

Book Challenge Policy

Libraries: An American Value states, "We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services."

Onondaga County Public Library recognizes a responsibility to present differing points of view on controversial topics and a broad spectrum of artistic media. Materials which may seem objectionable to some may seem essential to others. OCPL's only fixed position is in support of Intellectual Freedom, and the inclusion or selection of any item does not imply an endorsement of its viewpoint or presentation. Each work must be judged on its own merits in light of the audience for whom it is intended.

The library welcomes user opinion on items in the collection, but will be governed by the Collection Management Policy in regards to deletion of an item from the collection. Users wishing reconsideration of library materials must fill out the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" appended to this document.

Upon receipt of a formal, written complaint, the Director will appoint an ad hoc committee to be chaired by either Head of Central or Head of Branches (depending on the source of origin of the complaint), also consisting of 2 professional staff members from System/Central and 2 professional staff members from branches. The Board will be notified of any formal written complaints and will be kept apprised through the decision making process.

All members of the ad hoc committee will be given time to review the item(s), pertinent reviews, and statewide or national holding patterns on the item(s) and then the committee will meet and forward its recommendation to the Director, who will then make a decision on the status of the item(s). The Director will then communicate this decision, and the reasons behind it, to the complainant.

If the complainant is not satisfied appeal may be made to the Board of Trustees, through formal appeal to the President of the Board. The Board will then review the Director's decision, and decide whether or not a formal hearing is warranted. If not, the Director's decision will stand as final, and if so the decision of the Board, following a hearing, will be final.

The item(s) under consideration will not be withdrawn from the shelves or from circulation during any phase of this process, until a final decision is reached.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Please completely fill out the form and mail to:

OCPL-Director, 447 S. Salina St., Syracuse, NY 13202

Title: _____

Author: _____

What is the format of the item? Please circle one: Book /Video /Music

Name of person making request: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Are you representing yourself? _____ A group? _____

If a group, give the name: _____

1. What in the material do you find objectionable? Please be specific, and provide example(s) and page numbers?

2. Is your objection to this material based upon personal experience (you have read /watched/listened to it), or upon reports you have heard, or both?

3. Have you read, listened to, or watched the material in its entirety?

4. Are you aware of the opinion of literary or educational reviewers regarding the item?

5. What action would you recommend regarding the use of this material?

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reconsideration requests are reviewed by a committee appointed by the Executive Director.