

# **Joshua Hyde Public Library**

## **Policy Manual**

Update as of May 2021



# Joshua Hyde Public Library Policies

## Table of Contents

Collection Development.....	1
Freedom to Read .....	3
Library Bill of Rights .....	7
Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials.....	8
Bulletin Board .....	11
Borrowing.....	13
Confidentiality.....	15
Gifts .....	17
Internet.....	19
Local History Area.....	21
Meeting Room.....	23
Patron Behavior.....	25
Unattended Children.....	27

## History of Reviews and Approvals

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Date</b>
Collection Development	1	February 2021
Freedom to Read	3	-
Library Bill of Rights	7	-
Request for Reconsideration of Materials	8	May 2021
Bulletin Board	11	January 2020
Borrowing	13	October 2020
Confidentiality	15	April 2021
Gifts	17	May 2021
Internet	19	November 2020
Local History Area	21	May 2012
Meeting Room	23	May 2019
Patron Behavior	25	March 2021
Unattended Children	27	February 2017
Entire manual reformatted for consistency of style	All	Nov 2020 – Jan 2021

The Board of Trustees of the Joshua Hyde Public Library has determined that the Library Policies shall be subject to review and needed revision by the Board at least every five years. Individual policies will be reviewed or added as needed.

**Joshua Hyde Public Library**  
306 Main Street  
Sturbridge, Massachusetts 01566-0186  
(508) 347-2512  
[www.SturbridgeLibrary.org](http://www.SturbridgeLibrary.org)

## **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

It is the mission of the Joshua Hyde Public Library to serve all patrons of the Library. Materials are provided for information, for general educational advancement, and for the enrichment and recreation of borrowers.

Material selection is performed by the Children's Librarian for the Children's Department and by the Library Director and Adult Services Librarian for the other areas of the Library (i.e. Young Adult, Reference, Adult, etc.) For access to out-of-print materials, or otherwise difficult to acquire resources, as well as items that may fall outside this Policy, the Library depends on the Massachusetts Library System's inter-library loan service (MLS ILL). The Library Director is responsible overall to the Library Trustees for the development of the collection.

Library materials are selected according to the following policy:

- Materials selected must meet high standards of quality in content, expression, and format. These standards are not determined by any one individual, but rather from a consensus of well-known journals and critics (e.g. Library Journal, Booklist, New York Times Book Review, etc.).
- The Library may purchase works written by authors whose views, though they may be widely rejected, have affected the shaping of world events.
- The Library is responsible for providing materials on controversial issues, and whenever possible, to represent many shades of opinion on these issues.
- Serious works are not necessarily excluded because of unpleasant language or frankness. If a work, overall, has artistic merit or provides important information, it has a place in the Library's collection.
- Criteria essential to the selection of non-fiction for both the Children's and the Adult collection include authoritativeness, accuracy, objectivity, timeliness, clarity of presentation, and community need. An attempt is made to limit purchase of specialized research materials for which there might be demand from only one or two members of the community.
- An up-to-date, balanced and useful collection will be maintained through a continual discarding and replacing process. Worn but basic titles will be replaced and obsolete or infrequently used materials withdrawn.
- The availability of funds may limit the range and number of materials considered for purchase.

The Library is opposed to the removal from its collection, at the request of any individual or group, books or materials which have been chosen according to this Collection Development

Policy. Furthermore, the Library will oppose coercion on the part of an individual or group seeking to have books or materials added to the shelves contrary to this Policy.

Should any patron wish the Library to reconsider the selection of any materials they may fill out a Request For Reconsideration of Library Materials form and submit it to the Library Director. Alternatively the filled-out form may be emailed to the Library Trustees at [JHPLTrustees@Gmail.com](mailto:JHPLTrustees@Gmail.com). The request will be considered by the Library Board of Trustees. The form is available upon request and may also be found at Page 9 of this Manual. Incomplete forms will not be considered.

Because they represent an ideal the Library is trying to maintain, the Board of Trustees is guided by the "**Freedom to Read**" joint statement by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers as well as the "**Library Bill of Rights**" adopted by the American Library Association. Both these documents are included here as appendices for the reader's convenience.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, February 2021

## Appendix 1

### THE FREEDOM TO READ

A joint statement by the American Library Association  
and by the Association of American Publishers.

