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# POLICY MANUAL

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AMHERST TOWN LIBRARY  
14 Main Street Amherst, NH 03031

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# Circulation Policy

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Approved: 10/17/2012

Amended: 5/20/2014; 04/18/2016; 05/15/2017; 05/2/2019; 09/20/21

## Access to Materials

The Amherst Town Library welcomes all individuals to use its collections and services within the library facility. Free and open access to the total library is essential to the role of the public library.

In accordance with Article V of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the Amherst Town Library does not restrict access to any materials on the basis of a person's gender identification, race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical ability, or age.

The Amherst Town Library adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and makes every attempt to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities with regard to use of the library facility, participation in library activities, and attendance at library programs.

In order to borrow library materials, the Amherst Town Library requires that individuals establish a library account according to the guidelines outlined below.

## Registration and Eligibility

- 1) Application for a library account may be completed in person or online through the library catalog.
- 2) To obtain a library card, individuals must appear in person and present *required documentation* (see Appendix A).
- 3) The Library does not distribute library cards through the mail or disseminate library card numbers over the phone or by email.
- 4) Library accounts are available for free to anyone living, working, or owning property in Amherst. Accounts are also available to Amherst students and institutions, and to non-residents for a fee (see Appendix A).
- 5) In the interest of good customer service, Residents and Non-Resident Property Holders, Town Employees, and Students who are able to present proof of identity but unable to present proof of eligibility at the time of registration may be granted a *provisional account* (see Appendix B). Individuals with a provisional account must present required documentation for eligibility (see Appendix A) on their next library visit to validate their account.
- 6) All library cardholders (see Appendix B) receive the same benefits and levels of service regardless of Resident or Non-Resident status.

## Library User Records

In accordance with NH RSA 91-A:5 and RSA 201-D:11, library user records are confidential. The Amherst Town Library will not divulge titles that are currently checked out, items that are overdue, or materials that have been requested to anyone other than the library cardholder without the express permission of the cardholder.

## Borrowing Privileges and Responsibilities

### 1) Checking out Materials

- a) Individuals should present a *valid card* (see Appendix B) to borrow circulating library materials. Exceptions will be made for individuals with a provisional account on their first visit.
- b) If a cardholder cannot present their card at the time of checkout, a current photo ID displaying their name and address (such as a driver's license) will be accepted. If the address on the ID does not match the Library's records, the cardholder is required to verify their address verbally before checkout. Cardholders will be assessed a fee (see Appendix D) to replace a lost card.
- c) Library cardholders (or the parent or guardian of a cardholder under age 18) are financially responsible for all items checked out to their account. Library users are expected to treat the library materials carefully and respectfully. Materials should be returned to the library in the condition in which they were borrowed.
- d) Most library materials are available to be checked out for home use. Select items may be designated for in-library use only. Items circulate for a specified period based on the type of material (see Appendix C).

### 2) Self-Checkout

Cardholders may checkout circulating library materials at the ExpressCheck terminal using a valid library card (see Appendix B) or by entering the username and password associated with their account.

### 3) Loan Limits

The Library does not impose a limit on the number of physical materials a cardholder may borrow at any time. Limits on digital materials may apply.

### 4) Renewing Materials

- a) Materials will be automatically renewed twice unless a cardholder has *excessive fees* on their account (See Appendix B).
- b) Renewals are not available on materials with requests or on Hot Books & Hot DVDs (see Appendix C).
- c) An additional renewal may be granted for books over 500 pages and audiobooks containing more than 15 discs.

### 5) Returning Materials

Library materials may be returned in the library, in the outdoor book drops, or to another GMILCS library (see Appendix E). Interlibrary loans must be returned to the Amherst Town Library.

### 6) Overdue Materials

- a) The Amherst Town Library does not charge overdue fines.

- b) Cardholders will be notified if they fail to return library materials on or before their due date.
  - c) Notices are delivered on a regular schedule to the selected notification method in the cardholder's account.
  - d) If materials are not returned after delivery of overdue notices, cardholders will be billed for the replacement cost of the materials.
  - e) Bills will be sent via USPS to the cardholder's mailing address.
- 7) Lost Materials and Damaged Materials
- a) Cardholders will be charged the replacement cost of materials that are lost or damaged beyond repair (see Appendix D).
  - b) Cardholders may be assessed a fee for materials which are damaged but repairable at the discretion of library staff.
  - c) Cardholders may be assessed a fee rather than the replacement cost of the material when the Library is able to replace a part of a lost or damaged material (i.e. one disc of an audiobook, instructional booklet, hanging bag).
- 8) Payments, Waivers, Refunds
- a) The library accepts cash and check payments. Debit card and credit card payments are also available through the online catalog.
  - b) At the discretion of the Library Director, the Library will accept replacements in lieu of payment, for the full cost of lost or damaged materials.
  - c) Lost items that have been paid for may have replacement costs refunded if items are found and returned within three months from the date of payment, *only if the Library has not yet purchased a replacement*. There is no refund for lost Interlibrary Loan materials.
- 9) Reserving Materials
- Requests for materials will be fulfilled in the order in which they were placed. Cardholders that fail to retrieve a reserved material by the pickup date indicated in their account forfeit their position in the queue and will need to request the material again.
- 10) Lost or Stolen Cards
- Library cardholders are responsible for all materials checked out on their library account. Cardholders agree to report lost or stolen library cards immediately. After reporting the loss, cardholders will not be held responsible for any materials that are subsequently checked out on the account, or for charges on such materials.
- If a lost or stolen card is returned to the library, it will be held at the Circulation desk for 30 days. In order to obtain a replacement card or reactivate a lost card a photo ID is required. Replacement cards are subject to a fee (see Appendix D).

#### 11) Change of Address

It is the responsibility of cardholders to keep their account accurate and up-to-date. Changes of name, phone number, email, and address should be reported to library staff or updated through the “my account” feature of the online catalog.

#### 12) Library Card Renewals

Cardholders must renew their library cards on or before the expiration date for uninterrupted access to library materials and services.

- a) To renew an expired library account a cardholder must provide required documentation with the name and current address of the cardholder (see Appendix A).
- b) Documentation may be provided by the cardholder in person or electronically through the library website.

The Amherst Town Library may purge the records of those cardholders whose accounts have expired.

#### 13) Closing a Library Account

All library materials must be returned to the library and all fees paid before an account may be closed. It is the responsibility of the cardholder to verify that all materials have been received by the library and that there is no outstanding account balance.

#### 14) Revocation of Library Privileges

The library reserves the right to restrict or revoke a library account if borrowing privileges are abused. Borrowing privileges may also be suspended if a cardholder has excessive fees (see Appendix B).

### Common Borrower Card

The Amherst Town Library has entered a reciprocal borrowing agreement with other libraries within the GMILCS consortium. The agreement enables Amherst Town Library cardholders to check items out from the other libraries in the consortium. Libraries may choose to limit access to certain collections. A valid library card (or current photo ID displaying the patron’s name and address) must be presented to use the service. If the address on the ID does not match the address in the library database, the patron is required to verify their address verbally before checkout. The policies of the lending library will prevail so patrons should be aware that loan periods, fine schedules, etc. may differ from those at the Amherst Town Library. Items may be returned and fines may be paid at any participating libraries. Reparations for lost or damaged items should be made with the owning library.

Items obtained through interlibrary loan are subject to the Interlibrary Loan policies and procedures even if they are borrowed from a GMILCS library.

## Appendix A -Account Types, Eligibility, and Required Documentation to Validate Registration

Account Type	Eligibility	Required Documentation
<p><b>RESIDENT</b></p> <p>Accounts must be renewed every six years.</p>	<p>Individuals who, regardless of age, identify Amherst as their legal domicile.</p>	<p><b>Proof of Identity &amp; Residency</b></p> <p>Documentation that shows the individual’s name and physical address (not a P.O. box).</p> <p>Acceptable documentation for <b>identity</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● U.S. driver’s license</li> <li>● ID card issued by federal or state government agency</li> </ul> <p>Acceptable documentation for <b>residency</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● U.S. driver’s license</li> <li>● auto registration</li> <li>● checkbook</li> <li>● recent utility bill/e-bill</li> <li>● recent property tax statement</li> <li>● lease or mortgage papers</li> <li>● posted mail with name of applicant</li> </ul> <p>As a substitute for residency documentation another Amherst Town Library cardholder may attest to the residency of a person in the same household or community (either in person or by submitting a letter with their name, address, and the name of the individual applying for a library card).</p> <p><i>In the case of minors (persons under the age of 18), as a substitute for an ID, an accompanying adult who has an ID for the same address may vouch for the identity of a minor and show proof of residency for the minor wishing to obtain a library card.</i></p>

