

Library Programming Policy

In support of the mission of the Ford City Public Library, library staff uses many criteria in making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources, including, but not limited to community needs and interests; relation to library or community collections, resources, exhibits, and programs; educational significance; availability of program space; presentation quality; presenter background/qualifications in content area; budget.

Definitions

Library programs differ from fundraising, outreach, and community events. All library programs are free and open to the public. For equity and accessibility of library patrons, the library does not charge program or material fees. In rare instances, a suggested program or materials donation may be requested if excessive costs are required to offer a given program. Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited. A library membership may be required for some programs, such as book clubs. Library programs must be held on library property unless part of an outreach event (i.e., school assembly, story time in the park, etc.), or when it is reasonable to change the location of a regularly occurring program to better suit the elements of a given program. Library programs must be organized/overseen by paid library staff for consistency and reliability.

The library's philosophy of open access to information and ideas extends to library programming, and the library does not knowingly discriminate through its programming. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by participants. Program topics, speakers, and resources are not excluded from programs because of possible controversy. Evaluation of the effectiveness of a library program will be based on attendance and/or audience satisfaction. Other evaluation criteria include attraction of new patrons to the library, the promotion of Library goals, and addressing the needs of a specific target audience.

Fundraising Events: If the purpose of the event is to raise funds for the library, regardless of the type of activity occurring, the event will be deemed a fundraising event and will be advertised as such. Fundraising events may include, but are not limited to, specialized instruction, seasonal attractions, crafting activities, live entertainment, and food sales. Fundraising events must be organized by or in cooperation with library staff and/or volunteers.

Outreach Events: If the purpose of the event is to educate community members on the services, resources, and programs the library provides, regardless of the type of activity occurring, the event will be deemed an outreach event and will be advertised as such. Outreach events must be organized by or in cooperation with library staff and/or volunteers.

Community Events: Events held within the library by a community organization (i.e., pre-school registration, Garden Club sale, college q & a, etc.) must be organized in cooperation with library staff.

Presenters

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. While the library may partner with an agency or hire a speaker who is a professional or who has expertise in a particular area, the program itself remains the responsibility of the library staff. No funds of any kind may be solicited or collected by a presenter. Sale of products or services is not permitted without the written consent of the Library Director. Presenters may be asked to submit clearances in order to present children's programs. Presenters must maintain a respectful and appropriately civil attitude with library patrons and staff at all times. Disrespectful speech, actions, or attitude towards library staff or patrons will be cause for program disapproval or cancellation, and/or dismissal from the library.

Additional rules for programs and events are as follows:

- Presenters may not require sign-ups or contact information from attendees; presenter may provide their own contact information so attendees may voluntarily contact them after the program has concluded.
- The library will not be held responsible for any presenters' damaged items or materials.
- Excessive noise and other activities that disrupt normal library activity will not be permitted.
- Activities of a vigorous or dangerous physical nature or those involving the presence or use of firearms, live ammunition, or hazardous substances are not permitted.
- Garbage must be removed at the end of the event, and space is to be left clean.
- No alcoholic beverages will be permitted on library grounds.
- No candles or open flames are permitted.
- Open aisles must be maintained to provide clear access to all exits at all times.
- The library is not responsible for advertising or taking registration for non-library events.
- The library will not provide supplies or equipment of any kind, without prior agreement to do so.

Program Requests

Unsolicited offers from individuals or organizations to present programs or hold events will be evaluated by the same standards used by library staff when planning library programming. Library programming and use of space for library services and resources takes precedence over outside presentations and events. A Program Request form must be submitted at least 30 days in advance of proposed program or event. Submission of a Program Request form does not guarantee approval. Clearances, references, and/or a background check may be required for approval.