The Library Director may delegate program implementation and supervision to members of the staff who are professionally trained to curate and development programs. These staff members are guided by this policy and use their professional skills and training, Library collections, equipment, and facilities, and feedback from the community in planning and delivering quality and relevant Library programs that support the interests, informational needs and enlightenment of all residents.

Criteria for Program Selection

When developing a library program, library staff will consider the following:

- Relevance to the Library's mission, vision, and strategic plan
- Community needs and interests
- Representation of a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints.
- Access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of residents
- Potential to promote, supplement, and encourage use of the library's collections and resources
- Costs
- Presenter qualifications and experience in content area
- Space and staff time requirements
- Safety of patrons and staff

- Length of program
- Balance of current programs being offered at the library
- Connection to other community programs

Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be approved or offered by the Library. However, educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates, may be offered.

Programs that support or oppose a specific religion will not be approved or offered. Programs are planned to be inclusive of all cultures and of all religions and no religion. Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe or proselytize a particular religious conviction. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of Library patrons.

Funding

The library receives funding for programming in a variety of ways including municipal appropriations, support from the Friends of the Hall Memorial Library and other charitable organizations, grants, and donations. The library may partner with other town departments, organizations or businesses offering their services free of charge as long as it meets the library's criteria for program development.

Presenters

Presenters may not conduct a program for commercial, religious, political, or partisan purposes. They may have business-related brochures or other printed information available for attendees, however, they may only be distributed upon request of the attendee.

Program Materials

Books, CDs, DVDs or other ancillary materials related to the content of a program may be offered for sale at a Library program as a convenience to attendees, if approved ahead of time by the Library Director. Presenters are responsible for handling their own sales.

Programs sponsored by the Friends of the Hall Memorial Library may include the sale of merchandise as a fundraiser to benefit the Library.

The library materials that are used in a program are chosen with the same care and consideration used in selecting materials for the collection.

Access

All library programs are open to the public, including Ellington residents and those of other communities. Generally admission to programs is free of charge. Occasionally a materials fee may be charged as appropriate.

Some programs may require advance registration for planning purposes. Sometimes registration may be limited to Ellington residents or Ellington residents may be allowed to register earlier than residents from other towns due to space constraints. If the maximum number of registrants has been met, a waitlist may be created.

If a patron registers for a program and then realizes they cannot attend, they should notify the library to be removed from the registration list to make room for others.

Patrons that don't attend programs that they registered for, and don't notify the library of their inability to attend on repeated occasions, may not be allowed to register for future programs.

Many programs are designed for specific audiences with their interests and needs in mind, such as programs intended for children and teens. Adults may attend children's programs if they are accompanying a child. Tween and teen programs are limited to tween and teen attendance only, except when they require an adult assistant. Programs targeted towards specific audiences will be publicized as such.

Responsibility for a child's access to a program rests solely with their parent or guardian. The Library does not stand in place of a parent and is not charged with a parent's rights, duties and responsibilities. The Library will not act in the role of censor for any age level. Programming will not be restricted by the possibility of access by a patron not in the intended audience.

All attendees will be required to adhere to the Patron Code of Conduct Policy. The Library reserves the right to deny attendance or request a patron to leave a program if they violate this policy.

Patrons with special needs may contact the library at least 24 hours before the start of the program to request any reasonable accommodations that they may need.

All library programs are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of Chapter 814c of the CT state general statutes.

Virtual Programming

Some Library programs may be offered using a virtual meeting platform that registered patrons may use to access from their own internet-enabled devices. This may include programs that are simultaneously run at the physical Library as well as programs that are offered only virtually. Some virtual programs may be pre-recorded and broadcast via the internet or recorded as presented for later viewing. In the event an interactive program is being recorded, attendees will be informed of that fact at the start of the program.

Registered participants will receive, via email, a link to log on to the program and must not share that link with others. Information collected during the registration process will be used only to communicate information about that program or to confirm eligibility to participate in that program.

Patrons attending virtual programs are also expected to adhere to the Patron Code of Conduct Policy, and failure to do so may result in their immediate removal from said program. The Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of virtual events, however attendees must understand that all online activity carries some degree of risk.

Patrons are required to provide their own equipment and internet connection to attend virtual programs. The Library will make a good faith effort to utilize platforms that will be compatible with the widest array of hardware and software, but makes no guarantee that every patron will be capable of accessing every Library program successfully. Nor can the Library guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees.

Cancellations

Programs may be cancelled, at the discretion of the Library staff, for several reasons, including severe weather, absence of the presenter, or low registration. Cancelled programs may or may not be rescheduled. Whenever possible, advanced notification of program cancellations will be made on the library's website or by other appropriate communication channels.

Program Evaluation

To provide the highest quality and most useful programming, Library staff may gather information about program results to guide future programming decisions. Outputs, such as the number of attendees at a program, will be gathered for all or almost all programs. Outcomes, such as how well the content of a program helped attendees learn about the program's topic, may be gathered at times when such data is required for grant reporting or would be helpful in evaluating a new program topic or format.

Procedure for the Questioning of Library Programs by Patrons

While patrons outside of Ellington are welcome to attend programs at the Hall Memorial Library, requests to reconsider programs are limited to residents of Ellington. Please see our Review and Reconsideration Policy and reconsideration form for further information on this process.

9/2025

Approved by State Library 9/18/25

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