



Library Programming Policy

Purpose

The West Haven Library (“WHPL”), in keeping with its mission of promoting knowledge, ideas and cultural enrichment, develops and presents programs that provide information, learning and entertainment.

Programming is an integral component of Library services that promotes and complements WHPL’s other services and collections. It supports the WHPL's role as the center of the community. Programs are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents and aim to represent a wide range of varied diverging viewpoints and will provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of residents. WHPL recognizes the importance of displays and programs as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. This policy provides guidelines for the development, management, and oversight of programs presented by WHPL.

Scope

This policy applies to all West Haven Library programs.

Definition

A library program is defined as a library-sponsored event or activity designed to provide the public with educational, informational, entertainment, or cultural experiences, free and open to all. These planned events serve to introduce attendees to library resources, meet specific community needs, and support the library's mission as a community and cultural center.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Village Improvement Association (VIA) delegates development, presentation and oversight of programs to the Executive Director and staff.

The Head of Adult Services, Branch Manager, and the Head of Children & Teen Services are accountable for planning, scheduling and implementation of programs for the library.

Designated Library staff are responsible for the development, coordination and supervision of WHPL programs. The final responsibility for the library program is held by the Executive Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by library employees throughout the library that are professionally trained to curate and develop programs.

Attendees are responsible for complying with West Haven Library's Code of Conduct Policy.

Procedures

1. **Program Selection:** The Library strives to present programs that are educational, informational, cultural or recreational and avoids programs that do not meet these standards. Topics, content and timing of West Haven Library programs are developed with consideration of available resources and keeping community needs and interests in mind. Program selection is based upon the suitability of topic, format and intended audience. A program will not be excluded because its topic may be regarded by some as controversial. WHPL sponsorship of a program does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the content or of the presenter of the program. The library provides programs created or curated by librarians or staff members of the public library as well as allowing displays and programs created by members of the public or community groups and exhibited in the public library.

a. West Haven Library programs must have educational, informational, cultural or recreational value to the community. Programs of a purely commercial nature or those designed for the solicitation of business will not be offered by WHPL.

b. Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be approved or offered by West Haven Library. However, educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates, may be offered.

c. Programs that support or oppose a specific religion will not be approved or offered. Programs are planned to be inclusive of all cultures and of all religions and no religion. West Haven Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe or proselytize a particular religious conviction. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of WHPL patrons.

2. **Program Development, Coordination and Supervision:** West Haven Library programs may originate from Library staff, partnering institutions or members of the public. In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization depending upon the timing and venue of the program. All programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the West Haven Library, however, must abide by this policy regardless of where they are hosted.

3. **Program Access:** West Haven Library programs are free and open to the public on a first-come, first-serve basis. Registration may be in advance online or at the door. For programs targeted to a specific audience, e.g. children or teens, and promoted as such, preferential admission may be offered to those groups on a first-come first-serve basis, limited to those individuals as the West Haven Library deems appropriate. Any individual

requiring accommodation to participate in a WHPL program should contact the Library two weeks prior to the program using the Accessibility Accommodation Request Form.

4. Virtual Program Delivery: Some West Haven Library programs may be offered using a Library-approved virtual meeting platform (such as Zoom) that registered patrons may use to access the virtual program from their own internet-enabled devices. This may include programs that are simultaneously run at the physical Library as well as programs that are offered only virtually. While hosting the virtual program, West Haven Library staff, partnering organizations, and program facilitators will follow industry standard best practices for virtual events.

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 via email a link to log on to the program 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 West Haven Library's Code of Conduct Policy and failure to do so may result in their immediate removal from said program. The West Haven Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of virtual events; however attendees must understand that all online activity carries some degree of risk.

Patrons are required to provide their own equipment and internet connection to attend virtual programs. The West Haven Library will make a good faith effort to utilize platforms that will be compatible with the widest array of hardware and software but makes no guarantee that every patron will be capable of accessing every WHPL program successfully. Nor can the West Haven Library guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees.

5. Program Materials: Books, CDs, DVDs or other ancillary materials related to the content of a program may be offered for sale at a WHPL program as a convenience to attendees.

6. Program Evaluation: To provide the highest quality and most useful programming, West Haven Library staff will gather information about program results to guide future programming decisions. Outputs, such as the number of attendees at a program, will be gathered for all or almost all programs. Outcomes, such as how well the content of a program helped attendees learn about the program's topic, will be gathered at times when such data is required for grant reporting or would be helpful in evaluating a new program topic or format.

7. Procedures for the Questioning of Library Programs by Patrons:

The West Haven Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays or programs to individuals that are residents of West Haven. Please see our Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and reconsideration form for further information on this process.

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.