

POLICIES  
OF THE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM  
MONROE, MICHIGAN

Approved November 9, 1981

Revised 6/91, 2/98, 4/09, 10/09, 5/10, 9/10, 2/11

# Policy Manual

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The policies which follow are intended to guarantee that the highest levels of public library

service are provided to the residents of Monroe County, Michigan.

These policies establish the framework and operating guidelines for the board, executive officer and staff of the Monroe County Library System. These policies are intended to point the way to fulfillment of the mission of the Monroe County Library System.

**A. THE MISSION OF THE MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM**

Monroe County Library System is a free public library whose mission is to meet the individual and common needs of all the people of Monroe County, Michigan for on-going access to information within the full scope of recorded human expression.

The Library provides its users a source of life-long learning and entertainment and, through the provision of information, a means of exerting control over and enriching their lives.

The Library is a forum for the exploration of ideas, a focus for community identity and pride, and a repository for and point of access to the dreams, aspirations, and visions of humanity.

The Library fulfills a special role in support of the free exercise of First Amendment rights as an essential component of maintaining our open, democratic society of free people. It assumes a responsibility to encourage the development and utilization of reading skills as a means of enabling full participation by each individual in the opportunities and responsibilities of this society.

The Library is dedicated to excellence, equity, and lack of bias in all aspects of its service. The Library's services and collections reflect the diversity of its users, the variety of their interests, and the heritage of their communities.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees  
March 13, 1989

Mission statement: The Monroe County Library enriches the quality of life for all residents of the county by providing free access to informational, educational and recreational resources.

Adopted June 2004

**B. THE RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC**

The Mission of the Monroe County Library System will strive to provide access to information within the full scope of recorded human expression. The Library is a forum for the exploration of idea and fulfills a special role in support of the free exercise of First Amendment

rights as an essential component of maintaining our open, democratic society of free people. The Library is dedicated to lack of bias in all aspects of its service and its collections reflect the diversity of its users, the variety of their interests, and the heritage of their communities.

As a government service, these purposes exist within a framework of constitutional law spelled out in both the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Michigan as well as in the various federal, state, and local laws and ordinances that govern the library and its operations. Library policy operates within these contexts and guides procedural decisions which determine the agency's day to day functioning.

The American vision of a self-governing, informed populace is the primary reason for the existence of the public library. The public library is an institution which embodies the concept of a marketplace of ideas which the First Amendment protects. It stands as a gateway to human experience and as a bulwark against those who may feel that governments should determine which ideas are acceptable, which religions are correct, and which beliefs will be tolerated. For this reason, libraries by design contain representations of differing perspectives, opinions, and points of view on issues both important and mundane. They collect and make available not only majoritarian, popular material, but also the voices of dissent: the minority viewpoints that enrich and enliven our public debate. And they contain a measure of the unpopular and the controversial as well.

It is the genius of the American way that we trust ourselves and our fellow human beings with open expression, the right of dissent, and the right to pick our own paths towards the truth. It is the genius of the American public library that we support at public expense an institution which enables and facilitates access to the diversity of human views from around the globe.

The Monroe County Library System finds that these principles are embodied in professional standards of librarianship which have been formulated and articulated by the American Library Association and are included in its Code of Ethics for Librarians, the Library Bill of Rights, and the Statement on Freedom to Read adopted and endorsed by the American Library Association, the Association of American Publishers, the American Booksellers Association, and many other national professional organizations.

These documents are included as basic policies of the Monroe County Library system and are appended to this policy handbook.

The Monroe County Library System operates under the provisions of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act. The library board directs the library director to implement procedures to keep the library in compliance with this law and to monitor the administration of those procedures.

The Monroe County Library System operates under the provisions of the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

The Monroe County Library System operates under the provisions of the Michigan Privacy Act which protects the confidentiality of library users.

The Monroe County Library System is committed to the provisions of public library service without direct charges to individuals or groups who reside in Monroe County, own property in the library's taxing area, work or attend school in Monroe County or who are served by libraries with which the Library System maintains reciprocal user privileges. Non-resident charges may be levied for borrowing privileges extended to individuals who live outside the library's jurisdiction.

Basic library services will not be subject to fees or other user charges. The Library may from time to time impose fees for non-library use of library equipment (i.e. copy machines) or fines to encourage the prompt return of circulating materials. Charges may be levied for the repair or replacement of lost or damaged materials.

## **II. ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM**

The Monroe County Library System was established April 18, 1934 by the Monroe County Board of Supervisors under the provisions of Act 138 of 1917, being the Compiled Laws of Michigan, Section 397.301 - 397.305 as amended.

The Monroe County Library System began with funding under the Federal Works Progress Administration. The Michigan Legislature in 1939 and again in 1947 took action empowering the Monroe County Library Board to receive all penal fines collected within the county. The Monroe County Library System served the entire county except City District No. 1. This district had a public library independently operated by the Monroe Board of Education.

The Monroe County Library System is the product of a merger agreed upon by the Monroe County Library System Board and the School District of Monroe which was effected January 1, 1963. The agreement merged the City of Monroe Library (Dorsch Memorial Library and the City of Monroe's East End Branch Library) into the county system under the jurisdiction of the Monroe County Library System Board.

## **III. FINANCIAL BASIS**

### **A. BUDGET**

The fiscal year of the Monroe County Library System is January 1 to December 31 (Public Act 174 of 1943, Michigan Compiled Laws 45.201). As a body corporate, the Board of the Monroe County Library System is authorized to administer the county library fund, to authorize and enter into contracts, to determine the number of and compensation for library employees, and to do any other thing necessary to conduct county library service. The Board of the Monroe County Library System shall annually prepare a budget which shall be considered for approval only after provision

is made for an adequate Public Hearing.

The budget and its related financial reports shall conform to the provisions of the county Government Accounting Act (Public Act 328 of 1931; Michigan Compiled Laws 750.485), Public Act 621 of 1978, and other directions of the Treasurer and Auditor of the County of Monroe and the Local Audit Division of the State Treasury Department. The budget shall address the expected/anticipated revenue of the library system as well as the anticipated expenditures required for adequate operation of the library system. The budget shall address the needs for an adequate collection of materials, necessary hours of service, a competent, well-trained staff, maintenance of library-owned equipment and facilities, and appropriate capital expenditures. Included in the annual budget shall be a schedule outlining grades of compensation for employees. The only ungraded position shall be that of the Library Director. The Board will annually set the compensation for the Library Director.

The Library Director is charged with general supervision of and the execution of the budget adopted by the Board and shall hold the staff accountable for performance of their responsibilities within the amounts appropriated by the Board of Trustees in keeping with the financial policies of the Board.

Following the close of each fiscal year, the Library will obtain an independent audit of its annual financial statements.

## **B. FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE COUNTY OF MONROE**

Provisions of Public Act 138 of 1917 define clearly the responsibilities of the Monroe County Library System Board. Its full authority as a body corporate imposes no obligation on the County of Monroe for financial support for the library services devised and provided. It shall be the policy of the Board to function independently in its decision making and to consider the interests of all citizens in its policy deliberations free from the control of other policy making bodies.

The Treasurer of the County of Monroe shall serve as Treasurer Ex Officio of the Board of the Monroe County Library System. Under provisions of state law, the Treasurer shall disburse the County Library Fund upon the order or warrants of the Library Board. All eligible employees of the Library System shall be members of the Monroe County Employees Retirement System.

## **C. SOURCES OF REVENUE**

### **1. PENAL FINES**

Under provisions of the Constitution of the State of Michigan, the County Library shall be the recipient of penal fines collected for violations of state law within the jurisdiction

of the County of Monroe. These funds shall be paid monthly by the County Treasurer to the County Library Fund. Penal Fines, as outlined in the State Constitution, shall be applied only for the use of public libraries in the State of Michigan.

## **2. MILLAGE**

Under the provisions of the state law as first employed in 1962 the voters of the County of Monroe may, from time to time, be requested to impose upon themselves a millage tax for the operation of the Monroe County Library System. Successful millages were placed on the ballot in 1962, 1964, 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1984, 1988, 1996, 2000, and 2004. Under the provisions of the Headlee Amendment to the State Constitution in 1979, a factor is used to determine the exact amount which the voted millage will produce in tax revenue during any given year. Each year of the existence of a voted millage the Library Director shall certify to each unit of government within the county the authorization for the collection of any voted millage. Notice of this collection shall also be made to the County Department of Equalization and the County Treasurer. Funds collected from this levy of taxes shall be credited to the County Library Fund by the County Treasurer.

## **3. STATE AID**

The Monroe County Library System is authorized under the provisions of Public Act 89 of 1977 to receive state aid administered by the Library of Michigan. State aid is provided on a per capita basis based upon the most recent United States census to libraries meeting minimum requirements for levels of certified staff and local fiscal support.

Additional state aid is received as a result of Monroe County Library System's participation as a member of the Woodlands Library Cooperative and is in turn paid as a membership fee to the Cooperative.

## **4. CONTRACTS**

The Monroe County Library System Board is authorized to enter into contracts which it feels serve the best interests of the System and the residents of the County. These contracts shall provide for appropriate financial consideration for services and materials provided or received.

# **D. METHODS OF ADMINISTERING FUNDS**

## **1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Significant Accounting policies utilized by the Library System conform to generally accepted accounting principles as applicable to governments. These are enumerated in the Annual Financial Statement.

## **2. EXPENDITURES**

Budgetary control is at the fund level. Expenditures shall be made pursuant to appropriations made by the Board of Trustees in keeping with the adopted budget. Changes in the amount appropriated by the Board shall require approval by the Board.

Expenditures will be made by authorized personnel within established budgetary policy and administrative procedures.

It is in the interest of the Board of the Monroe County Library System to acquire services and materials at the most equitable and reasonable price without sacrificing necessary quality. When price, service and availability are competitive, the library system will purchase supplies and labor locally. For purposes of this policy, if a business has a presence in Monroe County, it will be considered "local" (thus adding to the county's tax base).