<p><b>NON-RESIDENT</b> Business/Property Owners</p> <p>Accounts must be renewed every six years</p>	<p>Individuals who own property within the town boundaries and support the Amherst Town Library through their taxes.</p>	<p><b>Proof of Identity &amp; Ownership</b></p> <p>Documentation that shows the individual’s name and physical address (not a P.O. box).</p> <p>Acceptable documentation for <b>identity</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● U.S. driver’s license</li> <li>● ID card issued by federal or state government agency</li> </ul> <p>Acceptable documentation for <b>ownership</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● recent property tax statement</li> <li>● recent utility bill/e-bill</li> <li>● recent property tax statement</li> <li>● lease or mortgage papers</li> </ul>
<p><b>NON-RESIDENT</b> Town Employees</p> <p>Accounts must be renewed annually.</p>	<p>Individuals who work in the Town of Amherst</p>	<p><b>Proof of Identity &amp; Employment</b></p> <p>Documentation that shows the individual’s name and physical address (not a P.O. box), and the individual’s workplace address.</p> <p>Acceptable documentation for <b>identity</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● U.S. driver’s license</li> <li>● ID card issued by federal or state government agency</li> <li>● work badge with photo</li> </ul> <p>Acceptable documentation for <b>employment</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● paycheck stub</li> <li>● work badge</li> <li>● letter from Employer</li> </ul>
<p><b>NON-RESIDENT</b> Students</p> <p>All student accounts expire September 1 and must be renewed annually.</p>	<p>Students currently enrolled at the Amherst Middle School or Souhegan High School</p>	<p><b>Proof of Identity &amp; Enrollment</b></p> <p>Documentation that shows the individual’s name and physical address (not a P.O. box)</p> <p>Acceptable documentation for <b>identity</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● U.S. driver’s license</li> <li>● ID card issued by federal or state government agency</li> <li>● student ID</li> </ul> <p>Acceptable documentation for <b>enrollment</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● student ID</li> <li>● official copy of current class schedule</li> <li>● report card</li> </ul>



<p><b>NON-RESIDENT</b></p> <p>Other</p> <p>Accounts must be renewed annually.</p>	<p>Non-residents who do not own property, work, or go to school in Amherst may establish an account for an annual fee (see Appendix D).</p> <p>An account for another individual in the same household is available for a one-time fee (see Appendix D).</p>	<p><b>Proof of Identity &amp; Address</b></p> <p>Documentation that shows the individual’s name and physical address (not a P.O. box).</p> <p>Acceptable documentation for identity includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● U.S. driver’s license</li> <li>● ID card issued by federal or state government agency</li> </ul> <p>Acceptable documentation of <b>address</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● U.S. driver’s license</li> <li>● ID card issued by federal or state government agency</li> <li>● auto registration</li> <li>● checkbook</li> <li>● recent utility bill/e-bill</li> <li>● recent property tax statement</li> <li>● lease or mortgage papers</li> </ul>
<p><b>INSTITUTION</b></p> <p>Accounts must be renewed annually.</p>	<p>An Institutional account established for a nonprofit organization or institutions within the Town of Amherst at the discretion of the Library Director.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the institution to provide the Library with a list of approved borrowers annually. Users of an institutional account card may borrow circulating library materials for an extended period (see Appendix C) in pursuit of the institution’s activities. This account membership is not intended for personal use.</p>	<p>Nonprofit organizations or institutions may request a library card by submitting the following information on letterhead, signed by an individual authorized to act on behalf of the organization:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A statement indicating that the organization accepts responsibility for any fines and/or replacement of materials</li> <li>2. The names of all individuals who are authorized to use the card.</li> </ol>

## Appendix B – Definitions

*Cardholder* - Individual account holder whose identity and eligibility has been verified.

*Excessive fees* - Account charges in excess of \$10.00.

*Overdue* - Status of library materials that were not returned before the library opens on the day following the due date, nor renewed by midnight on the due date.

*Provisional account* - A temporary Amherst Town Library account offered to Residents and Non-Resident Property Holders, Town Employees, and Students who are able to present proof of identity but unable to present proof of eligibility at the time of registration. *A provisional account is validated when the individual presents required documentation for eligibility.*

*Valid card* - An Amherst Town Library card that identifies its owner as the library account holder. A valid card is not expired and does not have excessive fees. Library cards stored on smartphone apps are acceptable.

## Appendix C – Loan and Renewal Periods

<b>Type of Material</b>	<b>Loan Period</b>	<b>Renewal Period</b>	<b># of Renewals</b>
All Materials (except those excluded below)	14 days	14 days	2 renewals (if no requests)
Hot Books & Hot DVDs	7 days	--	No renewals
Interlibrary Loan	14 days	14 days	1 renewal
Institutional Loan (all materials)	30 days	--	

Extended/ vacation loans available upon request; excluding Hot Books, Hot DVDs, and items with Holds

## Appendix D – Fee schedule

Non-Resident Card	\$100.00 (Annual)
Additional Non-Resident Family Card	\$5.00 (One -time)
Replacement Card	\$2.00
Lost Materials (except as itemized)	Retail purchase price of the item
Magazines	\$5.00
DVD Cases	\$2.00
Hanging Bags	\$2.00

## Appendix E – GMILCS Libraries

Bedford Public Library

Danforth Library (New England College)

Derry Public Library

Goffstown Public Library

Hooksett Public Library

Kelley Library (Salem)

Manchester City Library & West Manchester Community Library

Merrimack Public Library

Nesmith Library (Windham)

Teti Library (New England College)

Wadleigh Memorial Library (Milford)

# Reference Service Policy

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Approved: 09/17/2012

## Statement of Library's Mission

The Amherst Town Library shall strive to provide all community residents with materials and services for their information, education and entertainment needs.

## Mission of the Reference Department

It is the mission of the Reference Department to effectively meet the community residents' information, education, and entertainment needs by bringing the library's resources and potential users together through a variety of services. The Reference Staff is committed to providing excellent customer service to *all* research requests in an attentive, prompt, accurate, and professional manner. Intellectual freedom and respect for confidentiality are the foundation of our services. The Reference Department affirms the Library Bill of Rights and Code of Ethics as stated by the American Library Association. In this rapidly changing information environment, we, as professional Reference Librarians, take actions each day to stay current and up-to-date in our knowledge of information sources and strive to respond to the specific needs of our community of library users. Reference service is available to all persons served by the Library regardless of age, sex, religion, race, social, or economic status.

## Purpose of this Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy statement is to provide the Staff with a compendium of information policies that promote a uniform standard of service of the highest possible quality for all library patrons.

This policy is designed both to orient new Staff members and to be an information resource for more experienced Staff.

The Head of Reference will endeavor to review the policy annually for currency, accuracy, and completeness. Specific changes will be made throughout the year as the need for them arises.

## General Guidelines for Reference Service

### Priorities

Service to the public receives priority over any other duties. Other tasks and professional assignments are secondary. In-person patron requests are handled first. Telephone, email, fax, and mail requests are responded to in a timely manner and meet the library users' communicated time needs. Questions that remain unanswered at the end of a Reference Librarian's desk shift may be passed on to the incoming Reference Librarian if deemed necessary. Staff members are encouraged to consult with colleagues if they need help with a difficult question. If the requested information cannot be provided within 24 hours, the patron should be notified of the status of the request. The Library's primary responsibility is to Amherst Town Library patrons. Only basic reference service is

provided for requests from those who are not Amherst Town Library cardholders. Library users with time-consuming inquiries who are not Amherst Town Library cardholders may be referred to the public library in their own community, if appropriate; and, in cases where the Amherst Town Library has special resources in Staff or materials, and the needs of the user seem to warrant it, assistance beyond the routine may be given. In answering Reference questions, authoritative and reputable sources are consulted and cited after a complete Reference Interview is conducted. The Reference Department will actively communicate the scope, nature, and availability of the information services we offer.

## Information Access

The Reference Department will maintain innovative and effective tools for meeting the community residents' information needs. These tools include a customer friendly web site, excellent print and non-print information sources, and useful and relevant electronic databases available in the library and remotely. Collection decisions affirm the Amherst Town Library's Reference Collection Development Policy. The library's building shall not be a boundary to its information services. The Reference Department offers Reference Service to information seekers at the place where they are when they have a question and will endeavor to be progressive in seeking new technologies available to communicate with library users. Photocopies provided to patrons in conjunction with the answering of Reference questions are free.

## Education, Culture and Entertainment Access

The Reference Department offers educational, cultural and entertainment opportunities in the following ways: one-on-one or "group" help with research needs; one-on-one assistance in computer applications; and, cultural and entertainment programs that respond to the needs of the community and affirm the role of the library as a community gathering and information center.

## Interlibrary Service

The Reference Department offers excellent interlibrary loan services to support the diverse research needs and to satisfy the broad reading interests of all Amherst Town Library patrons. For detailed interlibrary loan policies and procedures, please see the Interlibrary Loan Policy section.

