

## REVIEW OF MATERIALS POLICY

The Pickens County Library System supports the principles stated in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and endorses the principles documented in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read statement of the American Library Association.

The Library has a responsibility to provide a robust library collection of materials which represent diverse viewpoints, life experiences, and interests of the public. We believe every book has its reader, and as such, the library upholds the right of individuals to access materials, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Library materials and resources are selected by trained professional staff members to meet the varied needs of the community; however, it is not expected that all resources will appeal to every user. Individual patrons may not restrict access of other Library users because they personally object to materials or resources.

Patrons may request reconsideration of physical library materials, displays, programs, electronic materials, or digital resources. The patron petitioning the reconsideration must be an adult (18+) and a resident of Pickens County with an active library card. The Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form can be found on the Pickens County Library Board website or by requesting it from a staff member. Upon receipt of a Request for Reconsideration form, a formal review of the material in question shall be undertaken in accordance with the governing policy. Professional librarians within the Library System are responsible for managing requests for material review.

The petitioner is required to have read the entire book or examined the entire resource and is solely responsible for originating and preparing the request. Requests will not be considered if they are submitted on behalf of or at the request of another individual or organization. Signing the reconsideration form is a testament that the petitioner has conformed to these requirements. A Request for Reconsideration will not be considered if the principal reason for the request is construed to be based on content related to sexual orientation or preference, gender, race, or religious or political belief.

Reconsideration Request are limited to one active request per patron at a time. The amount of time required to thoughtfully review material submitted by petitioner in conjunction with the item in question is extensive. If a title has previously been considered, the decision rendered will remain in place for two years. After such time has passed, the Board must approve by a majority vote to proceed with any new Reconsideration Request of the material.

When multiple Requests for Reconsiderations are being processed, availability of library materials may result in delays; in this case, library staff may determine the order and number of materials to be reviewed. A maximum of three Reconsideration Requests will be addressed by the Board within a thirty-day period. During the reconsideration process, the material under review will remain in circulation and be available in the library within the section in which it was housed prior to the initiation of the review process. A list of all items being reconsidered and their status within the Reconsideration process will be available on the library's website. Please note, the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form, accompanying materials and any written responses to the Reconsideration become part of the public record.

Throughout this reconsideration process, all parties involved will adhere to the following:

### Guiding Principles

- Libraries have diverse materials reflecting differing points of view, and a library's mission is to provide access to information to all users.

- All library users have a First Amendment right to read, view, and listen to library resources.
- Patrons have the right to express concerns about library resources and expect to have their concerns taken seriously.
- Parents or guardians have the right to guide the reading, viewing, and listening of their own children and must give the same right to other parents/guardians.
- An item being reconsidered is done so based on the entirety of the work, not judged solely on excerpts.
- Board members voting on an appeal must have read an entire book or examined an entire resource or recuse themselves from voting.
- Any communication from the petitioner regarding the review that includes abusive, defamatory, menacing, or intimidating statements, as defined within the Library's Code of Conduct, will terminate the reconsideration process. Alleged violations may be submitted to the Library Board for review by the public, staff, or Board members.

**Factors for reconsideration of a material that will not be considered by the Board:**

- The use of public funds for libraries used as an argument against an item the petitioner does not believe the Library should have purchased.
- An argument that the material in question does not appeal to the ideological, religious, or political opinions, beliefs, or affiliations held by the majority of the population of Pickens County.
- A request that calls for moving a book or item to a section of the Library that does not currently exist.
- A request to remove materials from the adult section of the Library.

**Reconsideration of Library Materials Procedure**

1.	Petitioners submit a completed Request for Reconsideration form to a Department/Branch Manager. The Department Head/Branch Manager will verify the form is complete and complete the staff portion of the form with location, staff initials, and date received.
2.	The Department/Branch Manager will scan the Reconsideration Request form and email it to the Library Director. The original form will be sent to the Library Director via interoffice mail.
3.	The Department /Branch Manager will send the petitioner an acknowledgement that the Reconsideration Request form has been received. A copy of the Review of Library Materials Policy and Procedures will also be enclosed.
4.	Managers will select two professional librarians to conduct an independent review of the library material. Each may consult and rely upon professional reviews and other expert sources as part of the review process. These librarians will provide their individual recommendation to the Manager, who will then make a decision regarding
	the material. The Manager is not bound by any of the librarians' recommendations when rendering a decision. The Manager's decision will be communicated in writing to the petitioner within 45 business days of receipt of their initial request. If additional time is needed, the Manager will notify the petitioner who submitted the request. The Manager also notifies the Library Director of the decision reached regarding the Reconsideration Request.

5.	<p>If the petitioner is not satisfied with the decision of the Manager, they may appeal to the Library Director. To initiate this appeal, the petitioner must send a written notice of appeal to the Director within 15 business days of receiving the decision from the Manager. The Library Director will send the petitioner a written acknowledgement of receipt of the appeal. Appeals should include additional information explaining why they disagree with the decision of the Manager.</p> <p>The Library Director will review the initial recommendations of the two librarians, the decision letter of the Manager, original request submitted by the petitioner and any additional information received by the petitioner. The Library Director may also request that additional librarians on staff review the material. The Library Director will make an independent decision concerning the Request for Reconsideration and is not bound by any previous review or recommendation. The Library Director will notify the petitioner in writing within 30 business days of receipt of the petitioner's notice of appeal. If additional time is needed, the Library Director will notify the petitioner with an estimated date of completion of the review.</p>
6.	<p>If the petitioner is not satisfied with the decision of the Library Director, they may appeal to the Pickens County Library System Board of Trustees. To initiate an appeal to the Library Board, the petitioner must send a written notice of appeal to the Board within 15 business days of receiving the Library Director's decision. The Board will be notified of the appeal at the next scheduled meeting. The matter may be reviewed at a regular or specially called meeting as determined by the Library Board Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair.</p> <p>The Library Board will be provided with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copies of the Reconsideration Form and accompanying materials</li> <li>• Librarian reviews</li> <li>• Decisions of the Manager and the Library Director</li> <li>• Library's Collection Development Policy</li> <li>• Mission Statement</li> <li>• Library Bill of Rights</li> <li>• The Miller Test</li> <li>• Review of Materials Policy with Guiding Principles and Procedures</li> <li>• Any other pertinent materials</li> </ul> <p>Written notice of the Library Board's final decision will be sent to the petitioner within seven business days of that meeting date. The decision of the Library Board is final.</p>

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