Bids may from time to time be requested to assure the widest and most equitable participation. It shall be at the discretion of the Board and Director of the Monroe County Library System that bids are solicited for any services or materials to be acquired when the per unit cost is expected to exceed \$20,000.00.

The Board and Director may, at their discretion, solicit bids for the sale of used and/or obsolete material and equipment. Requests for bids for purchase and/or sale of materials may be publicly announced in the newspaper of record, being the Monroe Evening News published in Monroe, Michigan, or may be provided via the U.S. mail or other documented means to appropriate bidders without additional publication.

approved 2/14/11

## **3. PAYMENTS**

All payment for materials, service or equipment received shall be made by check through established bank accounts. All expenditures by the Library System are approved by the Director and the Board of Trustees, except for such small items as it shall be necessary to purchase from petty cash. Replenishment of the petty cash fund shall be made by the same procedure as for other bills. The Board authorizes in advance payment for all services and other appropriate compensation to employees in order to meet established personnel policies

and practices. In addition to payroll, automatic payment, as appropriate, is authorized for all utilities and for all bills with time limitations, or where a discount may be realized for prompt payment. The Library Director shall make a printed report of receipts, expenditures, and the Library's financial condition each month to the Board.

All bills scheduled for payment as mailed to the Board shall be considered approved, except if an objection is received on or prior to the second Monday of the month in question. Such payments will be ratified by the Board at their next regular meeting.

The Board of the Monroe County Library System shall designate a bank through which all financial expenditures will be handled. Along with the resolution of appointment of the financial institution shall go the Board's approval of the Library Director as the authorized signatory for all checks and other negotiable financial instruments. The board authorizes the use of an acceptable check signature machine when it will most efficiently serve the needs of the Monroe County Library System.

#### **4. INVESTMENTS**

The Treasurer of the County of Monroe, in consultation with the Library Director, is authorized to utilize funds on deposit in the County Library Fund for the purchase of Certificates of Deposit and other appropriate investments authorized under state law.

See Appendix IV for the Investment Policy Resolution.

### **IV. ORGANIZATION**

#### **A. THE BOARD**

##### **1. APPOINTMENTS/TERMS**

The Monroe County Board of Commissioners under the provisions of state law shall appoint all members of the five person Monroe County Library System Board (Compiled Laws of Michigan, Section 397.302).

Board terms are for five years. Appointments shall generally run beginning January 1, 2000 and thereafter of each year with terms on a staggered basis.

In the case of a vacancy on the Board, the Monroe County Board of Commissioners shall appoint an individual to fill the unexpired term. Board members may be reappointed for additional terms by action of the Board of Commissioners.

## **2. OFFICERS**

The organizational meeting for the election of officers shall be held each year at the meeting following the appointment by the Board of Commissioners of a member to fill the term that expires that year. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary shall be elected by a majority vote of the Trustees of the Monroe County Library System present. The Board officers shall serve for a term of one year or until replaced by election.

The Chairperson shall be the presiding officer of the Board and shall exercise all duties and privileges of that office. The Chairperson may speak and vote on all business coming before the Board.

The Vice-Chairperson shall serve as the presiding officer in the absence of the Board Chairperson.

The Secretary shall keep records of all meetings, sign all legal documents and correspondence, and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board.

The Board of Trustees will establish Committees of the Board as needed to assist it in carrying out its functions. These may include, but not be limited to, a Finance Committee, a Policy and Personnel Committee, and a Technology Committee. The Board will review all its Committees on an annual basis. Committee terms will generally be for one year. Members will be appointed by the Board Chairperson. Committees will meet on the call of the Board Chairperson, the Committee Chair, or the Director. The Director will serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of all Board Committees.

## **3. MEETINGS**

The Library Board shall transact all business at a regular or special meeting of the Board. The Board shall annually in January approve and post notice of the dates, time, and locations of all meetings. Unless otherwise scheduled, regular meetings will be held at the Library Headquarters in the Mary K. Daume Library Service Center, 840 S. Roessler Street, at 6:00 p.m. on the second Monday of the month. The Board at its discretion, may schedule regular and special meetings at other locations within the County of Monroe. The Chairperson, or a majority of the Board members, may call additional meetings as needed. The Director shall make arrangements for all meetings, notify members at least 24 hours before the meeting and prepare the agenda for such meetings Monroe County Library System

Any Board member may have issues vital to library policy placed on the agenda.

The provisions of the Open Meetings Act (Public Act 267 of 1976) shall be followed.

The most recently revised edition of Roberts Rules of Order, Revised shall be the rules for all meetings of the Board. When those rules differ from Board policies, Board policies will be followed. The Board shall provide for adequate public participation at all meetings.

The following policy will apply to public comment at library board meetings.

\*Revised August 14, 2000

### **Public Comment Policy**

1. Public Comment shall be for the purpose of hearing public opinion and concerns. Questions to board members or the staff are not appropriate at this time.
2. Public comment times are provided at the beginning and ending of each meeting. Each speaker shall be limited to a three-minute presentation; additional time may be permitted at the discretion of the Chair. If necessary to accommodate a large group of speakers, the Chair may limit speakers to two minutes.
3. Public comment shall be for a period of up to one hour at the start of the meeting. Time will also be provided at the end of the formal agenda for additional public comments.
4. Persons wishing to speak shall first sign a card giving their name and address. Speakers will be recognized by the Chair. Each speaker shall identify himself or herself for the record.
5. Public comment shall be permitted at public hearings called by the board. Persons speaking at a public hearing must limit their comments to the subject of that hearing.

6. Persons attending the meeting must not interrupt other speakers or otherwise disrupt the meeting. The Chair may order persons who violate these rules to leave the meeting.

Public Comment Policy adopted by the Monroe County Library System Board October 4, 1999

The minutes of the proceedings of the Board of the previous meeting shall be prepared and mailed to the members with adequate time for review before the next regular meeting. They will be made available to the public under the provisions of state law.

#### **4. DUTIES / ROLE OF LIBRARY BOARD**

As empowered by state law, the Board of the Monroe County Library System shall have the responsibility for the governance of the library system. Section 397.302 of the Compiled Laws of Michigan states, "The Board shall be a body corporate and shall be authorized to contract for the leasing, construction, or maintenance of buildings or quarters including the acquisition of sites to house the county library service and to do any other thing necessary for the conducting of county library service...."

The Board is charged with the setting of policy to guide the provision of library service in Monroe County. The Board shall approve the budget and expenditures related thereto. The Board shall set appropriate levels of compensation and shall approve necessary contracts for the provision of library services.

The Board of the Monroe County Library System shall appoint a Director of the library system who shall be a graduate librarian possessing a Master's Degree in Library Science from a school accredited by the American Library Association. The Director shall have the responsibility for the operation of the library system in accordance with policy enacted by the Board and within the parameters of the annual budget as approved.

No member of the Board shall have the power to act in the name of the Board except as empowered by specific action of the Board.

No member of the Board should be financially interested directly or indirectly in any contract, labor, or supplies provided the library system. No board member should influence library policy to benefit financially in any way.

Board members and designated staff members will file annual conflict of interest disclosure statements as required by Board policy.

No member of the Board, nor family members, shall hold an administrative position with the Monroe County Library System.

## **5. BOARD COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES**

Each member of Board of the Monroe County Library System shall be compensated for each Board meeting attended. The Chairperson shall receive an additional monthly stipend. The amounts of this compensation shall be reviewed and set annually by the Board as part of the budget preparation process. Reasonable and necessary additional expenses shall be paid to all Board members upon approval of the Board. Reimbursed expenses must be based upon documented claims.

A member of the Board of Trustees shall receive \$50.00 for attendance at a meeting in which they are representing the Monroe County Library System Board. The payment of this stipend shall be waived when any other remuneration is received by a Board member for the same meeting.

Each member of the Board may attend the Annual Conference of the Michigan Library Trustee Association and the American Library Trustee Association with reasonable expenses of such attendance to be paid by the library system if the budget allows.

The Library System will pay annual dues for its Trustees to join the Michigan Library Association and the American Library Association and their Trustee units if requested by the Trustees.

## **6. INDEMNIFICATION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF**

To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, it is the policy of the Monroe County Library System by action of the Board of Trustees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless each person who, by reason of being or having been a member of the Board of Trustees or the Director of the Monroe County Library System, is named or otherwise becomes or is threatened to be made a party to any action, suit, investigation or other proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or otherwise in nature (and the Library System by action of the Board of Trustees may indemnify any employee or other person as deemed proper by the Board of Trustees) against any and all costs and expenses (including attorney fees, judgments, fines, penalties, amounts paid in settlement, and other disbursements) actually and reasonably incurred by or imposed upon such person in connection with any action, suit, investigation or proceeding (or any claim or other matter therein), whether civil, criminal, administrative or otherwise in nature, including settlements thereof or any appeals therein, with respect to which such person is named or otherwise becomes or is threatened to be made a party by reason of being or at any time having been a

director, officer, employee or other agent of or in a similar capacity with the Monroe County Library System, or, by reason of being or at any time having been, on behalf of Monroe County Library System, a director, trustee, officer, administrator, manager, employee, advisor or other agent of or fiduciary for any other corporation, partnership, trust, venture or other entity or enterprise including any employee benefit plan.

For this purpose, the Library will carry errors and omissions and/or liability insurance in amounts deemed sufficient by the Board, which amounts shall be reviewed annually by the Director during budget preparation and modified when deemed appropriate. The Library will pay costs not covered by insurance.

Notwithstanding the above, the Library may refuse to indemnify or hold harmless a person who is convicted of criminal misconduct or who is found to have misappropriated public funds or assets for personal gain.