# Interlibrary Loan Policy

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*Approved: 11/1/2019*

Interlibrary Loan is a transaction in which the Amherst Town Library borrows materials directly from another library on behalf of a patron, or another library borrows materials from the Amherst Town Library on behalf of its patron.

Interlibrary Loan is a primary service that supports the mission of the library by providing enhanced access to library materials and information. The purpose of Interlibrary Loan is to obtain materials not available in our collection and to provide materials from our collection to other libraries. Interlibrary Loan is not a substitute for the library's collection.

## Making Requests

The Amherst Town Library accepts interlibrary loan requests, for both borrowing and lending: in person, by phone, by email, through NHAIS (for both patron initiated requests and NHAIS libraries), and ALA-approved forms (via email, mail, or van service).

## Conditions of Service

In delivery of Interlibrary Loan services both in borrowing and in lending, the Staff will follow procedures established at the Amherst Town Library in accordance with the standards of the American Library Association's Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States, the United States Copyright Law and the United States Commission on New Technological Uses of Copyrighted Works (CONTU) Guidelines, federal and state laws governing confidentiality of records, the New Hampshire State Library System, and GMILCS, Inc.

## Turnaround Time

The Amherst Town Library makes every effort to respond to all requests within 3 weekdays.

## ILL Borrowing

### Patron Borrowers

Any patron holding a valid library card from the Amherst Town Library may borrow materials. (See Appendix A for Types of Materials Borrowed)

### Conditions of Use

The Amherst Town Library will observe any restrictions or limitations of loaned materials that are imposed by a lending library.

### Charges

The Amherst Town Library does not impose a fee for borrowing materials through Interlibrary Loan.

For requests to libraries outside the New Hampshire State Van delivery system the Amherst Town Library reserves the right to charge for any cost imposed by the lending library, including photocopying, general fees, insurance or postage costs, which exceed \$10.00.

## Responsibility

The patron is responsible for adhering to the Amherst Town Library's Circulation Policy for all interlibrary loan items. Requested items should be picked up within 1 week of notification. Interlibrary Loan items are returned by patrons to the Amherst Town Library at completion of the patron's loan period. The Amherst Town Library then processes the item for return to the lending library.

## Statistics

The Amherst Town Library will maintain records of current transactions in order to inform patrons of the status of their requests and will annually report activity (numbers of transactions) as required to the New Hampshire State Library.

## ILL Lending

### Borrowing Libraries

The Amherst Town Library will loan materials to all libraries. (See Appendix B for Types of Materials Loaned)

### Charges

The Amherst Town Library will charge the borrowing library for materials that are damaged or lost on Interlibrary Loan. The cost will reflect the replacement cost of the item plus a \$2.00 processing fee.

For requests from libraries outside the New Hampshire State Van delivery system the Amherst Town Library reserves the right to charge for any cost incurred, including photocopying, insurance or postage costs, which exceed \$10.00.

## Contact Information

Amherst Town Library (HSDG)

14 Main Street

Amherst, NH 03031

Phone: (603-)673-2288

Website: [www.amherstlibrary.org](http://www.amherstlibrary.org)

Email: [ill@amherstlibrary.org](mailto:ill@amherstlibrary.org)

## Appendix A: Types of Materials Borrowed

Type of Material	Can this be borrowed and requested through ILL
Materials not owned by ATL	Yes
ATL materials with a missing status	Yes
ATL materials in repair or unavailable	Yes
Additional copies of materials owned by ATL for book clubs and school reading lists	Yes

## Appendix B: Materials We Lend & Loan Period

Type of Material	Available for ILL Loan	Loan Period	Renewal Period
All Materials (except those excluded below)	Yes	6 Weeks	If all parties involved agree to an extended loan period
READS-TO-GO Book Club Kits	Yes	8 Weeks	If all parties involved agree to an extended loan period
Reference Collection Materials	No	--	--
Archival Collection Materials	No	--	--
Hot Books & DVDs	No	--	--
Newspapers	No	--	--



## Meeting Room Policy

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*Approved: 09/09/2010*

*Amended: 01/25/2022*

The Amherst Town Library welcomes everyone with inviting spaces for collaborative interaction and public use. Meeting rooms are available so that people may gather to exchange ideas, access and share information, and participate in community activities.

Meeting rooms shall be made available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of the individual or group making the request.

Permission to use the Library's meeting rooms does not imply endorsement of the beliefs, policies, practices, or program of any individual or group by the Amherst Town Library, the Trustees of the Amherst Town Library, or the Town of Amherst.

### Priorities of Use

Priority for meeting room use is given to library-sponsored activities.

Provision of meeting room space is not the primary mission of the library, and must always be subordinate to the paramount need to provide a safe, peaceful, and respectful environment for library pursuits.

### Public Nature of Use

All meetings and events must be of an educational, cultural, or civic nature.

Meeting rooms may be used for meetings by non-profit groups engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, charitable, advocacy, civic, religious, or political activities, and that are based in Amherst or serving Amherst residents.

Individual use is permitted by local students for public presentations to fulfill education requirements or scouting advancement/achievements (i.e. Souhegan High School senior projects, BSA Eagle Scout or Girl Scout Gold/Silver award presentations).

Meeting rooms shall not be reserved or used for social gatherings or private parties (including but not limited to birthday parties, showers, potlucks, banquets, graduations, weddings, memorials, or family reunions) or fundraising events.

Public use of meeting rooms shall not interfere with library operations.

Meetings and events that interfere with patrons in their customary use of library facilities, impede library staff in the performance of their duties, or endanger the library building or collection are not permitted.

All library policies apply to activity in the meeting rooms.

Those attending meetings are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the library's "Unattended Children Policy" and "Patron Behavior Policy." Any violation of conduct should be reported to staff. The further use of meeting rooms may be denied to individuals or groups who disregard library regulations.

All meetings and events must be open to all members of the public and news media.

Activities taking place in the meeting rooms must not be closed to any person in any legally protected category, including but not limited to age, gender, sex, race, religion, marital status, political affiliation, national origin, or disabling condition. Library staff reserve the right to attend meetings and events at any time.

All meetings and events must be accessible to all.

Users of library meeting rooms must comply with all applicable local, State and Federal laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, such as by hiring an interpreter or providing auxiliary aids when requested by the public.

All meetings and events must be free of charge for those attending.

Retail sales are not allowed.

### Application/ Reservations

1. Reservations are approved in order of receipt.
2. An Amherst member of the organization must sponsor non-local organizations.
3. A valid library card is required to use the online room request system. Amherst residents without a card may still be eligible to reserve the facilities and should call the library for assistance.
4. Meeting Room reservations may be made up to six months in advance.
5. Because of the high demand for meeting space, groups will be limited to 1 reservation per month or 12 reservations per year. Exceptions will be made based on availability.

### Cancellations

The Library reserves the right to cancel a reservation due to weather or some other emergency. When the library closes because of a facility or weather-related emergency, reasonable efforts will be made to notify individuals or groups scheduled to use a meeting room.

## Indemnification

By using a Library Meeting Room, individuals and groups agree to hold the Library Board of Trustees, and the Town of Amherst, and all library staff, harmless from and to indemnify them against all costs, damages, losses, claims, and expenses incurred, directly or indirectly, as a result of meeting room use. Such costs, damages, losses, claims, and expenses shall include, without limitation, any damage to the meeting room or any other part of the library building, grounds, or collection; the cost of employee overtime, if occasioned by the use of the meeting room; the cost of police protection, if deemed necessary by the Board of Library Trustees; and any claim asserted by any third person against the Library Board of Trustees, the Town of Amherst, and/or any library staff on account of any alleged injury causally related to the meeting, together with defense costs including reasonable attorneys' fees.

## Release

In consideration of the use of the meeting room, an individual or group, for itself and each and all of its members, hereby releases, remises and waives any and all claims which they, or any of them, ever will or may have against the Library Board of Trustees, the Town of Amherst and/or the library staff for any injury to persons or damage to property suffered by such group or any of its members during or as a result of the use of the meeting room, except insofar as such injury or damage is directly and solely caused by the negligence or intentional misconduct of any person belonging to or acting on behalf of the Library Board of Trustees, the Town of Amherst or the library staff.

## Appeal Procedure for the Use of Library Meeting Room

If you believe that you meet the guidelines outlined in the Amherst Town Library Meeting Room Policy and that your application was not given proper consideration, you may submit an appeal.

1. Ask for reconsideration by the Library Director if you are not satisfied with the original decision. An appeal form must be completed and submitted requesting such action.
2. Ask for reconsideration by the Library Board of Trustees if you are not satisfied with the decision of the Library Director. An appeal form must be completed and submitted requesting such action.

A separate appeal form must be submitted for each of these steps. Appeal forms are available online at <http://bit.ly/ATLRoomAppeal>.

