Trenton Free Public Library Request for Removal Policy

LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Trenton Free Public Library is to provide the citizens of Trenton with information resources along with programs and activities that meet and anticipate the educational, cultural, social, and recreational needs of the community. The Library is a bridge that connects the community to literacy, guides learning, and inspires curiosity. It also has a special responsibility to conserve, preserve, and make accessible the records of Trenton's rich historical past.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Trenton Free Public Library's Request for Removal policy ensures that the provisions of the Freedom to Read Act are followed and that the library's collection responds to the local community's needs as outlined in its mission statement.

REASON FOR POLICY

The purpose of the policy is to provide standards for the curation of library material; establish criteria for removal of existing library material or library material selected for inclusion in the public library; and provide protection against attempts to censor library material.

This policy supports the mission of the Trenton Free Public Library by helping ensure that the collection remains responsive to the educational, cultural, social, and recreational needs of the community. By establishing clear and consistent standards for the selection, retention, and removal of materials, the policy supports equitable access to information, encourages learning and curiosity, and helps the Library maintain a diverse and relevant collection that reflects the community it serves. The policy also supports the Library's responsibility to preserve and make accessible materials that document Trenton's history and heritage. Consistent with the Freedom to Read Act, decisions concerning library materials shall be based on established collection-development standards and the Library's mission rather than on attempts to restrict access to materials because of their content, viewpoint, or the ideas they express.

DEFINITIONS

Censorship. Means to block, suppress, or remove library material based on disagreement with a viewpoint, idea, or concept, or solely because an individual finds certain content offensive, but does not include limiting or restricting access to any library material deemed developmentally inappropriate for certain age groups.

Governing body. Means a board of trustees, director or other chief administrative officer, a county library commission, or board of county commissioners of a public library.

Individual with a vested interest. Any resident who is served by the public library or residents in a county or municipality where the library is situated.

Library material. Means any material, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books; magazines; reference books; supplementary titles; multimedia and digital material; software and instructional material, belonging to, on loan to, or otherwise in the custody of a public library.

Review committee. The governing body will appoint a review committee consisting of:

- At least one member of the governing body;
- A librarian employed by the library;
- A non-librarian staff member familiar with the library materials;
- A representative selected by the governing body;
- A resident serviced by the public library, provided the resident selected is not the individual who submitted the form;
- Any additional members the governing body deems necessary.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Individuals with a vested interest may submit the request for removal form to the governing body of the Trenton Free Public Library with the purpose of initiating a review of the material. A separate form must be submitted for each request.

Individuals with a vested interest must completely and fully fill out the Trenton Free Public Library's Request form.

The Trenton Free Public Library's governing body must create a request for removal form based on the model removal form established by the State Librarian; and

- Appoint a review committee as defined in this policy.
- Review the committee's report and make a final determination on whether the material is to be removed from the Library or limited in use. The governing body shall provide a written statement of reasons for:
    - Removal, limitation, or non-removal of a library material; and
    - Any final determination that is contrary to the recommendations of the review committee; and
    - Provide that the library material that has been shall not be subject to a subsequent challenge for at least one year.

The review committee must:

- Review the challenged materials.
- Report in writing its recommendations to the governing body on whether to remove the library material within 30 business days from the date of receiving the form.
- Provide a copy of the report to the individual with the vested interest who filed the form.

RESPONSE

The Governing body's recommendation(s) must discuss the reasons for:

- Removal, limitation, or non-removal of a library material; and
- Any final determination that is contrary to the recommendations of the review committee, and;
- Provide that the library material that has been challenged shall not be subject to a subsequent challenge for at least one year;

CONTACT

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