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label “controversial” views, to distribute lists of “objectionable” books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be “protected” against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings. The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

**We therefore affirm these propositions:**

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.



4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by:  
American Library Association  
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:  
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression  
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.  
The Children's Book Council  
Freedom to Read Foundation  
National Association of College Stores  
National Coalition Against Censorship  
National Council of Teachers of English  
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

"The Freedom to Read Statement", American Library Association, July 26, 2006.  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> (Accessed January 8, 2021)  
Document ID: aaac95d4-2988-0024-6573-10a5ce6b21b2

## Appendix 2

### Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 18, 1939 by the ALA council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

"Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, June 30, 2006.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> (Accessed January 8, 2021)

Document ID: 669fd6a3-8939-3e54-7577-996a0a3f8952

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## REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Trustees of the Joshua Hyde Public Library have established a formal materials selection policy. All Library resources have been chosen in accordance with that policy. Although materials are carefully selected, there can arise differences of opinion regarding suitable materials. Accordingly, the Board has also established a procedure for gathering input about particular material items or resources. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure.

Patron Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent yourself? \_\_\_\_ Or an organization? \_\_\_\_ Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Material on which you are commenting:

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Publisher or Producer/Date \_\_\_\_\_

Book (e-book/audio book) \_\_\_\_ Movie \_\_\_\_ Digital Resource \_\_\_\_ Audio Recording \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

1. What brought this material to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you read, or listened to, or examined the entire content of the material? If not, what sections did you review? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What concerns you about the material? (Please be specific. Cite pages and/or sections.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(over)

(Concerns, cont'd)

4. For what age group would you recommend this material? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are you aware of judgments of this material by literary critics? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are there other materials or resources you suggest that will provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on the subject treated? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What action are you requesting the Board consider? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you believe that anyone has the right to tell you or your family what they may or may not read, listen to, or view? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Submit the completed form to the Library Director. Alternatively the completed form may be emailed to the Library Board of Trustees at [JHPLTrustees@Gmail.com](mailto:JHPLTrustees@Gmail.com). Your statement of concern will be considered by the Board of Trustees at its next monthly meeting, and you will be notified in writing of its decision.

Incomplete forms will not be considered.

Revised May 2021



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## **BULLETIN BOARD POLICY**

### **Bulletin Boards**

In the interest of community service, the Library maintains Bulletin Boards for public use under the following guidelines:

- Bulletin Boards are intended for announcements of non-profit, educational, cultural, intellectual or other special events of general interest to the community. They may be posted at the sole discretion of the Library. All notices must be reviewed by a staff member before posting.
- Depending on available space, notices will be accepted up to one month prior to the scheduled event. Items will be removed on a periodic basis.
- The Library does not endorse any postings not directly sponsored by the Library.
- Announcements of a political or commercial nature will not be accepted for the Bulletin Boards.
- Any questions regarding the use of the Bulletin Board should be directed to the Library Director.

### **Electronic Display Board**

The Library maintains an Electronic Display Board to promote and market Library services, programs, events, and resources. It is operated under the following guidelines:

- Content displayed is limited to Library-sponsored, or co-sponsored events, Library services and resources available to patrons, Town of Sturbridge department announcements, and community events that support the mission of the Library.
- Community and Town department announcements will be incorporated into the Library's rotating message stream with a ratio of no more than 1:4.
- With the approval of the Library Director, messages displayed may promote special or signature events for organizations other than the above which benefit the community as a whole.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees January 2020





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# **BORROWING POLICY**

## **Borrower Cards**

### **Resident and Non-Resident Users From Certified Massachusetts Libraries**

Residents of Sturbridge and Non-Resident Users are eligible to borrow circulating materials from the Joshua Hyde Public Library upon presentation of a current, valid library card. A borrower assumes full responsibility for all use made of the card. By accepting the card, the borrower agrees to comply with all Library rules and regulations; to pay all fines; and to be responsible for any loss or damage to materials.

### **Library Cards**

In order to obtain a borrower's card from the Joshua Hyde Public Library, adult patrons and children 12 or older need to:

- present a valid ID (driver's license or any postmarked item that has been received at their mailing address);
- indicate proof of their current mailing address;
- provide year of birth, telephone number and email address (if available).

