



SOUTHERN ADIRONDACK
LIBRARY SYSTEM

April 12, 2023

The Southern Adirondack Library is a cooperative public library system with thirty-four-member public libraries. Our strength lies in the autonomy of each library, which has an independent staff, boards of trustees, and policies reflecting the community they serve.

Each library has a board-approved community-based plan of service that guides the programs, collections, budget, and services each provides to its community.

The Southern Adirondack Library System believes diverse, accessible, culturally inclusive programming benefits everyone and is worthy of public support and funding. Individuals are encouraged to decide what programs they attend, and materials they borrow, and parents may choose to guide their children's viewing and reading. It is not up to individuals to decide what others may enjoy or find beneficial.

Public libraries oppose attempts to suppress library services, materials, or programs and celebrate the freedom of expression, the right to read freely, and the First Amendment. We have a professional obligation to ensure that all library users have free and equal access to the entire range of library services, materials, and programs.

We welcome everyone to visit their local library and connect with the wealth of information and resources available.

Established December 1, 1967, the Office for Intellectual Freedom is charged with implementing ALA policies concerning the concept of intellectual freedom as embodied in the *Library Bill of Rights*, the Association's basic policy on free access to libraries, information and library materials. The goal of the office is to educate librarians and the general public about the nature and importance of intellectual freedom in all aspects of library work.

The American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights provides guidelines regarding exhibits and exhibit spaces to assist libraries in upholding free speech and rights. Libraries protect rights and fundamental freedoms relating to free speech and freedom of expression, as well as open dialogue and constructive discussion enshrined in the First Amendment.

At the very minimum the library, and its accompanying exhibit spaces, should provide a safe space for the free and open exchange of ideas. Exhibits and artworks should feature broad and diverse viewpoints, no censorship of exhibit material should be imposed by the Library. If any restrictions are imposed, they must be reasonable and not an effort to suppress a specific viewpoint while allowing for the expression of others.

According to the Library Bill of Rights: Libraries should not shrink from developing exhibits because of controversial content or because of the beliefs or affiliation of those whose work is represented. Just as libraries do not endorse the viewpoints of those whose work is represented in their collections, libraries also do not endorse the beliefs or viewpoints of topics that may be the subject of library exhibits.²⁹

In addition, the library should not censor or remove an exhibit because some members of the community may disagree with its content. Those who object to the content of any exhibit held at the library should be able to submit their complaint and/or their own exhibit proposal. Libraries may wish to post a permanent notice near the exhibit area stating that the library does not advocate or endorse the viewpoints of exhibits or exhibitors.