There may be a waiting period of up to thirty (30) days for each step so that sufficient time may be given for a proper evaluation of your appeal. You will be notified as soon as a decision is made regarding your appeal. In the event your appeal is denied, you will receive a written notice stating the grounds for denial.

## General Guidelines

### Hours of Use

1. Meeting rooms are available for use during the library's normal operating hours.
2. Meeting organizers and attendees will have access to a room only after the library is open.
3. Individuals or groups needing setup time before their meeting should allow for it in their reservations. Access to meeting rooms will not be permitted before the reservation time.

4. All participants must leave by the time the library closes.
5. Access to the library materials housed in the Archives Room is provided to all library patrons at all times even when the room is in use.

### Room Capacity

1. Users of library meeting rooms must adhere to the maximum capacity of each room.
  - Maximum occupancy in the Johnson Meeting Room is fifty people.
  - Maximum occupancy in the Archives Room is ten people.
  - Maximum occupancy in the Balcony is twelve people.
2. Youth groups must have one adult in attendance for every fifteen young people.

### Setup

1. Set up chairs and tables are the responsibility of each individual or group.
2. Egress routes may not be obstructed in any way and exit signs must remain clearly visible.
3. Permission to hang decorations or set up signs or tables outside a meeting room require prior approval by the Library Director or designee.
4. No flame-producing or hazardous devices may be used in the library.
5. Storage is not available.

### Equipment

1. Requests for use of the library-owned equipment (podium, laptop, display) must be made when reserving the room.
2. A library staff member will set up library-owned equipment, ensure its proper operation, and store library-owned equipment after use.
3. Library staff will not operate equipment during programs (e.g. start/stop videos or run slideshows).
4. Individuals or groups providing their own laptop and who wish to connect to the Library's network, display, or sound system are strongly encouraged to test their device for compatibility ahead of time.
5. Technical questions can be addressed to [library@amherstlibrary.org](mailto:library@amherstlibrary.org). Technical assistance is not available on evenings and weekends.

### Food and Beverage

- Light refreshments (such as box or bag lunches, cookies, finger foods, etc.) may be served. Outside catering is permitted.
- No food may be prepared on library premises, however, use of electric warming appliances such as crock pots, and coffee makers are permitted. Chafing dishes with open flames are not allowed.
- Requests for use of the kitchen must be made when reserving the room.
- Individuals or groups serving refreshments must provide all equipment, utensils, and serving items.
- Alcoholic beverages may not be served in the library.
- Leftover food, beverages, and serving items must be discarded or removed from the Library.
- All cleanup must be completed before the end of the reservation time and before leaving.

## Publicity

- Advertising of meetings and events is the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- All publicity concerning meetings should make clear that the library is not the sponsor, and advertisements must include the statement, “not a program of the Amherst Town Library.”
- Neither the name nor address of the Amherst Town Library may be used as an organization’s official address except for library-affiliated organizations or with the approval of the Library Director.

## Clean Up/ Damages

- Individuals and groups are responsible for leaving meeting rooms in good order after use. This includes:
  - returning all tables and chairs to the original setup
  - placing all trash in receptacles provided by the library
  - reporting any spills immediately to a staff member
  - removal of all personal effects
- The library is not responsible for items lost or stolen.
- No fees are charged for use of the meeting room, however, the Library reserves the right to collect payment for damages or costs incurred through the use of its facilities and meeting rooms.

## Program Policy

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*Approved: 04/18/2022*

The mission of the Amherst Town Library is “Connecting People, Stories, and Ideas.” Library programs provide opportunities for patrons to gather and connect socially and intellectually with others. Programs serve to promote the use of library resources and services, foster opportunities for lifelong learning and personal growth, introduce both library users and non-users to library resources, expand the visibility of the library and strengthen its role as a community resource.

Library staff may use, but are not limited to, the following criteria in planning and making decisions about program topics, speakers and accompanying resources:

- Relation to library mission, vision, collections and resources
- Community needs and interest
- Presenter qualifications/reputation (in content area)
- Presentation quality
- Appropriateness of content for intended audience
- Availability of program space
- Budget and staffing considerations
- Connection to other community programs, exhibits or events

The library’s philosophy of open access to information and ideas extends to programming, and the library does not knowingly or intentionally discriminate through its programs. Performers and presenters will not be excluded from consideration because of their gender identification, race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical ability, or age. Library staff who present programs do so as part of their regular job and are not hired as outside contractors for programming.

The primary purpose of programs, whether presented by library staff, outside performers, or presenters, shall not be purely commercial, religious, partisan, or for the solicitation of business. The library may permit the sale of books written by speakers or recordings made by performers in conjunction with a library-sponsored program and outside performers or presenters may leave business cards for participants to pick up after a program. All plans to sell or distribute such items must be arranged in advance and approved by the library staff responsible for the program. Program presenters are responsible for the handling of all sales.

The library actively partners with other community agencies, organizations, businesses, educational and cultural institutions, or individuals to develop and co-sponsor programs that are compatible with the library's mission and vision. The library reserves the right to involve library staff in the planning and execution of co-sponsored programs, as well as preview program content and promotional materials.

Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute or imply an endorsement of its policies, beliefs, or program by the library Board of Trustees, the Town of Amherst or the library staff.

Types of library programs include, but are not limited to:

- Book discussions
- Story time for children
- Author visits/readings
- Exhibits
- Artistic and music performances
- Movie showings
- Demonstrations and workshops
- Instructional classes
- Lectures and presentations
- Community forums or panel discussions
- Library tours and orientations
- Off-site visits to community agencies, organizations, businesses, educational and cultural institutions
- Virtual programs

All library programs will be developed with consideration for the principles of accessibility and equity. Most programs are free and open to the public; however, some may require a nominal materials fee. No fees may be charged to people attending library programs except with the approval of the library director.

Every attempt will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend a program. However, when safety or the success of a program requires it, attendance may be limited. When limits must be established, attendance will be determined on a first come, first served basis, either with advanced registration or at the door. Some programs may require individuals to register using an Amherst Town Library card. A waiting list is often available should program registration become full.

Some programs may be developed for a particular audience (i.e. attendees should be within the appropriate age group such as children or teens, or may require an accompanying adult). The library reserves the right to set age limits or recommendations for programs. Programs designed for specific audiences will be publicized as such.

Participation in library programs implies acceptance of the **Patron Behavior Policy** and **Unattended Children Policy**. Failure to follow said policies may result in immediate removal from a program.

The Amherst Town Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of its virtual events. By participating in virtual events, attendees understand and accept that all online activity comes with some

degree of risk and agree the library is not liable for any emotional or financial damages that may result from attending a library virtual event.

The library reserves the right to use video or photographs taken of program participants for internal use, publication, and use in library promotional outlets, and for evaluation purposes. Participation in library programs indicates participants' willingness to be photographed.

Library programs are promoted through a variety of venues including, but not limited to the library website, social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), newspaper release, ACTV20, Amherst school newsletters, and flyers.

Library staff have the discretion to cancel programs. Programs may be canceled for a number of reasons, including: severe weather, absence of the presenter, or low registration. Canceled programs are not automatically rescheduled.

**This program policy does not apply to events that are developed only for special purposes such as donor recognition, fund-raising, or media conferences.**



## Displays and Exhibits

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*Approved: 10/2003*

*Amended: 06/16/2008*

1. Library bulletin boards will be used to display information about library services and events, municipal meetings or job postings, and flyers from non-profit groups. All postings require the approval of the Library Director or designee and will be dependent upon perceived level of local interest and space availability.
2. Posters of cultural, educational, civic or charitable events may be displayed with the Library Director's permission.
3. No materials that advocate the election of a candidate, political or otherwise, shall be displayed in the library or on library grounds.
4. No materials that advocate consideration of any product or item sold for purely commercial enterprise shall be displayed in the library.
5. No petitions will be allowed.
6. A "fine arts floater" which is attached to the existing town insurance policy covers all items on loan to the library. The library assumes no responsibility for the preservation, protection or possible damage or theft of any item displayed or exhibited. Patrons shall be required to sign a release form when displaying their items.

## Proctoring Policy

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*Approved: 08/10/2015*

*Amended: 06/18/2018*

Distance learning and correspondence courses are a popular way for individuals to complete continuing or advanced education locally and in a cost-effective manner. The Amherst Town Library supports continuing education efforts by cooperating with educational institutions and local students to provide exam proctoring services in the Library for Amherst Town Library cardholders.

1. Exam appointments must be scheduled in advance.
2. The proctor will meet the testing institution's requirements whenever possible. Direct in-room supervision will not be provided.
3. It is the student's responsibility to make sure the Library has received the test and/or necessary log-on information in advance of the examination.
4. Students should be prepared to show a valid photo ID at the time of the exam.
5. Students should arrive for testing as scheduled and notify the proctor if unable to keep a scheduled appointment.
6. There is no fee for exam proctoring.