Children under the age of 12 may obtain a card with their parent or legal guardian's permission. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for their children's behavior, safety, and welfare while their children are in the Library or on Library grounds. This includes their children's access to library materials and electronic resources. Library staff will not limit access to any resources for anyone, including children and teens.

It is the responsibility of parents or legal guardians to monitor the use of Library resources by their children and teens, and to determine whether to place their own restrictions on the materials accessed. The Joshua Hyde Public Library encourages parents and guardians to talk to their children and teens about the kinds of materials they believe are suitable for borrowing or accessing.

All borrowing procedures and fine allowances will follow C/W MARS guidelines.

Replacement cost for a lost card is \$1.00.

Any patron who forgets to bring their library card and can present a valid ID with an address that matches their library patron record may be allowed to borrow materials

Residents of other Massachusetts' communities with a state-certified public library may be granted borrowing privileges after presenting a valid ID and providing the same information necessary for obtaining a Joshua Hyde Public Library library card.

### **Out-of-State Residents**

Out-of-state residents who do not pay local taxes may apply for a card after paying an annual fee set by the Board of Trustees. Persons living outside Massachusetts may obtain a borrower's card by using their employment address as well as their permanent residence address.

### **Residents of Massachusetts Uncertified or De-Certified Public Libraries**

In accordance with the State's Minimum Standard for Public Service (Massachusetts General Laws, Ch. 78, Section 19B 1 & 6), the Joshua Hyde Public Library extends reciprocal borrowing privileges to the residents of the Commonwealth who reside in towns who also meet the standards.

Such reciprocity is not possible when a library ceases to provide services or reduces its hours below a reasonable level for the size of the community it serves.

It is, therefore, the policy of the Joshua Hyde Public Library to discontinue borrowing privileges to residents of communities that terminate library service or are de-certified by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

The Library Board of Trustees, Library Director, and municipal executives of the affected community will be notified in writing by the Joshua Hyde Public Library Board of Trustees when reciprocal borrowing privileges have been terminated.

The Joshua Hyde Public Library Board of Trustees agrees to provide reinstatement of borrowing privileges to all affected borrowers once a library has been re-certified.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, October 2020.

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**CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

The Library maintains a strict policy of confidentiality. To protect the privacy of our patrons, no information will be given from any Library record. When Library staff contacts patrons regarding overdue materials, every effort is made to contact the patron personally to ensure confidentiality. The staff will employ sensitivity and discretion when calling regarding children's overdue materials. Children are entitled to the same library privileges as adults.

Revised by the Board of Library Trustees, April 2021



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### **GIFT POLICIES**

The Joshua Hyde Public Library encourages and appreciates support of the Library by the community. Although the Library will gratefully accept all monetary gifts, we encourage donors to make any cash donations directly to the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library. The Friends are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation set up to do fund raising that enable library services not provided by the Town or by the Commonwealth. Additional information about the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library may be found at [www.sturbridgelibraryfriends.org](http://www.sturbridgelibraryfriends.org).

Gifts of books and other materials will be evaluated as described in the Collection Development Policy and added to the Library's collection, presented to another collection, sold by the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library, or discarded at the discretion of the Library Director and the Trustees. The Library reserves the right to refuse any gift. Donations will not be returned.

The Library is forbidden by law to act as an appraiser. If a receipt for tax purposes is required, please be aware that the donor is required to secure their own appraisal prior to the date of the gift and to attach the value to the donation.

Revised by the Board of Library Trustees, May 2021



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## **POLICY FOR PUBLIC USE OF THE INTERNET**

It is the mission of the Joshua Hyde Public Library to provide materials for information, for general educational advancement, and for the enrichment and recreation of its patrons. In support of this mission, the Library provides its patrons free access to computers and the internet. The internet allows users to connect to global resources, networks, and information, much of which may not be available in print. Library patrons are encouraged to take advantage of these services.

The Joshua Hyde Public Library does not produce or monitor, and has no control over, the information accessed through the internet. Likewise, the Library does not have complete knowledge of what might be available via the internet. Information on the internet may be reliable and current or it may be willfully inaccurate and out of date. The information may be unavailable at times. Patrons must be good and critical information consumers, questioning the validity of anything found on the internet. The Joshua Hyde Public Library cannot be held responsible for the content of the internet.