## **B. LEGAL COUNSEL**

The Board shall appoint a general legal counsel. Legal counsel may, from time to time, be consulted by the Director, the Chair and/or Board regarding legal and contract issues as necessary and appropriate. Individual board members may request, via the board chair, a clarification on an issue or question related to the functioning or operation of the library. Such a request shall be presented to the chair in writing, who may direct the director to contact the Library attorney for a response. The response will be relayed to the total board via a memo from the director. In matters requiring special legal expertise, other attorneys may be consulted as appropriate.

## **C. LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

The Library Board shall appoint a Library Director who shall serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the Library System. The Director shall administer the library system in conformity with the adopted policies and budget of the Board. The Director shall develop and administer procedures for implementing Board policies and is charged with recommending policy changes to the Board.

The Board of the Monroe County Library System recognizes the importance of a competent, well-trained and well-motivated staff. The Board will maintain Personnel Policies aimed at creating a work environment which instills a spirit of pride and cooperation in each employee. The Director shall administer personnel functions, appoint all staff members, and assign their duties.

The Director shall prepare the agenda for each meeting of the Monroe County Library System Board, shall attend all meetings and shall participate in all deliberations of the Board, unless otherwise excused.

The Director shall report to the library board on library operations and on the financial

obligations and commitments of the library system and shall be responsible for the maintenance of all financial records and the issuance of checks in payment of obligations of the library system.

The Director shall consult with the library Board concerning negotiations and discussions with local units of government on all matters relating to removal, alteration or new construction of branch library facilities.

The Director will work with the Board in planning for the continuation and future of library service.

The Director shall perform such other duties as the Board may, from time to time, determine and assign.

The Board shall annually evaluate the performance of the Director and shall consider such evaluation in its annual consideration of salary and compensation. A written copy of the Director's performance evaluation will be provided to the Director.

Membership in the Michigan Library Association and the American Library Association shall be paid by the library for the Director. The Director is encouraged to participate in the annual and midwinter meetings of the American Library Association and of the Michigan Library Association and to participate in meetings of local, civic, and educational organizations. Reasonable expenses for such participation will be paid by the Library System to the extent that the budget allows. Reimbursed expenses must be based upon documented claims.

## **V. PLAN OF SERVICE**

To meet its Mission, the Monroe County Library System has as its objectives:

- a. To provide library service and materials on a fair and equitable basis to each resident in the county. This service shall be offered to each resident desiring it regardless of race, sex, creed, religion, disability, social or financial position.
- b. To supply a network of branches with current literature, media, informational material, limited reference and resource materials, technology services, and recreational reading needed to maintain a well balanced collection and a program of library service which can provide information, reader's advisory services, programming, and other group and individual activities for the local community. Each branch facility has its own "personality" which is derived from demographics, architecture, square footage, and vision from within the community.
- c. To support branches, which are provided by local jurisdictions, through operation of the Mary K. Daume Library Service Center and the Ellis Library & Reference Center, both facilities owned by the Monroe County Library System. The Daume Center

provides support services including Administration, Finance, Technology, Training, Outreach Services, Public Relations and Collection Services and delivery. Ellis maintains a comprehensive collection of reference materials to answer the needs of all residents and community groups in all fields and serves as the system's central library, housing special collections including the Fermi Collection, Genealogy collection, Michigan collection, Monroe collection, George Armstrong Custer collection and Michigan and Federal government document collections. The circulating collection at Ellis intentionally provides richer and deeper subject access than branch facilities can house. It is the library system's obligation to provide and maintain these facilities and their county-wide services.

- d. To provide the widest array of materials including, but not limited to books, periodicals, pamphlets, video recordings, audio recordings including both books and music, electronic resources, newspapers, and government publications for free use by residents of Monroe County.
- e. To offer a variety of programs and services aimed at expanding informational, educational and recreational opportunities for all individuals and groups in the community at no charge.
- f. To work with and through other agencies and organizations in the county to enhance and extend library services as well as providing services supportive of the information needs of these agencies and organizations. To work to support the services and objectives of the county schools, the community college, the historical museum, and other educational, cultural, and service organizations.
- g. To provide a competent and well trained staff to facilitate the use of the library system's collections, programs and services.

## **A. BRANCHES**

Library services should be extended equally to all persons within Monroe County. When there is a demonstrated present and future need and funding permits, branch service will be established. Use patterns and other demographic and geographic considerations, productivity, patron convenience, cost effectiveness, and operational efficiency are all critical in determining the most appropriate and suitable location for branch library services. Local unit(s) of government, by assuming the burden of providing, without cost to the Monroe County Library System, suitable locations for library services shall also play an important role in deciding the location of branch library facilities.

Service and materials for all branch libraries should be provided in proportion to the area population served in accordance with the community's unique needs.

The Monroe County Library System shall extend walk-in service, including reference service, to all who enter its doors regardless of their place of legal residence. Non-resident fees may be charged for circulation services to persons living outside the Library's jurisdiction, unless reciprocal borrowing privileges have been established with a library in that person's place of residence or special arrangements have been made with the approval of the Director. The Monroe County Library System is a participant in the Library of Michigan's MeLCat statewide interlibrary loan system as well as the MichiCard program.

**B. HOURS OF SERVICE**

The Monroe County Library System shall keep each branch library open the number of hours necessary for adequate library service to the local community, providing there are sufficient funds available for such county library operations. The total number of hours each week which branch libraries should be open shall be determined by the Director after consideration of the circulation patterns and the size of the community served by that branch and hours best suited to public usage, with the approval of the Board.

Sunday hours will be offered at branches specified by the Board of Trustees from the Sunday following Labor Day weekend until the Sunday prior to Memorial Day weekend, unless an alternate schedule is determined by the Board of Trustees.

**C. LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

**1. BRANCH LIBRARY FACILITIES -- LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The local unit(s) of government where a branch of the Monroe County Library System is located shall provide without cost to the library system a suitable and convenient location for the branch including upkeep and repair of the facility, custodial services, heat, light, water, telephone and suitable furnishings including shelving. Furnishings and shelving provided by the local unit(s) of government shall remain the property and responsibility of the local unit(s) of government. That provided by or acquired through the efforts of MCLS shall remain the property of MCLS. Nothing in this policy precludes the Library System from owning or operating facilities anywhere in the county at its own expense.

**2. LIBRARY SYSTEM RESPONSIBILITIES**

For each branch library location, the Monroe County Library System shall provide the necessary books and other circulating and reference materials, the technical processing of all such materials, salary and compensation of personnel, the regular exchange of materials so as to keep the collection up-to-date and most useful to the community, and a comprehensive

interlibrary loan system aimed at providing public access to all of the resources of the Monroe County Library System as well as the resources of libraries throughout Michigan and the United States. The library system will link its branches together to provide access to electronic information. The relationship between the Monroe County Library System and local unit(s) of government shall be formulated by written agreement.

### **3. ADVISORY BOARDS**

#### **SUGGESTED OUTLINE OF FUNCTIONS OF ADVISORY BOARDS FOR BRANCH LIBRARY UNITS**

##### **MEMBERSHIP**

At least three members, appointed by the local government for a fixed period of time. The memberships should be rotating so that a new member is appointed each year or a current member is reappointed each year.

##### **MEETINGS**

At least three public meetings each year with the Head Librarian of the branch; additional meetings as deemed necessary for effective operation.

At one of these meetings a written report on the status of the branch library should be developed for the local government and for the Board of the Monroe County Library System. The staff of the Monroe County Library System will provide service statistics of the branch library for inclusion in the report to the local government.

Advisory members will be notified through their Chairman of the dates and time of the Monroe County Library System Board meetings. If possible, a member should attend to receive first-hand information concerning library system activities and to express the needs and progress of their branch library.

##### **SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES**

###### **A. Relation to library system board**

1. Evaluation of the relevance of services and programs provided by the library system to the local community.
2. Suggestions for improvement or changes in type of services provided.
3. Report to the Monroe County Library System Board concerning the physical improvements provided by the local government for the branch library.

**B. Relation to local government**

1. Suggestions for improvement of physical facilities and needed furnishings.
2. Periodical reports on the condition of facilities and service of the branch library.

**C. Relation with branch library personnel**

Personnel are responsible to Monroe County Library System Board and receive direction from the Monroe County Library System. The Head Branch Librarian should serve as secretary of the Advisory Board to ensure effective communication between the Advisory Board, the local community and the library system board. Other branch staff members will be involved through frequent staff meetings at the branch and in-service training sessions provided by the library system. To coordinate these activities the Head Branch Librarian will participate in regular system staff meetings.

**D. Relation with local community and Monroe County**

The Advisory Board furthers better understanding in the local community of the meaning and importance of good library service in the life of the community. Through cooperation with local Friends of the Library and with the Monroe County Library Council, (non-governmental bodies, one of whose purpose is to ensure adequate support for library service throughout Monroe County), the Advisory Board is a vital link between county government, local government, the people of Monroe County and the library service available through the public library branches and service center.

In addition to local library advisory boards there are three other structures to assist in maximizing input from the public: county library friends organizations, community library friends organizations, service/collection advisory committees.

11-4-10

**D. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The Board of the Monroe County Library System encourages the fullest participation by all county residents in the Library System and the provision of its materials, programs and services. All Board meetings are open to the public and time is provided on each agenda for public participation. Time for individual comments may be limited per board chair. In addition to local library advisory boards there are other organizational structures to assist in maximizing input from the public: e.g. local library friends organizations and county friends organizations.

## **1. COMMUNITY LIBRARY FRIENDS ORGANIZATIONS**

Various communities throughout Monroe County, indicating a significant interest in library activities, have formed local Friends of the Library groups. These organizations often provide support for branch activities including programming, undertake projects including fund raising to meet branch needs, or provide a focus of support for efforts to improve facilities or build new branches. They may also provide input to the local library advisory boards, the branch librarians, and to the library system administration and board.

## **2. COUNTY LIBRARY FRIENDS ORGANIZATIONS**

The Friends of the Monroe County Library System is a county-wide library friends organization which has historically served as an excellent and active source of interest, ideas, and support for the library system.