# Patron Behavior Policy

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*Approved: 02/22/2006*

*Amended: 06/16/2008; 10/16/2017; 4/15/2024*

The Amherst Town Library is intended to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where patrons can access library materials and services.

The Amherst Town Library supports the rights of all individuals to:

- Use the library without discrimination
- Receive friendly, respectful and professional service
- Have free and equal access to information
- Have a clean, comfortable and pleasant environment
- Use the library undisturbed without threat of harm, invasion of property or interference.
- Express their opinions and concerns regarding library materials and services to appropriate library staff.

In order for the library to be used and enjoyed by all patrons the following guidelines should be observed.

1. This policy pertains to behavior in the library building, on library grounds, and in library virtual spaces (such as a program on zoom).
2. Many patrons use the library as a place for quiet study. Patrons should respect the rights of others and not engage in loud conversations or noisy activities, including inconsiderate use of cell phones.
3. Accompany and take responsibility for those in your care. Do not leave a child or vulnerable adult unattended. A vulnerable adult is one who cannot take care of him/herself, requires assistance to move about, and/or communicate with others. (See “Unattended Children Policy”)
4. To ensure a clean, comfortable and pleasant environment for all patrons, proper use and care of the building and all materials is essential. Patrons may not deface or improperly remove library materials, equipment or furnishings, or prevent timely access to library resources through theft or deliberate misuse of materials.
5. No one may interfere with another person’s right to use the library for any of its intended purposes free of disruption or with the library staff’s performance of their duties. Examples of disruptive behavior include (but are not limited to): use of loud, profane or obscene language, running, throwing objects, resting feet on furnishings or equipment, or any activity resulting in loud noise. The Library Staff are empowered to identify disruptive behavior. Refusal to comply with the reasonable request of staff members to cease such activities will be considered disruptive behavior.
6. Poor personal hygiene that interferes with others’ ability to use the Library may be cause for eviction. Individuals with contagious illness should seek alternatives to in-person services, such as contact-free pickup.
7. Threatening the safety or rights of another person, violent or disorderly behavior, threats of violence, use of abusive or sexually suggestive language, possession, display or use of a weapon, except as authorized by law, blocking entrances or interfering with people entering/ exiting the building are not acceptable.
8. Use of alcohol, tobacco and vape/ e-cigarettes is not permitted anywhere in the library building or on library grounds.
9. Solicitation, sales, and distribution of non-library materials, canvassing and campaigning are not permitted without the permission of the Library Director or designee.

10. Personal photography and videography is permitted in the library provided that it does not interfere in any way with other patrons' ability to enjoy the library for its intended purposes, or with library operations, privacy, and confidentiality. All commercial and media-related photography and videography requires the prior written approval of the Library Director or designee.

Enforcement of these rules may take the form of any of the following actions, depending on the severity of the violation, which will be determined by the staff on duty at the time.

- Patrons who violate this policy will be given one verbal warning, will be advised of this policy and the actions which are violating it, and will be asked to behave in an appropriate manner. Patrons who do not modify their behavior after one warning may be asked to leave for the rest of the day.
- Patrons who violate this policy in a manner that staff judge is "extreme" may be ordered to leave the building immediately and may be requested not to return for the remainder of the day. "Extreme" violations may include activities that are harassing, threatening, dangerous, or destructive to persons or property at the library premises.
- If necessary, the staff may call the Amherst Police Department for assistance.
- Patrons whose behavior is significantly disruptive of the library's mission, either because of repeated violations of this policy, or because of a single extreme event which is dangerous, threatening, harassing, or destructive to persons or property, may have their library privileges suspended, including a prohibition against entering the library, for a period of up to one year, to be determined by the Library Director or designee. The length of the suspension will depend on the nature of the violation, the extent of damage and disruption caused by policy infractions, and other relevant circumstances. In this case, the patron will be notified in writing specifying the violation and the penalty, as well as their right to appeal.
- Patrons whose privileges are suspended may appeal to the Board of Library Trustees for reinstatement of library privileges. The appeal must be made in writing within 14 days after the written notice of suspension is issued and will be addressed as part of the next regularly scheduled Trustee meeting. The Trustees will review the appeal to determine whether the patron violated the library's policies and whether the suspension and/or the length of suspension was appropriate under the circumstances. If the appealing patron is not present at that Trustee meeting, they will be notified of the Trustees' decision in writing. The Trustees' determination is final and an appeal may not be repeated.
- During the suspension of a patron's library privileges, the library will make reasonable efforts to provide that patron with alternative access to library materials. Such efforts may include, but are not limited to, electronic access to materials, online requests for materials with curbside pickup, or the requirement to make an appointment to visit the library so that the patron can be monitored for compliance with this policy while present.

## Unattended Children Policy

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Approved: 02/22/2006

Amended: 06/16/2008; 10/16/2017; 06/17/24

The Amherst Town Library welcomes children of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, collections and programming offered by the library. However, we do not provide child care services and young children are not safe when left unattended in the library. The staff cannot know if children are leaving the building by themselves, with their parents, or with strangers. For the safety of minor children and the enjoyment of all patrons using the library, we have developed a specific policy regarding unattended children.

1. The Library Staff recognize that all children are unique and mature at different rates. We recommend that children under the age of eight not be left unattended in the library. A child is unattended if a parent, caretaker, or babysitter is not present with the child while in the library. At the discretion of a responsible adult, older children may be left unattended to enjoy library materials, services and programs. The child must know how to reach the adult in case the need should arise.
2. Children attending library programs are supervised by library staff only during the scheduled time of the program. Staff do not track when children arrive or depart from a program.
3. All library patrons, regardless of age are subject to the "Patron Behavior Policy" concerning disruptive behavior. Parents are responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the library with the child. Library staff does not serve *in loco parentis*, in place of the parent. If a child's behavior is inappropriate for the library, and he/she does not respond to appropriate guidance from library staff, the parent will be contacted to remove the child from the library. If the parent cannot be reached and the child's behavior is deemed dangerous or unduly disruptive, the Amherst Police Department may be called.
4. If a child is left at the library without a way home at closing time, library staff may call the child's home or parent's place of business. If the parent cannot be located or if a parent has not picked up the child within one half hour, the library staff may contact the Amherst Police Department. Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child out of the library or give a child a ride home.
5. The Amherst Town Library and its staff do not assume responsibility for any child left unattended in the library.
6. As used in this policy, the term "parent" may include legal guardians or other persons having custody or control of a minor.

## Patron Privacy Policy

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*Approved: 10/2003*

*Reviewed: 06/1/2017*

The Amherst Town Library collects personally identifiable information only when necessary for the fulfillment of the mission of the library.

In compliance with NH RSA 201-D:11 personal information and/or records of library activity shall be released only as provided for in this policy.

1. Application must be made to the Library Director or her designee.
2. The Director shall consult with Chairman of the Board of Trustees or his designee and the legal counsel of the Town of Amherst.
3. The request for information must be accompanied by a court order in proper form that has been entered by a court of competent jurisdiction after showing good cause by the law enforcement agency or person seeking the recorded information.

# Collection Development Policy

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*Approved: 06/16/2008*

## Philosophy and Scope

Collection development at the Amherst Town Library is based on principles of intellectual freedom and equal access for all. The library maintains a collection that represents a broad spectrum of opinion and subject matter, in diverse formats, suitable to a variety of learning and recreational interests. The library builds a collection for the general public that is responsive to changing community interests and needs.

## Responsibility for Collection Development

The Board of Library Trustees adopts a Collection Development Policy which they authorize the Library Director to administer. The Director allocates the materials budget and designates staff to develop selection and acquisition procedures and to make purchasing decisions subject to approval.

## Materials Selection Process/ Criteria/ Standards

Library staff use a variety of tools to aid in awareness and selection of materials including professional review journals, popular media, electronic interest groups/ listservs/ feeds, publishers' catalogs, patron and staff recommendations.

The lack of a review or a favorable/ unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting or adding a title.

Staff will objectively evaluate based on the entire work, not just individual parts and the work's overall contribution to the collection.

Many selection criteria will be considered, carrying different weights in different circumstances. Budget and space availability, as well as availability of the material through interlibrary loan will also shape the selection process. All materials, whether purchased or donated, will be evaluated critically based on some combination of

- authority and accuracy
- current usefulness or interest
- relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses
- standards of quality in content and format
- price and availability
- relevance to library's mission and goals
- local demand
- informational and recreational needs of users
- level of funding for materials

Additional criteria that will be considered when selecting materials in electronic formats include

- ease of use
- accessibility to concurrent users
- enhancement of the print equivalent (if applicable)
- reduction of space requirements
- continued access to retrospective information
- flexible and accessible technical requirements

Works which are obviously and exclusively created for pornographic or sensational purposes will not be selected. Objectionable language and vivid descriptions of sex and violence when dealt with realistically within the context of a work will not be criteria for rejecting the title.