As with other library materials, a child's use of the internet is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian. The parent/legal guardian should guide their children in the use of the internet.

Staff will assist patrons with internet use as time permits but cannot offer personal instruction.

### **Unacceptable Use**

Patrons are expected to use the Library's computer and internet resources in a responsible manner, respecting the rights of others. It is not acceptable to use internet access for any purpose that violates federal or state law. Using Library computers to copy and distribute copyright protected works may be an infringement of the copyright law (Title 17 U.S. Code). Computer privileges may be suspended or revoked, at the discretion of the Librarian if a patron is found tampering with the computers. Examples of unacceptable use include, but are not limited to:

- disruptive behavior or harassment of other Library users or staff;
- invading the privacy of others;
- degrading or disrupting equipment, network, or system performance;
- destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the Library or other users;

- gaining unlawful access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities;
- unauthorized use of computer accounts, access codes, or identification numbers;
- disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications;
- violating software license agreements and copyright laws;
- violating other federal, state, or local laws;
- deliberately displaying obscene images.

## **Computer Usage**

- Patrons must sign up to use the Library’s computers. Each time slot is 1 hour long.
- Patrons may sign up for a maximum of two time slots. Any extension of a patron’s computer session beyond two hours will be at the discretion of the Librarian.
- Computers in the Children’s Room are reserved for patrons 12 years of age and under. No one over the age of 12 years may use those systems unless accompanied by a child.
- All computers must be shut down 20 minutes prior to the Library’s closing time.
- Printing services are available for a per-page fee.

## **Wireless Access**

Wireless internet access is available to patrons who use the Library’s laptop computers or who bring their own portable wireless devices to the Library. As with any wireless internet access service, the Library cannot guarantee either a secure connection, or any specific connection speed. The quality of the wireless service may vary depending upon the number of users connected, and their location within the Library or on the grounds.

Library staff will provide general information on the settings necessary to access the internet over our wireless connection. If a patron has problems accessing the internet over this connection, staff will only verify that the Library’s connection is operating normally. Staff will not perform troubleshooting on the patron’s own wireless device.

Since the Library cannot in any way guarantee a secure connection to the internet in a wireless environment, patrons are strongly advised to protect all devices that connect to the Library network by keeping their operating system(s) and all their software fully patched and up to date. They are likewise advised to utilize anti-malware (viruses, spyware, Trojans, etc.) software that has the most current updates available to prevent unauthorized access to their own wireless devices while they are in use. Wireless users are also advised not to transmit credit card information, passwords, or any other sensitive personal or financial information while using any Library connection.

This policy governs the use of the internet via the Library’s wireless access points in all areas within range of the connection, both inside and outside the building.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, November 2020.



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## **POLICIES FOR THE LOCAL HISTORY AREA**

The purpose of the Local History area of the Joshua Hyde Public Library is to house materials relating to the history of Sturbridge and the surrounding communities. The Library will attempt to gather materials and provide services relating to the Sturbridge community, including the lives and careers of individuals who have lived in, or have directly affected the community's development. Due to the limitations of space and staffing, the Library must set priorities on the types of material collected. These priorities are as follows:

- 1) The primary area of concentration is material relating to the history and heritage of Sturbridge.
  - a. General histories of Sturbridge, along with historical information regarding culture, events, buildings, businesses, organizations, government and people are actively collected.
  - b. Genealogies and information regarding Sturbridge and area families are collected, but overall, genealogy is not a primary focus of the collection.
  - c. Some historical maps will be collected.
- 2) Materials relating to the surrounding towns served most frequently by our library (Holland, Wales, Brimfield, the Brookfield's, Charlton) are the second area of concentration. Southbridge is not included in this list because of the extensive collection its public library offers in its Local History Room.
- 3) Histories of Massachusetts and prominent Massachusetts people.
- 4) Some histories of other New England states may be available, but will not be actively sought.

The Librarian and Trustees would like to state that we do not feel that we have either the facilities or the staffing required for collecting and retaining items that pertain to other areas of the state outside of those towns listed in priority #2.

