

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Policy

Purpose:

The Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library is dedicated to providing free and equal access to a diverse collection of materials that support the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community. While the inclusion of an item in the collection does not imply the Library's endorsement of its content, the Library acknowledges that community members may occasionally object to specific materials. This policy provides a structured process for individuals to request the reconsideration of library materials.

Eligibility to Submit a Request:

Requests for reconsideration may only be submitted by individuals residing within the Library's service area who hold a library card in good standing. Each individual may submit a maximum of three (3) requests for reconsideration per calendar year. A specific title, regardless of format (e.g., print, eBook, audiobook, etc.), may not be challenged more than once every three (3) years.

Guiding Principles:

The Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library affirms the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement. Materials will not be automatically removed from the collection or restricted based solely on a request for reconsideration. Materials under review will remain available to the public throughout the reconsideration process.

Reconsideration Process:

1. Individuals requesting reconsideration must complete a Request for Reconsideration Form, available at the library or on the library's website. The completed form must be submitted to the Library Director.
2. Upon receipt of the completed form, the Library Director will acknowledge the request and conduct an initial review based on the Library's Collection Development Policy.
3. Within fourteen (14) days of receiving the request, the Library Director and Board President will review the material and determine if further review is warranted.
4. The Library Director will issue a written decision to the requester, summarizing the findings, within ten (10) days after the review is completed. This decision will be sent via certified mail. A copy of the decision will also be provided to the Board of Trustees.

Appeal Process:

1. If the requester is dissatisfied with the Committee's decision, they may submit a written appeal to the President of the Board of Trustees.
2. The Board of Trustees will review the appeal at its next scheduled meeting or at a special meeting, if deemed necessary.

3. The Board's decision will be communicated to the requester in writing.
4. If the requester remains unsatisfied, a final appeal may be made to the Commissioner of Education in Albany, New York.

Evaluation of Standards:

Evaluation of library materials will be based on the work as a whole, not on isolated passages. The library will not redact, modify, or remove portions of any material under consideration.

Final Authority:

Final responsibility for all library policies lies with the Board of Trustees. Implementation of this policy and day-to-day collection development decisions rest with the Library Director.

References:

- American Library Association Library Bill of Rights:
<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>
- Freedom to Read Statement: <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>
- Freedom to View Statement:
<https://www.ala.org/rt/vrt/professionalresources/vrtresources/freedomtoview>
- Code of Ethics: <https://www.ala.org/tools/ethics>

Approved: February 2025

Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library Request for Reconsideration Form

Introduction:

This form is in reference to the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Policy and is for residents who wish to request a review of an item in the library's collection. Requests will only be accepted from library cardholders in good standing that reside in the library's service area.

The Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library supports the right to access a broad range of ideas and information. The library will not process requests, and the library board will not hear reconsideration requests from individuals who reside outside the library's service area. Materials will remain available during the review process.

Please fill out the form completely and return to:

Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library
C/O Library Director
2 Willets Ave
Belmont, NY 14813

Date: _____ Name: _____
Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____
Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____
Library Card Number: _____

Material Information

Title: _____ Author/Creator: _____
Format (e.g., Book, eBook, DVD, Audiobook, etc.): _____

Have you read the Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library Reconsideration Policy?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you represent: Yourself? _____ An Organization? _____

What brought this title to your attention?

Did you read, view, or listen to the entire work? If no, what parts?

What do you believe is the topic or theme of this title?

What specifically concerns you about this title? Please cite pages, items etc.

Are there, in your judgment, any positive elements in this title? Please describe:

Are there resources you suggest providing additional information and/or viewpoints on this topic?

What action would you like the Library to consider regarding this material?

____ Removal from the collection ____ Relocation to a different section ____ Other (please specify):

Signature: _____

******Library Use Only******

Date request received: _____

Review Start Date: _____

Review Completion Date: _____

Submitted to ALA/NYLA on: _____

Reconsideration action:

Date response sent to patron: _____

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