The responsibility for a child's choice in reading materials belongs with the parents and legal guardians of the child. Collection selection will not be determined by the possibility that controversial works may come into the possession of children.

## Gifts

The library welcomes gifts of materials, but reserves the right to evaluate them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. Gifts may be refused if they do not meet the objectives of this policy or require special housing. The library will not accept conditions relating to the gift and reserves the right to dispose of the gift, at its discretion, when it no longer fits the needs or scope of the collection. The library does not provide evaluations for tax purposes nor does it make the arrangements for such an evaluation.

## De-selection

In order to maintain a collection that is current, reliable, in good repair, easy to use, and appealing, materials are withdrawn on a continuing basis. Collections should change over time to reflect changes in the community and the library's goals. Materials will be de-selected when they are judged to be dated, inaccurate, seldom used, in poor condition, or otherwise not in compliance with the criteria for selection.

## Controversial Materials and Intellectual Freedom

The Amherst Town Library does not promote particular beliefs or views, but strives to provide free access to a well-balanced collection of topics, suitable to the diverse members of the community.

Language, situations or subjects that may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify materials which, in their entirety, are judged to be of value.



The library houses materials in the areas to which they seem most suitable, but does not restrict their use by ages or other criteria.

The library does not rely on private advisory codes or rating services in the selection of materials, but also does not remove them if they are integral to the packaging of the work.

In the interest of protecting the individual's right to have access to materials, the library supports:

- The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
- The Library Bill of Rights, Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.
- The Freedom to Read Statement, Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.
- The Freedom to View Statement, Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

Should a community member object to a particular item owned by the Amherst Town Library, the patron will be offered the opportunity to fill out a "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource". The request shall be reviewed by three library staff members and/or trustees including the Library Director. The Library Director will issue a written decision to the challenger that may be appealed to the Library Board of Trustees. In the event of an appeal, the decision of the Library Board of Trustees is final. The challenged materials will remain in the collection while the material is being reviewed.

## Internet

Library mission states that the Amherst Town Library "strives to provide all community residents [both young and old] with materials and services for their information, educational and entertainment needs." The World Wide Web has become an essential tool for research, casual information needs and recreation. There are serious questions about how effective internet filters can be considering the complexity of human knowledge. Therefore, we provide our patrons with unfiltered Internet access and employ a "positive approach" to guide patrons to selected sections of the Internet. First, the Amherst Town Library website directs users to carefully selected sites on many subjects. Second, the Internet computer in the children's room is restricted to search only chosen, edited subscription databases accessed via the Internet. We consider our more positive approach to safe use of the internet to be a better method of serving our patrons' diverse needs.

### **Attachments:**

*Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials*

*Library Bill of Rights*

*Freedom to Read Statement*

*Freedom to View Statement*

# Reference Collection Development Policy

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*Approved: 10/17/2012*

## Purpose of the Policy

The Reference Collection Development Policy establishes guidelines for the placement of materials in the Reference Collection; establishes procedures for acquiring new materials for the Reference Collection; and, establishes weeding guidelines for the Reference Collection. As the Reference Collection is a key component of the Library's collection, the development of this collection follows the general guidelines set out in the Amherst Town Library Collection Development Policy and is based on the principles of intellectual freedom and equal access for all. The Reference Collection Development Policy is aimed at further definition of this specific collection and key procedures in building and maintaining this resource.

## The Reference Collection Defined

The Reference Collection contains general reference materials and specialized reference materials (print and online) to support the information needs of the community of Amherst Town Library users. Materials in the print Reference Collection are non-circulating [for special research needs, items may be checked out by a library patron after conferring with a Reference Librarian]. The print Reference Collection is located on the main floor next to the Circulation Desk and the Information and Research Desk. Ready Reference items are placed at the Information and Research Desk shelves located directly behind the Reference Librarians. Frequently consulted reference sources relating to the history of Amherst are also placed on the shelves behind the Information and Research Desk and are cited in the catalog as being located at the "Ref. Desk." Atlases are located in the atlas stand on the Main Floor of the Library at the end of the stacks near the stairs to the Mezzanine. Database access is available through our web site on the on-site computers and through patron authentication on remote computers. Microfilm is located next to the Microfiche/film reader and printer on the mezzanine near the elevator. The Reference Vertical File items are located in the file cabinet in the Archives Room. A local history collection is located in the Archives Room. [There is a separate Local History Collection Development Policy in development that will address the specific parameters of that special collection.]

Items are placed in Reference in accordance with the Selection Criteria for the Reference Collection and the Library Collection Development Policy. Reference materials generally will be limited to sources which are designed for consultation rather than continuous reading and are usually arranged to facilitate rapid retrieval of information. The latest edition of a source is shelved in the Reference Collection and earlier editions are included only if historical references to the subject is deemed relevant. There is no absolute limit on the size of the Reference Collection other than those imposed by budget allocation and the physical space allotted for the Reference area. The Collection aim is to be as lean and efficient as possible to enable effective use.

## Users

Staff and Amherst residents are the target audience and the primary users of the Reference Collection. Although, the Collection is open to all people seeking information whether in person, by phone, by fax, by mail, by email, or other mobile/online technology available.

## Selection Criteria for the Reference Collection

In selecting for the Reference Collection, the primary criteria are the Library's users' information needs and expectations; and, the format which meets our community of users' needs in the most comprehensive way. Online reference resources may be preferred over print publications in some instances. These decisions will be based upon cost, content, currency, potential frequency of use, need for 24/7 availability; and, ease of use. Other considerations for selection include authority and accuracy; favorable reviews in professional resources or inclusion in basic reference collection guides; reputation of the author or publisher; and, the expense of ongoing maintenance, especially in the case of serial publications, that will require frequent updating. Donations are welcome, but they must satisfy the same criteria as noted here.

Duplicate copies of reference materials may be purchased for the circulating collection if the need is determined, and if the price is not prohibitive. To a very limited extent, items not falling strictly within the reference format, but in high demand by library users, may be included in the Reference Collection in order to insure their availability in the library at all times. Recommendations of materials are welcome from other staff members and the public and are evaluated with the same criteria noted here.

The collection is developed with predominant emphasis on standard reference formats: almanacs, atlases, biographical sources, legal materials, encyclopedias, dictionaries, yearbooks, handbooks, indexes, directories, bibliographies, concordances, plot summaries/critiques, price guides, and statistical compilations. Reference Intake Data is reviewed each year to determine the subject areas in greatest demand. Those subject areas are the focus of primary growth and development in the Reference Collection for the upcoming year.

## Management

### Acquisition of New Materials in the Reference Collection

The Library Director allocates the materials budget for the Reference Collection and the Reference Staff select materials to be purchased for the Reference Collection. All purchasing decisions are subject to the Director's approval. All standing orders are evaluated, for content and format, at the beginning of each fiscal year to determine whether each specific title continues to serve users in an authoritative and user-friendly way for the information it provides. Standing orders are chosen for those items where prompt receipt of the most current edition is desired. Hardcover or paperback titles are acceptable. All reference titles published periodically are considered for the standing order plan, except in cases in which price, frequency of publication, or overlap with other titles indicate otherwise. If the cost is prohibitive, an alternative to the annual cycle may be considered, such as ordering the title every two, three, or five years.

The Head of Children's and Young Adult Services and the Head of Reference and Adult Programming will consult each other regarding the selection of Reference materials which may be appropriate to both departments.

## Weeding

The Reference Staff is responsible for weeding the Reference Collection. Retention is based primarily on the timeliness/currency and usefulness of a title and its informational content; and, on the likelihood of a historical interest in the field as well. Weeding is done on an annual basis [i.e. entire Reference Collection is reviewed over the fiscal year] to ensure that the collection remains up-to-date and authoritative in providing quick access to basic information; and, to make room for newer titles. Titles included in current editions of standard selection guides warrant serious consideration for retention. Materials that show no use based on “in-house use” statistics, are out of date, incomplete, superseded, in poor condition, of greater use in the circulating collection, or in subject areas that are no longer vital to Reference, will be considered for weeding and/or relocation to the circulating collection. Items weeded from the Reference Collection and not suitable for the circulating collection will be offered for online sales through the Friends of the Amherst Town Library; offered on the NHAIS listserv free to NH libraries; added to the Friends of the Amherst Town Library’s annual Book Sale collection; or, discarded for recycling. These decisions are based on a title by title examination for the best option. Weeding items in print format that are duplicated by online resources are considered on a title-by-title basis.