### **GIFTS**

Donations of Local History materials are accepted. All donors should receive a copy of the Library Gift Policies when the gift is delivered to the library. The Policy states that gifts of books and other materials may be added to the library's collection, presented to another collection, sold by the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library, or discarded at the discretion of the Library Director and the Trustees.

### **USE OF COLLECTION - RULES AND REGULATIONS**

All materials must be used in either the Local History or the Reference areas of the library. Under no circumstances may any Local History item be removed from these areas. Both the public and the library staff must observe the following regulations:

- Please make certain that you have clean hands before using materials from the Local History area.
- Use only pencils in this area.
- Patrons should check with Library staff before photocopying any materials from the Local History Collection. Because of their fragile nature, some materials should not be photocopied at all. Some materials may be photocopied by staff only.

Library staff will be happy to assist patrons in using any materials from the Local History area.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, May 2012

## **MEETING ROOM POLICY**

The Joshua Hyde Public Library meeting room is made available without charge to local, non-profit groups for educational, informational, or cultural meetings or programs. No meeting is allowed that promotes any business, commercial, or religious activity. Reservations for use of the room are scheduled according to the following priorities:

1. Library sponsored or Library-related activities;
2. Non-profit organizations based in Sturbridge;
3. Non-profit organizations from out of town;
4. Two or more individuals wishing a private workspace, of which some may be remote;
5. Profit-making organizations based in Sturbridge;
6. Profit-making organizations from out of town.

### **FEES**

Fees charged for use of the Meeting Room are as follows:

- Room is free for all non-profit groups;
- \$25.00 per day (4-hour maximum) for profit-making organizations based in Sturbridge;
- \$40.00 per day (4-hour maximum) for profit-making organizations from out of town;
- Fees must be paid before reservation begins.
- Fees will not be refunded except in the case of natural disasters, or if the Library must cancel the event.

### **DATES AND TIMES AVAILABLE**

All meetings must take place during hours the Library is open, and must conclude at least 15 minutes before the Library is scheduled to close in order to allow sufficient time for staff lock-up procedures.

### **APPLICATIONS**

Organizations or individuals wishing to use the Meeting Room must contact the Library in advance of the desired meeting date(s). Requests may be made via the online form at the Library's website, via telephone or in person and must indicate a person of legal age (18) who will be responsible for the room. All requests must specify the date desired (Month, Day, Year). Reservations will be accepted a maximum of three (3) months in advance. A group may not reserve the meeting room for use more than four (4) times within a one-month timespan without prior approval from the Library Director.

Meeting Room privileges are granted on a first-come, first-served basis in accordance with the Priority List given above. Set-up of the Meeting Room is the responsibility of the requesting individual or organization. Any individual or organization using the Meeting Room is expected to leave the room set-up as they found it.

### **CANCELLATIONS**

The Meeting Room will be held for no more than 15 minutes from the time your reservation begins before being made available to other patrons. Cancellations must be made more than 48

hours in advance via email, telephone, or in person. Cancellations without sufficient notification more than two (2) times in a six (6) month period may result in denial of future reservation requests.

## **REFRESHMENTS**

Organizations may bring in their own refreshments (such as cheese/crackers, fruit, cookies, coffee/tea). Any food served hot is not permitted. Refreshments may be consumed only in the Meeting Room area. The Library cannot provide refreshments or utensils. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the premises at any time without proper licensing from the Town of Sturbridge.

## **VISUAL AIDS**

A/V equipment including a large smart screen with speakers, microphone, Blu-ray/DVD player, Bluetooth and HDMI connectivity is installed in the meeting room and available for use. Additionally, the Library can provide a laptop. If you plan to use either the A/V equipment or a laptop, it must be indicated on our online reservation form so staff can be available to assist with setup. Organizations requiring other visual aids, such as whiteboard, flip chart etc., must provide their own.

## **FACILITIES**

- Wi-Fi is available in the Library. Please see the Internet Policy for more information.
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the Library at any time.
- Due to limited space, materials and supplies may not be stored in the Library.
- The telephone is for use only by Library personnel.
- The Library may not be used as a mailing address for any outside organization.
- Please remember to silence any cell phones and to refrain from using them outside of the Meeting Room.