## **3. SERVICE/COLLECTION ADVISORY TASK FORCES**

The Board may, from time to time, appoint ad hoc advisory task forces to focus specifically on county-wide and/or specific resource concerns of the Monroe County Library System.

## **4. VOLUNTEERS**

The Library Board encourages individuals and groups to volunteer their time and efforts in the service of the Monroe County Library System and its branch libraries. In appreciation of volunteer services, the Monroe County Library System acknowledges the need to organize volunteer activities and to provide for appropriate recognition befitting the benefit to the library system and the communities it serves.

## **E. COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

The Library Board recognizes the importance of community relations and instructs the Director to maintain an active community relations program which aims at informing residents of the activities of the library system and its Board of Trustees.

## **F. RELATION TO EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

## **1. SCHOOLS**

The Board of the Monroe County Library System recognizes the library system's responsibility to supplement and compliment the resources of the various school libraries in each of the school districts in the County of Monroe. Recognizing that public library service to schools is not a substitute for a library within the schools, the Monroe County Library System encourages the establishment of adequate school libraries throughout Monroe County. The library system is dedicated to working together with the county school districts and independent schools to provide coordinated and complete library services for all children and young people in Monroe County. Specific policies may, from time to time, be established to govern the circulation and utilization of library materials by teachers, schools, and school organizations.

## **2. COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

The Board recognizes that the Library System has a special relationship with the Monroe County Community College and encourages efforts to improve interlibrary cooperation with MCCC in order to better serve the College's students and the residents of the community at large.

### **G. SERVICE TO GOVERNMENT/COUNTY LAW LIBRARY**

The Board of the Monroe County Library System recognizes the importance of library service to all units of government within the county of Monroe. The Library system will be responsive to the expressed information needs of local governments and will endeavor to collect materials appropriate to the specialized services of government in Monroe County. Efforts in this direction are aimed at increasing the availability of decision-making information which will provide for more efficient government for all residents of Monroe County. The Monroe County Library System shall provide assistance to the Monroe County Law Library and shall, resources permitting, assist the public in accessing the available law library materials.

### **H. MEETING ROOMS**

Public meeting room space is available in some of the facilities operated by the Monroe County Library System. When the meeting room is operated and controlled by the Library, Library policy and operating procedures will govern its use. In instances in which the local unit of government retains control of meeting room space, that government's policies and regulations shall apply.

Library policies concerning meeting space made available for public use are intended to

provide for open and equitable use of the space by Monroe County groups and to adequately safeguard and protect library system operations and assets.

1. All facilities are provided primarily for library use and programming. When public meeting rooms are not in use by the library, they may be made available to the public under the conditions herein outlined.
2. The facilities must be booked at least one month, but not more than six months, in advance. If space is available, this requirement may be waived by the Director or designated staff members. Frequency of use may be limited to ensure open and equitable access. Normally, regularly scheduled meetings will be limited to once a month.
3. The Library reserves the right to cancel any scheduled use of its meeting rooms if operations require it. In such a case, every reasonable effort will be made to provide the scheduled group with adequate advance notice and with assistance in locating alternative meeting space.
4. Use is restricted to non-commercial purposes. No fees may be charged for admission to meetings or for programs or services performed or provided at meetings, nor may items or materials be sold, except in the case of fund-raising activities carried out by the Library or by Friends of the Library groups or other organizations affiliated with the library. Activities of this sort must be pre-approved by the Director.
5. All meetings must be open to the public. The organizer of the meeting is responsible for maintaining adequate order. Closed or private meetings are not permitted.
6. Meeting room hours will be set on a location by location basis at the discretion of the Director or designated staff. Generally, meeting rooms will not be available for use when the libraries are closed or when the portion of the building they occupy is not staffed, unless the arrangement of the room provides sufficient security for meeting users' and library assets.
7. Refreshments are permitted only by advance arrangements with the library system.
8. No smoking is allowed in library meeting rooms.
9. The meeting room must be left in the same orderly manner in which it was made available. Appropriate charges will be made for cleanup, if necessary.
10. Failure to comply with these regulations will be grounds for denial of future use of the meeting room.
11. Any exceptions to the foregoing require advance written approval of the Director.

## I. DISPLAYS

Public display areas and/or bulletin boards may be provided, as space allows, in library facilities for individuals and organizations to exhibit items of informational, recreational or cultural interest.

The following rules will govern the display of materials at all libraries.

1. Display space and bulletin boards are provided primarily for library use. Where library operations and space exists, they may be made available for public use. Requests for use of display area must be made to the branch librarian at the desired location at least four weeks, but no more than three months prior to the desired time. This requirement may be waived by the Director or designated staff if space permits.

Bulletin board material will be accepted when presented if space permits. Bulletin boards are maintained by branch staff and posting periods may vary by location. Size limits on posted material may be imposed to insure open and equitable access to all.

2. Groups or individuals utilizing display space are responsible for installing and removing displays on the dates specified when the display is booked. All displays must remain intact for no less than two weeks and no more than four weeks. The Library reserves the right to remove and destroy any time oriented bulletin board material after the date of the posted event(s) or when space is needed for newer material. Bulletin board material will not be returned unless special arrangements are made at the time of posting.

3. Display space is available for non-commercial use only. Displays may encourage participation in community activities, however, with the exception of library sponsored or co-sponsored art or craft exhibits, items on display cannot be priced for sale. "Want ad" type material will not be accepted for posting.

4. Merchants or individuals who contribute to the display can be acknowledged for their contribution(s).

5. All displays and bulletin board items are subject to the approval of the library system staff. The Library recognizes that display and bulletin board space provides a public forum and will not deny access on the basis of the viewpoint represented by the posted or displayed material. The library also recognizes the viewpoints expressed in displayed material are not necessarily the viewpoints of library employees or the Library Board. All displays or notices will include adequate information identifying the person or organization which prepared the notice or display.

6. Though every effort will be made to safeguard materials, the Monroe County Library System is not responsible for loss or damage to items while on display at any library location.

## **J. LIBRARY COOPERATION**

### **1. WOODLANDS LIBRARY COOPERATIVE**

The Board of the Monroe County Library System, recognizing the need to provide maximum access to library materials and services in the most efficient and cost effective way, has approved active participation in the Woodlands Library Cooperative. The Woodlands Library Cooperative, formed under Michigan Public Act 89 of 1977, provides a means of sharing materials and services and cooperatively solving common library problems.

The Board of the Monroe County Library System shall, in conformity with the By-Laws of the Woodlands Library Cooperative, appoint one member to serve as the official Monroe County Library System member of the Governing Board of the Woodlands Library Cooperative. This member shall be responsible for reporting, along with the library system Director, to the Board of the Monroe County Library System on activities of the Woodlands Library Cooperative.

The Monroe County Library System provides service to and receives service from the Woodlands Library Cooperative under a series of contracts between the two entities. These contracts are subject to regular review, renegotiation, and approval by the Boards of Trustees of the Library and the Cooperative.

### **2. OTHER LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY ORGANIZATIONS**

The Monroe County Library System is actively committed to seeking and maintaining useful cooperative relationships with other libraries and library organizations as a means of improving service to the citizens of Monroe County. These include establishing and maintaining reciprocal service arrangements with other libraries in cases where this will benefit MCLS and its users. The Director and designated staff members are encouraged to participate in appropriate library organizations which are working to promote interlibrary cooperation.

## **VI. Collection Development Policy**

### **A. Statement of Purpose**

In keeping with the Mission of the Monroe County Library System, the collection will be selected and maintained to provide materials “within the full scope of recorded human expression.” The Library collection will provide its users a source of life-long learning and entertainment, a forum for the exploration of ideas, a repository for and a point of access to the dreams, aspirations, and visions of humanity. The collection will

reflect the diversity of its users, the variety of their interests, and the heritage of their communities.

The Board of Trustees of the Monroe County Library System recognizes that the full range of human ideas must be accessible in a public library, and that this principle is embodied in the First Amendment of the Constitution which protects the free expression of ideas. The Board believes that while anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to read or inquire. Parents have the primary responsibility to guide and direct the reading of their own minor child. The Library cannot stand “in loco parentis”.

The Library collection will be a broadly based and unbiased source of information. The collection will include as wide a selection as possible, and in as much depth as sufficient to meet anticipated and expressed needs. The Library selects materials in accordance with the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read statements.

**B. Placement of Materials**

The collection will be organized and maintained to facilitate access, primarily by the Dewey Decimal Classification System, which divides materials by subject.

The Ellis Library & Reference Center serves as the primary resource and reference center for the library system. Materials housed there include information useful for basic research in most fields of knowledge. Small branch collections are not intended for in-depth research or scholarly work. Popular titles and subjects are held in branches as long as there is demand for them.

The Library’s Interlibrary Loan Department serves to locate and borrow materials from public libraries and universities throughout the world, if materials are not available from other MCLS branches or cannot be purchased.

**C. Selection Responsibility**

Selection is accomplished under the policies adopted by the Board of Trustees and vested in the Director of the Monroe County Library System. The Head of Collection Services oversees the Materials Selection Budget and the purchases of subject specialists who are qualified by reason of education, training, or job responsibilities.

The Library is responsive to public suggestion of items and subjects to be included in the collection, and actively solicits such suggestions. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Head of Collection Services for consideration.

**D. Selection Criteria**

Criteria for adding materials to the collection will include:

- support of collection development objectives
- literary and social value, or importance as a document of the times
- relevance to community needs and interests
- potential and/or known demand for material (bestsellers)
- suitability of subject, style and reading level for the intended audience
- reputation and significance of the author, illustrator, publisher, producer, filmmaker, etc.
- literary, artistic, or technical values
- accuracy of content
- positive reviews in one or more appropriate professional journals
- within limits of budgets for materials
- relationship to existing materials in the collection
- diversity of viewpoint
- local author
- availability in area libraries

#### E. Selection Tools

Selection tools include professional journals, trade journals, subject bibliographies, publishers' promotional materials, and reviews from reputable sources. Purchase suggestions from patrons are welcome.