## Other Resources

Database selection is collaboratively decided with the Library Director, the Reference Staff, the Head of Circulation and Public Services, and the Head of Children’s and Young Adult Services. Meetings to plan the database selection for our library are scheduled in a timely way by the Head of Reference and Adult Programming to coordinate with database subscription renewals. The Head of Reference and Adult Programming sets up trials for the Library Staff as needed and negotiates the contracts for the selected database subscriptions. The Library Director allocates the database budget for the Library. The goal is to provide the databases that best meet the informational needs of our community while meeting the Library’s set budget allocation for databases.

Microfilm for *The Cabinet* and *The Amherst Citizen* are kept up-to-date. Vertical File additions are selected by the Reference Staff and are chosen specifically for updates on folders that have already been identified.

## Review of Policy

The Head of Reference and Adult Programming will endeavor to review the policy annually for currency, accuracy, and completeness. Specific changes will be made throughout the year as the need for them arises.

## Website Policy

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*Approved: 10/2003*

*Amended: 06/16/2008*

### Intent

The Amherst Town Library web site will support the mission of the Amherst Town Library. To do so, the Library selects, acquires and provides access to materials across a variety of electronic formats via the site. The Library web site provides electronic access to subscription databases, the Library's online catalog, selected web sites and other appropriate information sources as well as information about the Library's services and activities.

### Collection Development

The Library's link selection policy is consistent with our materials selection policy. Criteria for selection include: currency, authority, content, organization and accessibility.

Sites selected are not under the control of the Library. The Library is not responsible for the contents of any linked site or links within selected sites. The Library does not guarantee selected sites will be 100% accurate. Inclusion of a site does not signify endorsement by the Amherst Town Library.

The Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from use of its electronic services or its connections to the Internet.

The Amherst Town Library reserves the right to remove pages and the right to refuse linking to pages that are not essential to the Library Mission or do not comply with this policy. The Library web site is not to serve as a public forum.

# Local History Collection Development Policy

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Approved: 05/15/2013

Reviewed: 5/15/2014; 5/15/2015

## Statement of Purpose

The Local History Collection Development Policy establishes guidelines for the collection, organization and maintenance of materials that document the history of the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire.

As the Local History Collection is a key component of the Library's collection, the development of this collection follows the general guidelines set out in the Amherst Town Library Collection Development Policy and is based on the principles of intellectual freedom and equal access for all. The Local History Collection Development Policy is aimed at further definition of this specific collection and key procedures in building and maintaining this resource. This policy is meant to supplement the Amherst Town Library Collection Development Policy.

## Scope of the Collection

The primary focus of the Local History Collection is materials that document the history of the Town of Amherst. Whereas the geographic boundaries of the Town of Amherst once extended to include the towns of Hollis, Milford, Merrimack, Monson, and Mont Vernon, historical materials relating to these adjacent towns are also part of this collection. In so far as they provide a historical context and assist in the use of the primary collection, materials relating to the State of New Hampshire will be included. And, as the colonial settlement of Amherst played a role in the unique development of New England, some relevant materials relating to colonial New England may also be included.

## Users

Current and future Amherst residents and researchers interested in our community heritage are the target audience and the primary users of the Local History Collection. The Collection is open to the public and available to all individuals on equal terms, subject to the appropriate care and handling of the materials.

## The Local History Collection Defined

### Formats

The Amherst Town Library will collect a variety of print, electronic, and multi-media formats related to the history of the Town of Amherst.

The Library *will not* generally accept the following formats: three dimensional artifacts, items in poor condition, items with restrictions on use, and materials that reflect the history of an area other than as defined above (**Scope of the Collection**).

## Subject

The Amherst Town Library will collect materials that relate specifically to the Town of Amherst including, but not limited to, the following subjects:

1. Town administration [including Town Reports and Board of Selectmen's Meeting minutes]
2. Prominent individuals and families
3. Religious and social organizations
4. Places of interest (schools [including SHS yearbooks], historic homes and public buildings, cemeteries, churches, land)
5. Business and industry
6. Significant Amherst events/celebrations/anniversaries/dedications [including microfilm of *The Cabinet* and *The Amherst Citizen*]
7. Histories of the Town [including complete cemetery records]
8. Relevant materials on other NH towns, state of New Hampshire, and Colonial New England that provide historical context and assist in research on Amherst

## Time Period

The Amherst Town Library places no limitations on the chronological periods collected.

## Management

Head of Reference and Adult Programming will collect and maintain the Local History Collection.

All purchasing decisions are subject to the Library Director's approval.

## Acquisition of New Materials in the Local History Collection

The Head of Reference and Adult Programming will keep the collection current for those items identified as being part of the collection (Town Reports, BOS Meeting Minutes, SHS yearbooks, microfilm of *The Cabinet* and *The Amherst Citizen*, and cemetery records): and, The Head of Reference and Adult Programming will stay abreast of any new publications that match the scope and definition of the Local History Collection stated above (**Scope of the Collection** and **The Local History Collection Defined**).

## Donations

The Amherst Town Library will accept donations to the Local History Collection provided the materials fall within the scope and definition of this unique collection. The Library will not accept

conditions relating to the gift and reserves the right to dispose of the gift, at its discretion, when it no longer fits the needs or scope of the collection.

The Amherst Town Library reserves the right to refuse an offered gift.

## Cooperative Agreements and Loans

Under special circumstances, the Amherst Town Library may enter into a cooperative agreement with another organization/s in order to preserve historical materials and/or make them more widely available.

Under special circumstances, items from the Amherst Town Library may be loaned to other institutions for exhibition.

## Photocopying/Photo Duplication

Most items may be photographed/photocopied by the user. However, restrictions may be placed on some especially fragile items. The Library reserves the right to limit or refuse copying of materials because of copyright, condition, or other special considerations.

## Display and Arrangement of the Collection

Materials may be kept in locking cases and/or acid-free boxes to support the preservation of unique or fragile items.

## Review of Policy

The Amherst Town Library reserves the right to change the preceding policies in order to meet the goals of the Amherst Town Library. The Head of Reference and Adult Programming will review the policy annually for currency, accuracy, and completeness. Specific changes will be made throughout the year as the need for them arises.



# Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

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Approved: 06/16/2008

Title of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Publication Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Format: \_\_\_\_\_

Request Initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant represents: \_\_\_\_\_ his/herself

\_\_\_\_\_ organization (listed below)

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you find objectionable about the above listed material? Please be specific.

What do you feel might be the result of borrowing this item from the library?

Is there anything good about this item?

Did you read/view the entire item? If not, what parts?

What do you think is the theme of this item?

What item would you recommend to take the place of the above challenged item?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Received by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Staff Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Social Media Policy

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Approved: 04/19/2021

## Overview

The Amherst Town Library offers social media tools for educational, cultural, civic and recreational purposes. They provide a limited (or designated) public forum to facilitate the sharing of ideas, opinions and information about library-related subjects and issues, activities and collections. The library's social media is intended to create a welcoming and inviting online space where members will find useful and entertaining information and can interact with library staff and other library users.

The act of "liking" or "following" another page or person does not imply endorsement by the Library, nor does it necessarily reflect the views of the Library Board of Trustees or staff.

Comments are moderated by library staff and the library reserves the right to remove comments that are unlawful, off topic, or fail to abide by the guidelines stated herein.

## Definition of Social Media

Social Media is defined as any website or application which allows users to share information. Social media software can include, but is not limited to, blogging, instant messaging, social networking sites, wikis, posts to community reviews, and patron ratings of library materials via the library's website and online catalog.

## Parental Controls and Privacy

The Amherst Town Library does not act in place of, or in the absence of, a parent/guardian and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent/guardian may place on a minor's use of social networking software applications.

Users should be aware that third party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly.

Users are encouraged to protect their privacy by not posting personally identifying information.

## Commenting

The Amherst Town Library respects and encourages differences in opinion; however, all posts and comments will be monitored for content and relevance. Any post or comment that contains or commits any of the following content or actions may be removed:

- Defames, abuses, harasses, stalks, threatens or otherwise violates the legal rights (such as rights of privacy) of others
- Is of a profane, defamatory, infringing, obscene, indecent, racist, sexist, or unlawful nature, or is deemed inappropriate by library staff
- Violates any applicable laws or regulations
- Violates the copyright, trademark right or other intellectual property right of any third party
- Advertises or offers to sell or buy any goods or services for any business purpose
- Represents organized political activity
- Hyperlinks to websites that are not directly related to the current discussion topic
- Is unrelated to the library, its mission, its activities, or the current discussion topic; this includes photos or other images
- Contains viruses or programs that may damage the operation of another's computer.

The final decision to remove a post or comment lies with the library director. Members of the public who wish to question the decision may do so by contacting the library director in writing.

### Liability

The Amherst Town Library is not obligated to take any action on posts and comments, and will not be responsible or liable for content posted by any visitor to its website or affiliated social media sites.

### Personal Use

All library employees may have personal social media sites. These sites should remain personal in nature and clearly convey that postings are their own and don't reflect or represent the opinions of the library.