## **MEETING ROOM CONDITION**

Any group using the Meeting Room is responsible for its overall condition after its meeting. A trash basket and recycling container are provided. Privileges will be revoked for any group that does not leave the Meeting Room in satisfactory condition.

Library personnel will cooperate in every way possible to make your meetings a success. Please address any questions to the Library Director.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, June 2025

**Joshua Hyde Public Library**  
306 Main Street  
Sturbridge, Massachusetts 01566-0186  
(508) 347-2512  
[www.SturbridgeLibrary.org](http://www.SturbridgeLibrary.org)

## **PATRON BEHAVIOR POLICY**

In order to ensure that every patron of the Joshua Hyde Public Library has the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the Library in a comfortable and safe environment, all people visiting or using the Library's facilities or services must comply with the Joshua Hyde Public Library Patron Behavior Policy while on the Library's premises. The Library reserves the sole right to determine what it considers to be disruptive or inappropriate behavior by the patrons in the Library.

Dangerous, destructive, or illegal conduct, including but not limited to the following, will not be tolerated:

- physical abuse or assault, including fighting or challenging others to fight;
- engaging in intimidating or harassing behaviors, including following or stalking other patrons or Library staff, staring fixedly or leering at others;
- damaging, destroying, stealing, or otherwise vandalizing Library property.

Any patron engaging in one or more of the above behaviors will be instructed to leave the Library immediately and may have Library privileges suspended for a period of up to one (1) year depending on the severity of the violation. In addition, law enforcement may be called and appropriate legal action may follow.

The following behaviors are also prohibited:

- using harassing, obscene, abusive, or insulting language or gestures;
- leaving children under the age of eleven (11) unattended by a parent, guardian, or caregiver;
- disrupting other patrons by talking, gesturing, or interfering with their ability to read, study, contemplate, or otherwise use the Library;
- interfering with Library staff's performance of their duties;
- entering the Library with animals other than service animals authorized by law;
- making loud or unreasonable noise, including but not limited to the use of electronic equipment or mobile telephones at a volume that disturbs others. Ringer volumes should be set to silent or vibrate;
- petitioning, soliciting, or selling merchandise or services without written permission from the Library Director, including the distribution of handbills or flyers;

- refusal to follow reasonable direction from Library staff, including but not limited to leaving the Library during normal closing procedures or following a suspension of Library privileges or refusing to evacuate during an emergency.

### **Unattended adults**

Adults who are not accompanied by children may not use the Children's Room as a reading or sitting area. Materials may be taken to the Main Floor and enjoyed there. Adults who are not accompanied by children may not attend children's programs.

**Engaging in any of the above behaviors may result in Library privileges being suspended for a period of up to one year.**

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, March 2021

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## **UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY**

The responsibility for the wellbeing, safety, and behavior of children in the Library rests with the person who transported the child to the Library and not with Library staff. The Library does not provide daycare services, and Library staff cannot be responsible for children who are unattended or are demonstrating inappropriate behavior. Children who exhibit inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the Library. If the child is not of sufficient age and maturity to be able to leave the Library without a parent or caregiver he/she may not be in the Library without a parent or caregiver.

The following guidelines will be followed concerning the care and behavior of children:

- Children 8 and under must have a parent/caregiver in the immediate vicinity of (and in visual contact with) the child. Children may be left in the care of an older sibling if that sibling is at least 15 years old.
- Children ages 9-11 must have a parent/caregiver in the Library.
- If any child 11 years or younger is found unattended, Library staff will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver and inform him/her of the Unattended Child Policy. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, Library staff will contact the Sturbridge Police Department.
- Any child regardless of age who exhibits inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the Library. In such cases Library staff will attempt to locate the child's parent/caregiver. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, Library staff will contact the Sturbridge Police Department.

### **Specifically for library programs:**

- Unless otherwise specified at the time any Library program begins, the above policies remain in effect. Children 8 and under are expected to be accompanied by a parent/caregiver at all times.
- Occasionally the library offers a program in which the parent or other adult caregiver is not required to attend with their child. In these cases, the child must be brought to the librarian running the program and checked in. The adult must remain in the Library. Upon completion of the program, parents/caregivers must pick up their child from the librarian.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, March 2013. Reaffirmed February 2017