#### F. Standing Orders

Materials that are updated annually or qualify for better discounts may be put on standing order. The majority of these materials are reference books, but travel guides, college guides, talking books, or other items may also be put on standing order.

#### G. Materials Not Collected

Forms of expression that are unprotected by the First Amendment will not be included in the Library. Abridged talking books are not purchased, although they may be added to the collection if donated.

#### H. Gifts

Books, videos, and other materials may be donated to the Monroe County Library System, with the exception of textbooks, paperbacks without covers, damaged items, and magazines. No conditions may be placed on their use by the library system, although every effort is made to abide by the donor's wishes. Some items may be added to the collection, but others may be discarded, returned, sold in a book sale, or offered to educational or other non-profit institutions. Donors may request a receipt estimating the value of the donation.

Cash gifts or memorials are welcome. Letters of thanks are sent to both the donor and the honoree, including titles of the materials purchased with the donation. Bookplates with the donor and honoree's names are placed in the materials.

I. Collection Maintenance

Library staff continuously evaluate materials, replacing or repairing those which are worn or damaged, and withdrawing items no longer current or in demand. Replacement will depend on whether the item is still available and in print, another item might better serve the same purpose, there remains sufficient need to replace the item, newer or revised materials are a better replacement, or if the item has historical value. Withdrawn materials may be discarded, sold in a book sale, or offered to educational or other non-profit institutions.

Materials added to the collection may be removed if the Director finds they do not meet the collection criteria. Materials that have been damaged or altered so they no longer meet the collection criteria may be removed by the Director.

J. Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Board of Trustees recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in the library collection. An individual questioning material in the Library may be referred to designated members of the staff to discuss the matter; unresolved concerns may then be put in writing, signed by the patron, and forwarded to the Director. The statement and the material in question will be reviewed by the Selection Review Committee convened by the Director for this purpose. The Review Committee will determine if the material under consideration meets the criteria of this policy and will make a recommendation to the Director who will prepare a written reply to the individual.

All materials selected under this policy are considered constitutionally protected until such time as they are determined unprotected by judicial action in courts of competent jurisdiction and after all appeals have been exhausted. In the event that an individual charges that a particular item is not protected under the First Amendment of the Constitution, the onus of proof rests with the individual. Material under question will remain in the active collection until such judicial determination is made.

If the Director or the Board of Trustees are concerned that an item is “harmful to minors” as defined in Michigan Act 33 of 1978, MCLA 722.673 et seq, an opinion may be sought from the General Counsel of the Monroe County Library System. If the General Counsel provides an opinion that the item is “harmful to minors” under that statute, the item shall be maintained so persons under eighteen years of age do not have access to it unless the Board of Trustees adopts a resolution rejecting the opinion of the General Counsel.

As applied under this policy and under Act 33 of 1978, MLCA 722.673 et seq, “harmful to minors” means sexually explicit material which meets all of the following criteria:

1. Considered as a whole, it appeals to the prurient interest of minors as determined by contemporary local community standards.
2. It is patently offensive to contemporary local community standards of adults as to what is suitable for minors.

3. Considered as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political, educational, and scientific value for minors.

Interpretation of the above criteria shall be in accordance with the relevant state and federal court decisions.

## K. Material Categories

### 1. Reference

This collection includes encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs, atlases, indexes, directories, and bibliographies, although any item may be designated reference if it must be consistently available. Some titles are included in both the circulating and reference collections. Materials are kept current and updated, although some older items may be retained for historical or research purposes. Online databases and some CD products are also purchased for reference use. Reference materials do not circulate.

### 2. Adult Non-Fiction

This collection includes materials of topical and continuing interest, for the purpose of information, education, self-help, and entertainment. All significant points of view on current and historical questions and controversies, including legal, constitutional, political, economic, medical, ethical, religious, social, and other aspects are collected. Inclusion of material representing a particular belief, opinion, or point of view does not constitute endorsement by the Library. Unusually expensive items and those with an extremely limited focus are not normally acquired. Materials to support local academic curriculums are purchased, with the exception of textbooks. Pamphlet files are maintained at several branches, with a large state travel file at the Ellis Library & Reference Center.

### 3. Adult Fiction

This collection reflects the diverse interests, tastes, and reading abilities of the community. All genres, including science fiction, westerns, romance, and mysteries are collected. Popular titles such as bestsellers are purchased in quantity to meet demand.

### 4. Large Print

Patron interest and availability of materials has created a large print collection of primarily fiction titles with soft, light covers. The majority of these titles are also in the general collection. A separate collection of large print titles is rotated to numerous senior centers in the county.

### 5. Children's Non-Fiction

This collection covers similar areas and topics as found in Adult Non-Fiction, albeit at more basic reading levels and depths. Children's materials are cataloged as E Non-Fiction to serve children from birth through the third grade, and as J Non-Fiction to

serve children from third grade and older. Materials are included for adults involved with children such as parents, teachers, and children's literature students. A children's reference collection is also maintained.

6. Children's Fiction

a. Easies

This collection is intended for children from preschool to grades two or three (interest level may wane before reading level), for sharing and reading aloud. Beginner reading primers are included in this collection. Replacement and duplication of titles is often necessary as children read and re-read favorite books.

b. Juvenile

Juvenile fiction is selected primarily for children in third grade and older. Adaptations and abridgements are purchased only when they are faithful to the intent of the original.

c. Young Adult

This collection is intended for adolescents, and contains more mature themes and content.

7. Special Collections

a. Government Documents

The Monroe County Library System is a selective federal and one hundred percent state depository of government documents. These items are housed at the Ellis Library & Reference Center. Selection of materials is based on use and interest to the general public, and includes directories of government agencies, census publications, U.S. Code and the Code of Federal regulations, and several magazines. All government documents are available to the public either on regular loan, special loan, or for reference use in the library. The depository follows the Michigan Plan for withdrawal of federal documents on a monthly schedule. Items held for withdrawal will be available for one month past the requested withdrawal date.

b. Custer Collection

This collection specializes in the life and times of General George Armstrong Custer. A major component of the collection was purchased from Dr. Lawrence A. Frost in 1977, and continues to grow through additional acquisitions on the Civil War, Indians, and the Custer story. Materials are housed at the Ellis Library & Reference Center and are available for use by appointment only. These items do not circulate.

c. Michigan Collection

This collection includes material on the history, description, and development of the State of Michigan. Works of local authors are also collected.

- d. Monroe Collection  
This collection includes material on the history, description, and development of Monroe County. All branch libraries include some local history, with larger collections at Ellis, Dorsch, Bedford and Summerfield-Petersburg.
  - e. Genealogy  
Genealogical material relating to Monroe County is collected, including indexes to births, deaths, marriages, wills, and land records. The largest collection is housed at the Ellis Library & Reference Center. A wide range of other areas is collected, with special emphasis on Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and French-Canadian. Basic genealogical research guides are available in both the circulating and Genealogy collections.
  - f. Art for Loan  
A circulating art collection is maintained, comprised of award-winning entries from local art shows.
8. Periodicals  
This collection supplements and complements the book collection, is more timely and more frequently updated, and focuses on publications that provide current information on a variety of popular and practical research topics such as health, business, hobbies and crafts, consumer product evaluations, and arts and entertainment. Most materials circulate, with the exception of the most recent issue of a title. Newspapers and microforms do not circulate.
9. Media
- a. Videos  
A diversified collection in DVD format is available, including award-winners, foreign films, entertainment, informational, how-to, and children's titles. Items are intended for home use and other private showings which do not constitute public performances.
  - b. Books/Nonprint Format  
A collection of books in several digital forms are available including books on CD, eaudiobooks and ebooks. Titles include popular fiction and non-fiction, including language, history and biographies. Primarily unabridged titles are purchased.
  - c. Music CDs  
A diversified collection in CD format is available encompassing genres that include popular, classical, religious, holiday, sound effects and radio shows.
  - d. Kits

This collection is comprised of mixed media (print + media) packaged as a set. The adult collection is primarily non-fiction and includes language courses. The children's collection contains a core of classic children's literature in read-a-long CD and book format.

10. Internet Resources

The Library maintains a website which includes available databases and links to reference sites, homework helpers, and others. Each resource is evaluated for content, quality, accuracy, usefulness, and relevancy within the scope of the collection. Resources may be removed if outdated, content has changed significantly and no longer falls within the guidelines of the collection policy, or has been superseded by a more appropriate site.

## VII. CIRCULATION POLICIES

Circulation policies of the Monroe County Library System are intended to help meet the Mission of the Library by providing for convenient, user friendly access to the library's circulating collections in an equitable manner.

The basic purposes of the Monroe County Library System Circulation Policy are:

1. to provide maximum use of the materials collection;
2. to provide uniform policy for the retrieval of overdue materials.

Except as specified herein, these policies apply to all library materials, regardless of format, and all library users.

### A. ELIGIBLE BORROWERS

Residents: A person who resides in Monroe County, or pays property taxes in Monroe County, or attends a public or private elementary, secondary or post-secondary school within the boundaries of Monroe County, or is employed within Monroe County by an employer doing business within Monroe County, is eligible to borrow materials from any branch of the Monroe County Library System. Proof of residency, property tax payment, school enrollment, or eligible employment is required. All persons, regardless of residency, property ownership, school enrollment, or eligible employment may use library materials within all Monroe County Library System branch facilities. (approved 8/21/95)

Non-residents may broaden their use of library materials including the borrowing of materials from the library's collection and through interlibrary loan by paying an annual household borrowing fee

established for the purpose of loan services. The amount of the fee will be revised by the Board of Trustees of the Monroe County Library System from time to time. The payment of non-resident borrower fees shall be on an annual basis with 12 month borrowing rights beginning on the date of payment.

