

Free Speech Policy

A free exchange of ideas is a vital element of every society. To further this end, it is the policy of the Siuslaw Public Library District (district or library) to make designated areas on library premises available for the public expression of opinions or ideas. Library space will be available to the public on equal terms, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting its use. Time, place, and manner restrictions outlined in this policy shall be applied equally to all public speech.

The literature rack, exhibit spaces, and bulletin boards are available to local and regional organizations and individuals engaged in educational, cultural, political, intellectual, and charitable activities. Material displays, exhibits, and bulletin board materials are not endorsed by the Siuslaw Public Library District. Commercial materials and surveys for commercial purposes and personal campaign materials for political office are not permitted. The library supports the American Library Association Bill of Rights (see Policy Manual Appendix A).

Public Use of Library Premises for Expression of Opinion

People and organizations are free to assemble, demonstrate, petition for signatures, communicate, and protest (referred to as "public demonstrations" in the rest of this policy) at the Siuslaw Public Library District. Equally, members of the public and library staff and volunteers have the right to pursue their legitimate use of the public library without interference.

In the interest of privacy, safety, and to ensure library operations are maintained, public demonstrations must take place during the library's regular business hours and cannot be conducted inside library facilities. In addition:

- When arriving to conduct a public demonstration on library grounds, individuals or organizations will alert library staff to their presence.

- Public demonstrations cannot impede pedestrian, wheelchair, or vehicular access to the library building and they cannot restrict regular or authorized activities in library facilities or on library property.
- Public demonstrations need to be conducted at least 20 feet away from any building exit, entrance, material drop box, or staircase and cannot block access to sidewalks, driveways, or the parking lot and/or parking spaces.
- Public demonstrations in congested areas are limited to the number of people which the area can reasonably accommodate as determined by a public safety official (e.g. fire marshal).
- There will be no interference with demonstrations on the grounds of content of speech, except for any speech or demonstration which incites immediate violent action or breach of peace and represents a clear and present danger to the community.
- The Siuslaw Public Library District Rules of Conduct policy and all other library policies apply at all times to all persons on library premises.
- Sales, commercial advertisements, and/or solicitation of funds do not qualify as public demonstrations and are prohibited.
- If multiple groups wish to engage in public demonstrations, the library director is authorized to institute a reservation/booking procedure to facilitate orderly access to library grounds.
- Activity participants and organizers must in no way affiliate themselves with the library district either through written publicity, signage, or verbal statements.
- No exterior or interior library furniture may be used for public demonstrations. Any furniture provided by people engaged in public demonstration cannot restrict or inhibit access to or use of the library.
- The views expressed in public demonstrations are those of the organizers and/or participants and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Siuslaw Public Library District.

Failure to cease any activity in violation of this or any other library policy immediately following either written or oral notice by a district official is also a violation of this policy. Violations of this policy may subject persons to disciplinary action including eviction from library premises and prosecution for criminal trespassing or other applicable laws, codes, or statutes.

This policy only refers to property owned by the Siuslaw Public Library District. Property owned by other entities that is rented to or leased by the district may have different time, place, and manner restrictions.

Bulletin Boards, Displays, and Free Literature Rack

The terms of public use of library bulletin boards, displays, and information rack are:

- Priority for space will be given to library-sponsored activities.
- Any item placed directly on the rack or bulletin boards without the permission of staff will be discarded.
- Material not picked up by the sponsor will be discarded at the end of its display period.
- Literature, exhibits, and bulletin board materials must clearly identify the individual or group responsible for them.
- Material which is in violation of any legal statute will not be displayed.
- Exhibits will not be publicized in a manner that suggests library sponsorship or affiliation.
- The library retains the right to deny space to any notices or materials that do not comply with these terms. Violation of these terms may result in denial of future access to the space.
- Free-standing displays must be pre-approved and scheduled by the library director.
- Free-standing displays must be dismantled and removed by the sponsor by the final day of its display period.
- Items for distribution must be free of charge.
- Bulletin board space is reserved for announcements or information about local, state, or regional activities.
- No hand-lettered items will be accepted.

Exceptions to these policies and rules are at the discretion of the library director or a designated staff person.

Adopted by the Board of Directors: March 20, 2002

Revised by Board of Directors: January 24, 2008

Reviewed by Board of Directors: June 19, 2013

Revised by Board of Directors: September 6, 2024