### Ongoing Use Evaluation

The role and utility of social networking services in relation to the goals and purposes of the Library will be evaluated periodically by the Library staff and Board of Trustees, and may be terminated at any time without notice to subscribers.

# Investment Policy

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Approved: 07/30/2007

Reviewed: 05/16/2011

Amended: 04/17/2017

## General

The overall portfolio should be managed in accordance with the Prudent Man or Prudent Person rule. The definition of prudence is based on RSA 31:25-b as follows:

*“a prudent investment is one which a prudent man would purchase for his own investment having primarily in view the preservation of the principal and the amount and regularity of the income to be derived there from.”*

## Scope

This investment policy applies to all money and financial resources, governed by the Library Board of Trustees, available for investment on behalf of the Amherst Town Library.

## Objectives

The primary objective of the library’s investment activities are:

1. Legal: to conform with all applicable federal, state and other legal requirements
2. Safety: to adequately safeguard principal
3. Liquidity: to provide sufficient liquidity to supplement town funding
4. Total Return: to obtain a reasonable rate of return
5. Diversified Allocation across all library assets: to allocate funds taking all library Trustee assets into account, which includes library assets managed by the Trustees of the Trust Fund

## Investment Authority

Library trust funds are overseen by the Library Board of Trustees. An elected Treasurer and Chairman of the Board are empowered by the Board to act as agents to expend funds and execute tasks associated with day-to-day management.

## Reporting

The Treasurer of the Library Board of Trustees will report on the value and growth of Library Trust Funds and transaction history at regular board meetings

## Investment Policy Points

1. We intend to budget such that all monies taken in through copies, fines, coffee sales and interest collected from the monies managed by the Trustees of the Trust Funds are spent purely to supplement the library’s operating budget. The operating budget should be funded by the town.
2. Any monies not specified for immediate use in the budget will be reinvested in funds.

3. Given the library's strong financial position due to prudent management, our investment time horizon for our investments is long-term (over 10 years).
4. We need limited liquidity, either through maintaining a small cash position and/or a small short-term money market or bond fund. The remainder of assets can be invested in US equities.
5. As a board, we agree to invest in a broad, diversified portfolio.
6. We will maintain dollar-cost averaging purchasing throughout all market cycles.

## Gifts Policy

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*Approved: 10/2003*

*Amended: 06/16/2008*

1. Books, videos, audiobooks, magazines and other library materials will be accepted in accordance with the Collection Development policy.
2. Gifts of money, real property and /or stocks will be accepted if the conditions attached thereto are acceptable to the Library Board of Trustees.
3. Personal property, art objects, portraits, antiques and other museum objects will be accepted at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

# Pandemic Policy

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*Approved: 06/01/2020*

## Purpose

To establish the protocol to be used in the event of a pandemic. If there is a pandemic, the library may be required to operate on limited staffing or take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness, including service restrictions, limited hours of operation, or possible closure by order of local public health officials. Recovery from a pandemic may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or other physical crises. It is important to ensure that core business activities of the library can be maintained for several weeks or more with limited staff and reduced hours due to a pandemic.

## Definitions

*Pandemic Policy:* A pandemic plan differs from a general emergency preparedness policy or procedure. With an emergency preparedness policy, there is an assumption that staff will return to the building or begin rebuilding, almost immediately after the event or crisis (such as after a fire or storm, or if there is a utility shortage). Recovery from a pandemic may be slow and limited staff, services, and hours may be necessary for an extended period of time.

*Pandemic:* A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease. (World Health Organization <https://www.who.int>)

*Appropriate Staffing Level:* For the purposes of this policy, Appropriate Staffing Level refers to the minimum number of qualified staff necessary to provide service safely and efficiently, as determined by the Library Director or his/her designee.

*Library Director:* Library Director or designee is implied.

## Library Closure

*Public Health Mandate:* The Amherst Town Library will close in the event of a mandate order or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level. In the absence of a recommendation, the Library Board of Trustees may also choose to close the library based on the relevant and available information.

*Discretionary Service Level Changes:* At the discretion of the Library Director, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily in the event that there is not sufficient staff to maintain appropriate staffing levels or if unable to maintain adequate social distancing or sustain the recommended cleaning schedule, for health and safety. In the event of closure or reduction in operating hours, the Library Director or designee will maintain communication with staff, Library Board of Trustees.

*Possible changes to service include:*

- *Canceling interlibrary loan service to reduce risk of transmitting virus between towns.*
- *Halting outreach services.*
- *Closing open stacks access.*
- *Providing curbside pickup of requested items.*
- *Offering virtual rather than in-person programs and storytimes.*

*Discretionary Policy Level Changes:* At the discretion of the Library Director, policies may be modified to facilitate safe and efficient service.

*Examples of changes include:*

- *Modified loan periods*
- *Elimination of overdue fines*
- *Reduced proof of eligibility to obtain a library card, or proof of identity at time of circulation*

## Staffing

Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as three healthy employees available to be present at the library during all open hours with a maximum 8-hour workday and 40-hour work week per full-time employee, and no more than 28 hour workweek per part-time employee. An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level or a necessity to maintain this temporary minimal level for more than two consecutive days will result in reduced hours or closing the library.

In providing service safely and efficiently, the following actions may be taken at the discretion of the Library Director.

- Increased health/safety measures for staff (e.g., wearing of gloves, wiping down work areas, etc.) as defined by the CDC;
- Restricted access to areas in the library (e.g., closing floors or unmonitored areas for safety);
- Social distancing practices for staff and public
- Cancellation of programs, special events, and meeting room reservations
- Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours;
- Reduction of open hours or closure of the library.

If the Library is open, employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences following the established Personnel policy.

If the Library is closed or hours reduced, healthy employees may be assigned work-at-home tasks to be completed in their compensated hours. Before assigning any such work, the Library Director will ensure that each employee has the necessary work tools to complete the work-at-home tasks and is in compliance with



the "GMILCS Access Policy". Work-related travel may be limited to virtual attendance at meetings/conferences.

## Communication

In the event of closure necessitated by pandemic, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours must be announced in a timely manner. Library staff should follow the normal procedure used for any unexpected closure/program cancellation, which may include [wmur.com](http://wmur.com), various social media channels, and the library website, calendar, and email newsletter.

## Prioritization of Services

Priority will be given to the following essential services:

- Access to online resources
- Payroll and Accounts Payable
- Facility Maintenance.

In the case of reduced staffing or reduced hours of operation, the Library Director will prioritize service-related tasks and assign tasks to staff.

# Amherst Town Library Personnel Policy Manual

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*Approved: 01/18/2005*

*Amended: 06/16/2008; 03/18/2014*

The Amherst Town Library Board of Trustees adopts the Town of Amherst Employee Policies Handbook with the following amendments:

1. Where “Board of Selectmen” is written, “Library Board of Trustees” is implied.
2. Where “Town Administrator” is written, “Library Director” is implied.
3. In Section 314 regarding Educational Assistance, the Amherst Town Library will extend the same educational assistance benefits to Regular Part-Time Employees.
4. In Section 108 regarding Conflicts of Interest, the policy will apply to members of the Board of Trustees as well as employees.
5. In section 303 Vacation Benefits, regular part-time employees who become full-time will have their “length of eligible service” pro-rated according to the average number of hours they have worked as a regular part time employee. (Ex. A 20 hour/ week employee who worked for the Library for 10 years and was then made full-time, would accrue vacation at the level of 5 years of eligible service.)

## Volunteer Policy

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*Approved: 03/20/2017*

The Amherst Town Library welcomes the skills and talents of volunteers to support and extend the services of the Library. Volunteers may not replace paid staff, but may assist with special projects and supplement existing services.

Volunteers are bound by the rules contained in all library policies and guidelines, especially those that relate to patron privacy and confidentiality. Library volunteers are recognized by the public as representatives of the library and will be guided by the same work and behavior policies as employees.

All volunteer work will take place during open library hours and when adequate supervision is available. The schedule will be determined by the task or project. Individual work schedules and specific time commitments will be mutually arranged in advance by the volunteer and the immediate supervisor. Volunteers are asked to be reliable in their commitment to the library and to call the library at least two hours ahead when unable to make their scheduled time.

Volunteers must be 14 years or older. Volunteers aged 14 to 15 must have a NH Youth Employment Certificate on file with the library. Volunteers 16 to 17 must provide proof of age to the library and complete and submit the NH DOL's "Parental Permission" form.

All volunteers 18 years or older must complete an application form and a New Hampshire State Police criminal background check application. The Amherst Town Library will cover the cost of the criminal background check. Volunteer agreement forms will be updated on a yearly basis.

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to create a contract between the volunteer and the Amherst Town Library or Town of Amherst.

This policy will be reviewed periodically.