The borrowing and loaning of library materials to non-resident borrowers is done under the same conditions and circumstances which are part of the normal Monroe County Library System operation and which may be changed from time to time by action of the Monroe County Library System Board.

Proof of Residency: The Monroe County Library System reserves the right to request that all persons borrowing materials show proof of residency, property ownership, payment of non-resident fee, current eligible employment, or enrollment in a public or private elementary, secondary, or post-secondary school within the boundaries of Monroe County.

Parental Responsibility: Library collections and services are available to all users regardless of age. Parents are strongly encouraged to read to their children and to guide their own children's reading and use of library materials as they deem appropriate. The Library does not stand in loco parentis. At the same time, the Library does not assess parents for the overdue fines of children.

## **B. LIBRARY CARDS**

Persons eligible to borrow materials from the Monroe County Library System must complete an application form for a library card and provide proper identification at the point the application is submitted. Each borrower will be allowed the choice of a full-sized card or a key chain card. Library cards are not transferable. The borrower must be present. The library card must be in hand to borrow. With proper identification, one checkout per account without card in hand will be allowed. Special circumstances may apply. See Section S. Children's Card & T. Limited Cards in this policy.

### Library card replacement

The first library card is issued free of charge. A fee of \$1.00 will be charged to replace a lost library card.

## **C. LOAN PERIODS**

Loan periods will be established by the Director and reviewed and modified as deemed appropriate from time to time in a manner intended to maximize access to the circulating collections and to provide for efficient and effective library operations. Due dates for all materials will be provided to the patron at the time of check out.

#### **D. GRACE PERIOD**

Monroe County Library System circulating materials are eligible for a ONE-week (dating from the original date due) extension period during which no overdue fines will be collected. This period shall be referred to as a GRACE PERIOD. After the grace period, overdue fines will be computed from the date due. There is no grace period for videos or DVDs.

#### **E. RENEWALS**

Circulating materials will be renewed for two additional loan periods, if patron wishes, provided there are no holds waiting. Renewals can be made in person, online or by telephone. Materials from lending libraries outside Monroe County Library System can usually be renewed after a phone call to the lending library by designated staff. Certain overdue materials may not be renewed.

#### **F. LENDING LIBRARIES OUTSIDE MCLS**

Materials loaned from other libraries outside MCLS will be handled the same as MCLS materials.

#### **G. LIMITS**

There will be no limits on the quantity of materials borrowed by patrons in good standing. Due to demand and size of the collection, individuals are limited to ten audio recordings, ten compact disks, three Art for Loan, and 15 videos, including five DVDs, at any one time.

#### **H. IDENTIFICATION**

The Library reserves the right to request identification from any borrower at the discretion of the Director and designated staff members. Any government-issued valid ID, preferably with photograph and/or signature, is accepted for obtaining library materials that require identification.

#### **I. HOLDS**

Any cataloged materials not currently on the shelf or in the system may be requested by a patron at no charge. The Library fills holds for materials in the order in which they are received. Items which are not owned by the Monroe County Library System will be borrowed from other libraries at the patron's request when possible. The Library reserves the right to limit the quantity and frequency of individual requests in the interest of equitable service.

**J. OVERDUE MATERIALS**

Overdue materials are materials retained longer than stated period of loan .

**K. OVERDUE CHARGES**

Charges will be levied for overdue materials at rates that will be set by the Director and reviewed from time to time. The intent of such charges is to encourage the timely return of materials. Any fine levied may be paid at any MCLS branch.

In cases of economic hardship or extenuating circumstances, fines may be reduced or waived at the discretion of the Director or designated staff.

A patron’s borrowing privileges will be suspended when a \$5.00 fine has accrued or materials are long overdue.

**L. TELEPHONE RENEWALS OF OVERDUE MATERIALS**

When a patron calls to renew overdue materials, the amount of the fine will be computed, and patron advised that they may pay amount when materials are returned. Certain overdue materials may not be renewed.

**M. NOTICE OF OVERDUE MATERIALS**

When materials are not returned by the due date, the library will notify the patron in writing, by telephone, or through email on a schedule set by the designated staff and reviewed and revised from time to time. Failure to receive notice of overdue materials in no way lessens patron responsibility to return materials by the due date or relieves patron obligations for accrued fines, if any.

1. Excessive overdues: When the value of a patron's overdue material, replacement costs and/or fines reaches or exceeds \$100.00 the following procedure will be implemented: borrowing privileges will be curtailed, appropriate means will be utilized to secure the return of material, and the amounts owed will be settled including use of a commercial collection agency and/or notifying the appropriate law enforcement agencies and the County prosecutor. The Library will pursue legal means to obtain overdue material.

In the case of patrons wishing to settle large fines, a partial reduction in the amount

owed may be negotiated at the Director's discretion, contingent upon the immediate return of all materials and/or the patron's meeting an agreed upon payment schedule.

2. Chronic Offenders: When a patron has fraudulently borrowed materials i.e. phony address or false identification, the dollar value will not limit contacting the County Prosecutor or law enforcement authorities as noted above.

When a patron has consistently abused loan periods by refusing to return the material, regardless of value, the same procedure will be implemented.

3. Staff Notices: Staff are expected to comply with the same circulation procedures as all other patrons. Materials must be checked out through normal processes to be borrowed. Normal fine schedules will apply to staff overdues.

## **N. LOST/DAMAGED MATERIALS**

Patrons will be assessed for damages when material is returned only if, in the librarian's estimation, it is damaged beyond normal wear and tear or is no longer usable.

If an item has to be replaced a charge will be assessed on the basis of a schedule set by the Director and reviewed and modified as necessary from time to time. This schedule will reflect costs for replacement of the material according to a formula that includes an amount for cataloging, handling, and processing. Items of more than average value may be individually priced for the purpose of such assessments.

In cases of economic hardship or extenuating circumstances such charges may be reduced or waived at the discretion of the Director or designated staff.

If an item is paid for, the patron is entitled to keep the damaged article.

A lost or damaged article may be paid for at any time but no refunds will be issued if the patron then locates the item.

Computation of overdue fines will stop when the patron notifies MCLS she/he cannot locate the item or that it's damaged beyond repair. Patron's accounts will be charged for replacement of lost item.

## **O. MICHICARD PROGRAM**

The Monroe County Library System participates in the MichiCard program.

## **P. NON-CIRCULATING COLLECTIONS**

The Library maintains a number of special collections which generally do not circulate. These include, but are not limited to the following:

George A. Custer: books, periodicals, maps, clippings, art, misc. media related to George A. and Elizabeth Bacon Custer. Collection housed at the Ellis Library & Reference Center (Special designation CUS)

William McKendree Carleton: books, and miscellaneous written by and about William McKendree Carleton. Collection housed at the Carleton Branch Library. (No special designation)

Enrico Fermi: materials include documentation concerning the Enrico Fermi Atomic Power Plant, Monroe MI. Materials are on deposit through the Detroit Edison Company and the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and may be used in the library only. Collection housed at the Ellis Library & Reference Center.

Stephen Langdon: books dealing with mythology, one of which was written by Stephen Langdon. Collection housed at the Dorsch Memorial Branch Library (no special designation)

Dr. Edward Dorsch: books, manuscripts, art, misc. relating to Dr. Dorsch's life and works. Collection housed at the Dorsch Memorial Library (no special designation)

Henry Shaw Noble: books, mainly in French, donated in honor of H. S. Noble Collection housed at the Dorsch Memorial Branch Library (no special designation)

Michigan/Local History: books, periodicals, maps, clippings, art, misc. media documenting the history of the area. Includes demographic, geologic, sociologic and historical materials, church and family histories, and some fictional accounts of the local life and times. Main collection housed at the Ellis Library & Reference Center (special designation MI or MR)

Special arrangements with the collection librarian or department head may be necessary when using the special collections for extensive research. Special loan privileges may be given at the discretion of the collection librarian; identification will be required in the case of special loans. Limits on special loans will be established at the librarian's discretion. In the case of special loans, the regular fine schedule will apply.

## **Q. REFERENCE COLLECTION**

The Reference Collection consists of books, documents, maps, miscellany purchased

and used especially for the research and informational needs of the staff and library patrons. The collection is housed separately from regularly circulating materials. (special designation R or Ref.) Reference items generally will not be circulated except when the older edition is available for circulation. Interloan to other branches or library systems will be done at the discretion of the department head.

Under certain circumstances, reference material may be loaned for overnight, one or two weeks depending on the frequency of use of the material and on the need of the patron or borrowing library. Limits on reference loan will be established at the discretion of the librarian.

## **R. DEPOSIT COLLECTIONS**

Deposit Collections of library materials are placed in a variety of locations other than library branches. These include collections loaned to Senior Citizen Centers and nursing homes. These collections are compiled and delivered directly to the Senior Citizen Center, Nursing Home or individual homes. The library rotates these collections from time to time. There are no limits or overdue fines.

## **S. CHILDREN'S CARD (10-6-97)**

The Monroe County Library System created a Children's Card option for parents or legal guardians of children under the age of 12 who want to limit their child's borrowing. The Children's card cannot and does not limit a child's access to materials while he/she is in the library.

THE CHILDREN'S CARD differs from standard library card accounts only in these ways:

- Borrowing limited to materials classified J and /or E.
- Available only to children under the age of twelve.
- Parent or legal guardian must assume responsibility for utilization of Children's Card option.
- Children's Card must be renewed annually or become a "full use" card.

If a child wishes to check something else out from the library, the child may do so in the presence of a parent and using the parent's library card.

## **U. LIMITED CARD (4-11-05)**

In an effort to grant borrowing privileges to as many patrons as possible, the library system has created a patron type called Limited.

