

Burnham Memorial Library  
Colchester, VT

## **PROGRAMMING POLICY**

The Burnham Memorial Library supports its mission of connecting people with the world of ideas and information by developing and presenting programs that expand opportunities for learning, connection, entertainment, growth, and programs that support the library's role as a civic gathering place. The library's investment in programs recognizes that people learn in many different ways and that diverse programming enables the library to reach new audiences.

Programming is an integral component of library service that:

- Expands the Library's role as a community resource
- Introduces customers and non-users to Library resources
- Provides entertainment
- Provides opportunities for lifelong learning
- Expands the visibility of the Library

The ultimate decision for programming rests with the Director, whereas library staff, as part of their regular responsibilities, carry out programming for the community. The following criteria are used in making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources:

- Community needs and interests
- Availability of program space
- Presentation quality
- Presenter qualifications and reputation in content area
- Budget
- Relevance to community issues
- Historical or educational significance
- Connection to other community programs, exhibitions, or events
- Relation to Library collection, resources, exhibits, or programs

In addition, the Library draws upon other community resources in developing programs and actively partners with other community agencies, organizations, educational and cultural institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored public programs. Professional performers and presenters that reflect specialized or unique expertise may be hired for library programs; performers and presenters will not be excluded from consideration because of their expressions of race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, or political or social views. Library staff who present programs do so as part of their regular job and are not hired as outside contractors for programming.

Library programs reflect a commitment to intellectual freedom. Compliance with the First Amendment of the US Constitution, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Vermont laws prohibiting discrimination in places of public accommodation shall underpin the practices and practical processes of creating the library's programs. Any concerns about programming should be brought to the attention of the Library Director, as stated in the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials, Displays, or Programs Procedure. Responses to challenges must follow the

library's policies and procedures, regardless of the issue. All challenged programs will continue as scheduled during the reconsideration process.

All Library programs are open to the public. No fees may be charged to people attending Library programs except with the approval of the Library Director (ex. program supplies, etc.). The Library's philosophy of open access to information and ideas extends to programming, and the Library does not knowingly discriminate through its programming. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of program topics, content, or the views expressed by participants.

Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited. Programs may be held on site or off site. Programs may be cancelled for a number of reasons, including: severe weather, absence of presenter, or low registration. In the event of a cancellation, all efforts will be made to notify the public ahead of time. Any sales of products at library programs must be approved by the Library Director. Programs are not used for commercial or partisan purposes, or the solicitation of business. External organizations or individuals partnering with the library on programs must coordinate marketing efforts with Library staff.

#### Virtual Programs

The library also offers virtual programs in an effort to reach the greatest number of patrons. They may include programs simultaneously run at library facilities and programs solely offered virtually. Patrons will utilize library-approved online meeting platforms to access virtual programs from their own device. Patrons attending virtual programs are expected to adhere to the Burnham Memorial Library Code of Conduct while in attendance. Staff will make a best good faith effort to provide quality audio, visual, and stable internet connection. The Burnham Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of its virtual events. Patrons attending these events understand and accept that all online activity comes with some degree of risk and agree that the library is not liable for any negative consequences that may result from attending a library virtual event.

*Approved by the Burnham Library Board of Trustees: January 15, 2015*

*Reviewed by the Board of Trustees: May 15, 2025*