PROGRAMMING POLICY

Purpose:

The Cheshire Public Library promotes its mission of lifelong learning and community engagement by planning and offering programs that provide opportunities for education, entertainment, personal growth, and connection. Programs are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents. They are meant to represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints. They provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of residents. They are resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas as well as a means of promoting free expression and free access to ideas by residents. Programming is one of the core services the Library offers, in addition to our collections and technology offerings. This policy outlines the criteria for creating and selecting programs as well as gives information regarding the oversight of programs presented by the Library.

Definition of a Program:

A Library program is a free event, virtual or in-person, planned by the Library staff for the benefit of those members of the public who opt to attend. It may involve outside presenters, facilitators or performers and may be presented in cooperation with other entities. Programs may be held in person at the Library or at an offsite location. Library programs are open to all members of the public. The programs may be facilitated by Library staff or feature outside presenters or facilitators. The Library may also choose to partner with community organizations to provide programming.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Cheshire Public Library provides programs that are educational, informational, cultural, and relevant to current events. Topics and selections are made by librarians. Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop programs. Ultimate responsibility for Library program selection lies with the Library Director. Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

Programming Criteria:

Speakers and materials for programming are selected based on:

- Community interests and needs
- Entertainment/cultural value
- Availability of presenter/facilitator as well as program room space
- Knowledge/credentials of presenter/facilitator on a particular topic
- Cost of the presenter/facilitator
- Currency and timeliness of content
- Educational significance
- Connection to other community programs, exhibitions or events

Program Selection:

As outlined in the Programming Criteria, Library programs are selected based on their informational, cultural, educational, and recreational value as well as reviews, recommendations, and/or the professional judgment of the programming librarians. Programs that do not meet these criteria will be avoided. Strictly commercial programs or those promoting a business will not be offered by the Library as a Library sponsored program.

Programs of a political nature, specifically those that support or oppose political candidates, proposed legislation, ballot measures, or urge political action, will not be offered by the Library.

Programs that are strictly educational and/or present various perspectives of a political issue or candidate(s), such as a candidate forum where all recognized candidates are invited, may be considered by the Library at its sole discretion.

The Library may offer programs that address cultural and/or religious themes in an educational and informative capacity and format. Holiday programs may also be offered for educational or entertainment purposes. The Library is committed to providing equal opportunity through its employment practices and through the many activities, programs, and services it provides to all members of the community. All decisions are and will continue to be made without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement by the Library 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.

Program Development, Coordination and Supervision:

Library programs may originate from Library staff, partnering institutions or members of the public. Presenters who are interested in hosting a program at the Library should fill out our online [presenter form](#). Contacting the Library does not guarantee a programming slot or in any way represent or promise that the topic or content will be acceptable under this policy. Presenters will be booked at the discretion of Library staff as well as based on the criteria listed above, the timing of other programs, and programming room availability.

Program Access:

Library programs are open to the public and while some are first-come first-served, many require advanced registration. Cheshire residents are given priority registration for high-demand programs. Some Library programs are held at the Library while some may be held off-site depending on the size and nature of the program. Programming geared towards a specific audience, particularly in the case of youth services programs, are limited to those age groups,

and their family members or caregivers. Attendance at Library programs may be restricted based on factors such size limitations and/or targeted age group at the programming Librarian's discretion. The ultimate decision to allow a person to attend a program lies with the supervising librarian. Attendees and presenters are responsible for complying with the [Library's Code of Conduct](). Failure to do so may result in a participant being removed from the program.

The Cheshire Public Library seeks to provide accessibility to program attendees with disabilities regarding facility and communications. The Library will make a reasonable effort to accommodate any individual who wishes to participate in a Library program. They should contact the Library at least two weeks prior to the program. Please include a description of the accommodation you are requesting.

Virtual Programs:

The Library will occasionally offer virtual programs using a Library-approved virtual meeting platform, depending on the location and availability of the presenter. Those attending a virtual program are expected to provide their own audio-visual equipment and internet connection or arrange ahead of time to use Library equipment. The Library will try to utilize platforms that are compatible with its hardware and software but does not guarantee that every patron will be capable of accessing every Library program successfully. The Library cannot guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees. Some virtual programs may be pre-recorded and broadcast via the Internet or recorded as presented for later viewing. In the event an interactive program is being recorded, attendees will be informed of that fact at the start of the program.

Live virtual programs require advanced registration. Registered participants will receive a link to log on to the program via email and must not share that link with others. Information collected during the registration process will be used only to communicate information about that program or to confirm eligibility to participate in that program.

Patrons attending virtual programs are expected to adhere to the Library's Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in their immediate removal from said program. The Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of virtual events, however attendees must understand that all online activity carries some risk.

Program Materials: Books, CDs, DVDs or other ancillary materials related to the content of a program may be offered for check-out as part of a display at a Library program as a convenience to the attendees.

Program Evaluations:

Library staff will gather information about program results to guide future programming decisions. Number of attendees will be gathered for all or almost all programs. Other outcomes will be gathered on a case-by-case basis to assist with offering new programming ideas, topics, or formats.

Objection to a Library Program:

The Cheshire Public Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays or programs for individuals residing in Cheshire. Please see our [Material Review and Reconsideration Policy](#) for more information.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in Conn. Gen. Stat. §46a-64 (2019).

Reserving a Meeting Room Space:

Individuals or groups reserving spaces within the Library for meetings or events not co-hosted with the Library should refer to our [Meeting Room Policy](#). Note: Use of a public meeting room by an organization or an individual to hold a public event is not a library program.