Limited accounts are designed to be temporary accounts issued to patrons unable to offer the proof of identity and current residency required to receive a Regular patron account and its associated borrowing privileges. Many are issued to new county residents yet to update their driver's license, those who have recently moved, and other special circumstances.

Limited accounts allow these patrons to have checked out at one time 2 books and/or 1 media item (video, DVD, book on tape, CD) until they are able to gain full privileges with presentation of valid, current state-issued documentation, usually a driver's license or Michigan ID card, or the same from a parent.

To make qualifying for a Limited card as easy and flexible as possible, the following list is used. A patron must produce two of the following items to receive a Limited Card and is made aware of what is required to change the patron type to Regular and receive full borrowing privileges.

- Current Monroe County lease or rental agreement
- Current passport
- Phone call home verifying address
- Current official mail, usually a utilities bill
- Current proof of auto, renter's or homeowner's insurance
- Current report card or school schedule
- Work ID
- Military ID
- Checkbook with address or current bank statement
- Current pay stub from Monroe County employer
- Medicaid card
- Current out-of-state driver's license or state-issued ID
- Library staff or teacher OK

Updated 5/07

## **VIII. INTERNET SERVICE POLICY**

In keeping with the Library's goal to provide access to information within the full scope of recorded human expression, the Monroe County Library System offers access to the Internet as an informational, educational and recreational resource for its patrons. The Internet is a vast, ever-changing global network providing a wide range of information and data from around the world. Some of the information might not be available in any other format, at an affordable price, or in a timely manner. For example, daily stock quotes, printable state and federal tax forms, local sport and concert arena information, and homework helper sites for students are available via the Internet.

Due to the size, scope, and rapidity of changes on the Internet, some information may be outdated, incorrect, or biased. The Library encourages the critical evaluation of all information found.

Users have the right of confidentiality and privacy; for this reason privacy screens have been placed on each computer and software that deletes the history of sites searched by the previous user is in use. However, materials brought up on any public access computer are considered on display for public viewing. Obscene or sexually explicit matter that is harmful to minors will not be tolerated. Users are advised to be cautious in transmitting personal information over the Internet, and should check the privacy policy of each site (located at the bottom of their main page). Children who use the Internet unsupervised may be exposed to inappropriate or disturbing information and images. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for the information accessed by their children and are encouraged to monitor their children's use of the Internet. Parents should make children aware that adults may use Internet chat rooms or other Internet communications to attempt to make improper contacts with them. The Library does not filter Internet use by children, but does provide links to selected, age-appropriate Internet sites, including Internet safety information, via its Kids Zone. Public computers are placed so that staff can monitor for compliance with the Acceptable Use Policy. Through enforcement of this policy, the Library complies with MCL 397.606 and the federal Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 regarding computer access by minors.

The Library's connection to the Internet is provided through its affiliation with Merit, Inc., a non-profit Internet provider which operates MichNet, a Michigan computer network linking universities, public libraries, community colleges, K-12 schools, and other affiliates with each other and with the Internet. The Monroe County Library System maintains an affiliation with Merit through the Woodlands Library Cooperative. The Monroe County Library System also partners with local cable companies including Charter Communications, Comcast and Buckeye CableSystem to provide Internet access at some branch locations.

## **Acceptable Use**

- All users of library Internet services are expected to comply with the following while using a computer within a library branch of the Monroe County Library System.
- A user shall not intentionally transmit or display text or graphics which is obscene, sexually explicit matter that is harmful to minors, or child sexually abusive material.
- A user will be mindful and respectful of the rights of others, particularly children, not to be inadvertently exposed to materials they may find personally unsuitable.
- A user will respect the privacy of others; for example, users will not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.
- A user may download to a floppy disk, USB drive, or CD-R (RW). Temporary download to the hard drive is allowed. Personal software and hardware is allowed but on a temporary basis. Any software or hardware requiring reboot of the system will not work with the

current configuration of public access computers.

- A user will respect the legal protection provided by copyright and license to programs and data.
- Users may not attempt to circumvent user authentication or security of any host, network, or account. This includes, but is not limited to accessing data not intended for the user, logging into a server or account the user is not expressly authorized to access, probing the security of other networks, either manually or by artificial means, or attempting to gain shell access to the Monroe County Library System's servers.
- Users may not use any kind of program/script/command, or send messages of any kind, designed to interfere with a user's terminal session, via any means, locally or by the Internet.
- Users are explicitly prohibited from executing Netbus, SATAN, nmap, or other similar tools while connected.
- Users are prohibited from excessive consumption of resources, including, but not limited to CPU time, memory, disk space, and network bandwidth.
- Due to bandwidth resource considerations and potential copyright infringement, the library system does not support peer-to-peer file sharing networks.
- Internet access through the Monroe County Library System shall only be for personal, noncommercial purposes.
- Users are explicitly prohibited from sending unsolicited bulk mail messages ('junk mail' or 'spam'). This includes, but is not limited to bulk-mailing of commercial advertising, informational announcements, and political tracts.

In the event of a complaint or other indication of a violation of this policy, a user may be asked to exit a particular site, may have Internet privileges withdrawn, or may be prosecuted. Prior to termination of access, a user shall have an opportunity to justify or correct the questioned activities.

If it comes to the attention of the Library that the Internet is being used for illegal or criminal activity of any kind, the Library will cooperate with law enforcement officials in any manner authorized by state or federal statute.

### **Accessing the Net**

The Library provides Internet Access through designated workstations and computers located in its branches throughout Monroe County and wireless access in some branches.

#### **Library Computers:**

Each branch of the library system presently has at least one computer with graphical interface to the Internet. Internet use may be limited in terms of the use, length of time, or time of day in order to accommodate other patrons and library services. Patrons using library computers must first sign in at the desk and once at the terminal must acknowledge acceptance of this policy in order to log onto the Internet.

Printers are available at most locations and the library reserves the right to charge for copies in excess of 10 (black and white) pages per day. Color copies, where available, are not included in

the ten free copies a day. It may be more economical to download large documents to disk or to e-mail, and print them from a home computer.

#### Wireless Access

The Library will provide free Internet connectivity for users with portable computers or devices capable of receiving wireless signals, during normal library business hours. Signal strength may vary throughout the building.

Library staff will provide general information on the settings necessary to access the Internet via these connections, but are not responsible for any changes made to the user's computer's settings and cannot guarantee that hardware will work with the library's wireless connection.

If a user has problems accessing the Internet over these connections, staff will verify the library's connections are up and running, but cannot assist in making changes to the user's network settings or perform any troubleshooting on the user's own computer. Users should refer to owner's manuals or other support services offered by the device manufacturer.

As with most public wireless connections, the library's wireless connection is not secure. Any information being sent or received could potentially be intercepted by another wireless user. Cautious and informed wireless users should choose not to transmit their credit card information, passwords and any other sensitive personal information while using any wireless "hot spot." Users are encouraged to take appropriate precautions when using this service.

The library will not be responsible for any information (i.e. credit card) that is compromised, or for any damage caused to hardware or software due to electric surges, security issues or consequences caused by viruses or hacking. All wireless access users should have up-to-date virus protection on their laptop computer or wireless device.

Printers are not available via the wireless connection at this time. It is suggested that documents that need to be printed be sent to email, then using a wired library workstation jobs can be sent to the public printer.

Use of the wireless connection is governed by our Acceptable Use Policy and by using this service users agree to abide by it. All users are expected to use the library's wireless access in a legal and responsible manner consistent with the educational and informational purposes for which it is provided. As stated in the library's Acceptable Use Policy, users may not violate federal, state or local laws, including the transmission or receiving of child pornography or harmful material, fraud, or downloading copyrighted material. Our policy is to not allow the use of wireless devices in children's or youth areas of the library.

#### Small study rooms

Some small study rooms in library branches are wired for Internet access. Individuals wishing to connect to the Internet in those small study rooms must ask staff to activate the connection. To comply with section 397.606 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, when minors are using a connection in a small study room, the room may be entered from time to time by staff to insure compliance with the library system's Acceptable Use Policy.

Access to printers from these small study rooms is not available.

9/00 6/02 11/02 11/03 10/04 5/05 9/06 4/07

## **IX. PATRON BEHAVIOR POLICY**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The policy that follows is intended to guarantee that the highest level of public library service is provided to the residents of Monroe County Michigan and users of the library system.

Library policy operates within the context of the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Michigan as well as various federal, state, and local laws and ordinances to guide procedural decisions which determine the agency's day to day functioning.

The Monroe County Library System is committed to providing an environment where people of all ages may come to read, browse, research, and study. This in no way prohibits normal conversation

between patrons and/or staff. Nor does it restrict interactions necessary to carry on library programs or business.

The Monroe County Library System believes inappropriate behavior to include any activity that disturbs patrons, interferes with library operations, damages the buildings or furnishings, or any conduct considered unacceptable in a public place.

If or when a patron is not respecting the needs and rights of other library users, the patron will be:

1. made aware of improper behavior and asked to stop
2. if behavior continues, patron will be asked to leave the library for the day and will be notified that subsequent violations will result in additional and longer suspensions (Parent will be called to pick up a minor patron at the library if necessary)
3. if patron refuses, staff will contact appropriate law enforcement authorities
4. Subsequent violations could result in additional and longer suspensions.

Incident reports will be filed with library administration and appropriate authorities, and a completed Notice of Patron Behavior Policy Violation will be sent by registered mail, with a copy to the parent or guardian if the violator is a minor, or delivered by law enforcement authorities if law enforcement is involved in escorting the patron home.

## II. ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

A library facility is intended to preserve books and other related materials in organized collections for reading and quiet study. Patrons are expected to behave in a manner that does not disturb fellow library patrons, disrupt the operation of the library or jeopardize library materials. The following guidelines are designed to promote safety and security to library patrons and materials within the library.

**ABANDONMENT:** Leaving young children or individuals requiring care unattended will be considered unacceptable behavior. The library does not stand *IN LOCO PARENTIS*.

