



## Display Spaces Use Policy

### **Purpose**

West Haven Library's Display Policy provides a basis for the display of library materials by library staff, informs the public about the principles and criteria upon which these decisions are made, and promotes the purposes of the library's mission, which is:

“The West Haven Library is committed to serving the changing needs of our community by providing access to free sources of knowledge, information, and entertainment both within and beyond our walls.”

The West Haven Public Library encourages the use of our display spaces and views their use as an extension of library services in which residents can access artistic, intellectual, and cultural resources. Permission to reserve and use a display space does not constitute an endorsement by the library of the group's beliefs, point of view, or purposes.

### **Policy**

The West Haven Library recognizes the importance of displays as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by West Haven residents. With a strong focus on encouraging the love of reading, lifelong learning, and creativity, we establish responsive connections between the diverse needs of our community, our vast collections, our digital services, and an array of engaging programming. A key aspect of our approach is the creation of thoughtfully curated displays, which play an essential role in informing and inspiring individuals of all ages and of diverse backgrounds. These displays serve as a tangible expression of our dedication to the community and exemplify our belief that a vibrant library contributes to a strong community. Displays are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents, represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, and provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of residents.

## **Principles, Criteria, and eligibility:**

The library's display spaces are available for non-profit, non-commercial exhibits and notices, in addition to staff facilitated displays. Individuals and community organizations may use specific display spaces for presentations of educational, civic, cultural, or artistic nature. Preference is given to individuals and organizations based in West Haven. Library and library sponsored displays take priority over outside requests for use of the display spaces. Library staff are professionally trained to curate displays and do so under direction of the Executive Director. The Executive Director reserves the right to deny a request or reservation should they deem the content to be malicious to another group or inappropriate for a public building.

Library staff uses the following criteria in making decisions about display topics, materials, and accompanying resources:

- Community needs and interest
- Availability of display space
- Historical, cultural, or educational significance
- Connection to other communities or national programs, exhibitions, or events
- Relation to library collections, resources, exhibits, and programs
- The West Haven Library may partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored displays and exhibits.

The West Haven Library will strive to include a wide spectrum of opinions and viewpoints in library-initiated displays and exhibits, as well as offer displays and exhibits that appeal to a range of ages, interests, and information needs. Library-initiated displays and exhibits should not exclude topics, books, media, and other resources solely because they may be considered to be controversial.

The library provides displays created or curated by librarians or staff members of the public library as well as allowing displays created by members of the public or community groups to be exhibited in the public library. Acceptance of a display or exhibit topic by the West Haven Library does not constitute an endorsement by the West Haven Library of the content of the display or exhibit, or of the views expressed in the materials on display.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

## **Public Display Space Availability**

Requests for use of a display space are considered on a first-come first-served basis up to six months in advance and no less than 14 days ahead of time. A duration of up to two months is allowed for a display, and up to three separate reservations are allowed per year per renter. The library reserves the right to limit use where the demand for display space so requires.

## **Intellectual Freedom and Censorship**

The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial or offensive to an individual but maintains that individuals can apply their values only to themselves. The selection of library materials is predicated on the patrons right of access to information and freedom from censorship. Selections will not be made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the material itself.

## **Public Display Use**

To reserve a display space, exhibitors must speak with the Head of Adult Services at the Main Library or the Branch Manager at the Ora Mason Library and provide detailed information about their proposed display.

Placement and removal of displays are the responsibility of the exhibitor who has reserved the space. Placement and removal must be conducted during regular library hours and should be scheduled with the library staff.

Exhibitors must display items without causing damage to the display spaces. Tape, tacks, stickers, staples, and other items that can damage walls are not permitted for use. The library assumes no liability in the event of damage, destruction, or theft of a display. Displays must be taken down on the last day of the reserved time period and removed from the library. Any items left behind will be kept at the library for a maximum of two weeks, after which the library will dispose of the items.

## **West Haven Library's Display Policy**

Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of or be seen by minors. No one can exercise censorship to restrict access to library materials by others. It is the parents' or guardians' responsibility to determine which library materials are appropriate for their children.

The West Haven Library supports the *Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View* Statements from the American Library Association. The library forbids discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, age, lawful source of income, intellectual disability, mental disability, physical disability (including blindness or deafness), or veteran status.

## **Procedures for the Questioning of Library Displays by Patrons**

If a member of the West Haven community would like a reconsideration of a display, there are procedures in place for filing a reconsideration request. **For patron requests of review or reconsideration of a display, the patron must be a resident of West Haven.** Please see the library's reconsideration form and policy.

## **Patron Display Publicity**

All publicity concerning the exhibit is the responsibility of the exhibitor. The name of the library may not be used in any publicity regarding the display except to designate the location. The library may not be identified as a co-sponsor, nor may the library logo be used without prior written approval from the Executive Director. The library reserves the right to review and request changes to any promotional materials that the exhibitor intends to issue in connection with its use of the library's display space.

Items on display are not to be posted as being available for sale or used to raise funds while on display.

Exhibitors may display a business card or flyer to display information about the exhibitor and their contact information.

## **Delegation**

The Executive Director and Library Board have full authority to grant, refuse, or revoke permission to use the display spaces, as well as make exceptions to this policy as deemed appropriate.