**AISLEWAYS AND DOORS:** Patrons shall not obstruct aisles or doorways as these need to be free and available to all patrons in case of emergency.

**ALCOHOL:** Use of alcohol is prohibited in library facilities and on library grounds.

**ANIMALS:** Except for service animals and those designated for a library program, patrons shall not bring pets or animals into library buildings.

**BICYCLES:** Bicycles are not allowed in library buildings and should be secured outside the building without obstructing the library entrance.

**CELL PHONES:** Cell phones and other electronic devices including those using headphones are permitted in the library as long as their use does not infringe upon the rights of another library user. Should this occur, the librarian would ask the device be turned off.

**COMPUTERS:** The public access workstations are not to be used for purposes contrary to federal, state (Michigan Compiled Laws 722.675, 722.677, 752.365, 752.795), local laws or the Library System's Acceptable Use Policy.

**CONVERSATIONS:** Conversations must be kept low enough so as not to disturb other patrons.

Loud talking is prohibited.

**DRUGS:** Possession, distribution or use of controlled substances is prohibited in library facilities and on library grounds.

**ELEVATORS, STAIRS, AISLEWAYS:** Patrons shall not obstruct aisles, doorways, or play on the elevator or stairs. These need to be free and available to all patrons in case of an emergency.

**FOOD & BEVERAGES:** Each branch library will develop a specific food & beverages statement. At no time should food or beverage be allowed near electrical equipment (computers, copiers, microfilm machines, etc.)

**GRAFFITI:** The vandalism and abuse of library property is against the law and will be dealt with through local authorities.

**HARASSMENT:** Harassment of patrons and staff will not be tolerated and may be subject to appropriate criminal prosecution. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, obscene, threatening, or suggestive language, physical contact or any such behavior that interferes with a patron's right to use or work in the library.

**HYGIENE:** Patrons whose bodily hygiene is considered offensive and unreasonable and substantially interferes with other people's use of the library may be asked to leave the building.

**PERSONAL BELONGINGS:** Patrons are responsible for their own belongings. Items should never be left unattended. The library reserves the right and privilege to open and inspect any bag, pocketbook, briefcase, etc.

**RUNNING, PUSHING, AND SHOVING:** This behavior is not appropriate for a library.

**SHIRT & SHOES:** Shirt and shoes are required to enter library buildings for hygiene and safety reasons.

**SOLICITATION:** Patrons shall not solicit funds or sell any article or service in library facilities.

**SMOKING:** The library is a designated smoke free environment and the use of any tobacco product is prohibited.

Any violation of these rules may result in suspension or removal of library privileges.

Users violating the Rules of Conduct will be subject to the following:

Any individual violating the Patron Behavior Policy will be asked to cease such behavior or leave the building.

If an individual refuses to comply, local law enforcement may be called to the situation.

Information about incidents will be kept by the library staff on an Incident Report form. Patron name, address, and phone may be requested. This information may be used in any decision to restrict the individual's future use of the library system.

6/00, 10/00, 2/03, 6/07, 4/08

## **X. POLICY FOR COMPUTER EQUIPMENT DONATIONS**

Those individuals or groups wishing to donate computer equipment to the library system are asked

to keep these guidelines in mind:

Due to warranty and licensing concerns, we are unable to take donations of used equipment.

Donations for new computer equipment are welcome. Library technology staff will decide which computer system to buy. The library system will invoice the donor for the cost of the equipment and place the order after the funds covering the purchase have been received.

Once the equipment has arrived, it will be added to our inventory and it will become library property.

Library technology staff will decide whether the computer equipment is added to our network or serves as a stand-alone unit.

MCLS will provide routine maintenance, but may not cover the cost of repairs or upgrades for donated computer hardware purchased with donated funds.

Should a computer system purchased with donated funds fail or become outdated, it would not be standard procedure for the library system to replace it.

These standards will help to control costs and provide consistent technical support for technology endeavors throughout the library system.

Adopted 10/20/03

## **XI. Public Access Fax Policy**

### **Public Access Fax Policy and Procedures**

As a service to the community, the Monroe County Library System provides a fax service to the public at all branch libraries. Transmission must comply with copyright laws. Those wishing to use the fax must provide a loose leaf copy of the document to be faxed. If the document is not loose leaf, it must be photocopied before it can be transmitted and the regular photocopy charges will be charged. Current fax charges are free for the first three pages and \$.50 per page for each additional page per day. International faxes are \$3.00 for the first page and \$1.00 for each additional page. The library will provide a cover sheet at no charge. All faxes must be paid for at the time of the service. A copy of the transmittal report will be given to customers after faxing.

The Library will also receive documents via fax for individuals. No attempt will be made to notify the recipient that a fax has arrived as it is assumed that the individual is expecting the fax and planning to come to the library to pick it up. Fax transmissions will be kept on file at the circulation desk for seven days from the date on the received fax document. Charges for receiving faxes are \$1.00 payable upon pick up.

Those wishing to take advantage of fax service must be aware that library services are the library's first priority and that public access faxing will be done as soon as possible. Outgoing faxes will not be performed during the thirty minutes prior to closing time. Library staff will operate fax equipment; customers are not allowed to fax their documents.

The Monroe County Library System and staff are not responsible for wrong numbers, lost receipts, lost transmittals and undeliverable faxes.

Adopted 10/04

Revised 2/09

Revised 10/09

Revised 11/09 All fax fees eliminated

Revised 11/10 Reinstates reduced fees to cover staff costs, but not phone charges

Revised 11-17-10

## **XII. Public Relations Policy**

The Board of Trustees recognizes that it is the Monroe County Library System's responsibility to maintain continuing communication with present and potential users of library services and resources so as to assure effective and maximum usage by all citizens.

In order to promote use and support of the library services, the Board will engage in an ongoing public relations effort to:

1. Present organized, consistent and accurate information about library programs, services, policies and procedures
2. Promote the Library System through involvement by employees and Board members in community activities
3. Develop public understanding and support of the Library System and its role in the community.

The Library Director, or a designated employee, has the responsibility for coordinating public relations and public information activities.

Newsletters, brochures, and other promotional materials will be produced and distributed through branches and various methods of reaching the public.

Surveys of the community will be made as needed to assess and assure the Library System's responsiveness to the interests and needs of all citizens.

Personal and informational group contacts will be maintained with government officials, the media, service clubs, civic associations and other community organizations by library employees and board members. Memberships may be paid by the Library System upon the recommendation of the employee's supervisor with the final determination made by the Director.

Public relations is the responsibility of every library employee and Board member. Trustees and employees represent the library in every public contact. Good service supports good public relations.

The Monroe County Library System may sponsor programs, classes, exhibits and other library-centered activities and shall cooperate with other groups in organizing programs to fulfill the community's needs for educational, informational or recreational opportunities.

The Monroe County Library System does not offer financial support to community agencies in the way of advertising or sponsorships without board approval.

Local media will be utilized to keep the public aware of and informed about the Library System's resources and services. The Monroe Evening News is considered the newspaper of record for the Monroe County Library System.

Letters to the editor designed to officially speak for the library will not be submitted by library staff without prior approval from the Director.

The Library does not pay for advertising in newspapers, programs, or promotional pieces of any kind unless approved by the Director. The Friends of the Library may decide to pay for advertising, in which case the ad clearly states that it is paid for by the Friends.

#### Emergency Situations

In an emergency situation, official statements to the public and media will be made by the Library Director or his/her designee.

If it is necessary for library employees to provide the public with information, the Library Director will inform employees what is to be said.

In the event of emergency closings or disasters, the Library Director or designated employee will contact local media.

Adopted 9/12/05

### **XIII. Social Security Number Policy**

To comply with Michigan's Social Security Number Privacy Act (Public Act 454 of 2004) the Monroe County Library System will ensure, to the extent practicable, the confidentiality of social security numbers.

All records shall be retained to protect the privacy interests of employees and patrons of the Monroe County Library System.

Records containing social security numbers and other personal information shall be maintained as confidential by the library system and shall not be publicly disclosed.

Access to information or documents containing Social security numbers shall be limited.

The unlawful disclosure of Social Security numbers is prohibited.

Social security numbers reflected on any document or record shall be redacted prior to duplication, display or distribution.

Documents containing personal and private information shall be maintained and disposed of in a secured manner and shall be handled in accordance with the library system's record retention policy.

Persons who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Willful violation of this policy may also result in such person or persons being subject to civil or criminal penalties as provided in the Social Security Number Privacy Act.

This policy shall be published in the appropriate handbooks, manuals or other similar documents. The published document will also be made available electronically.

Adopted 9/12/05

#### **XIV. Alcohol at Library Events**

Alcohol is not typically served at library events. In the case of a special library event sponsored by a Friends of the Library group, alcohol may be served providing permission is granted by the Library Board of Trustees and/or the local unit of government, applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding serving alcohol are observed, liability insurance is in place and individuals are not charged for food or beverage at the event.

9-09

### **AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CODE OF ETHICS**

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.

II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.

III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.

IV. We recognize and respect intellectual property rights.

V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.

VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.

VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.

VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

*Adopted by the ALA Council  
June 28, 1995*

## **Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.

Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

## **THE FREEDOM TO READ**

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be “protected” against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings. The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

- 1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in

power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

*2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

*3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

*4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

*5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any expression the prejudgment of a label characterizing it or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in

making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

*6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

*7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

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A Joint Statement by: American Library Association

Association of American Publishers  
Subsequently Endorsed by:  
American Association of University Professors  
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression  
American Society of Journalists and Authors  
The American Society of Newspaper Editors  
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith  
Association of American University Presses  
Center for Democracy & Technology  
The Children's Book Council  
The Electronic Frontier Foundation  
Feminists for Free Expression  
Freedom to Read Foundation  
International Reading Association  
The Media Institute  
National Coalition Against Censorship  
National PTA  
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays  
People for the American Way  
Student Press Law Center  
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression