Massena Public Library

Programming Policy

Purpose
The Programming Policy provides guidelines for the selection and operation of programs to further the Library's mission and goals, connect individuals, unify the community through learning and culture, and to meet community needs.

Definition
A **program** is any planned event which introduces participants to a library service or activity or which directly provides information. Programs may cover the use of the library or provide cultural, recreational, or educational information, often to meet a specific social need and have a social component. Programs may include films, lectures, story hours, book discussions or many other activities. Programs may be sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library, held on-site, off-site, or online.

Selection
The Director shall oversee the planning and operation of Library programming and may delegate programming duties to specific staff.

The Library supports its mission by developing and presenting programs that provide opportunities for education, information, cultural enrichment, inspiration and entertainment. Programming shall address community needs and interests as outlined in the Library's long-range plan of service. This complies with Education Department Regulations Title 8 New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) §90.2 (Standards for Registration of a Public, Free Association and Tribal Libraries). Other selection criteria may include presentation quality, cultural or educational significance, presenter background or qualifications in content area, budget, and staff time.

Program selection does not constitute Library endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by presenters. The Library is not responsible for the factual correctness of the content of a presentation. Library programming shall not exclude topics, books, speakers, media or other resources because of their potential controversiality. Decisions to provide programs will be made based on the merits of the program in serving the interests and needs of Library patrons.

The Library may partner with non-profit, educational, cultural, or civic organizations, government and commercial entities, or individuals, to provide programs that involve specialized knowledge or opportunities beyond what the Library and staff could otherwise provide.

Proscribed Programs
The Library does not conduct programming that is purely commercial in nature. Programs

designed for the solicitation of business, such as presentations offered for free but with the intention of soliciting future business, will not be offered.

Programs will not be offered that endorse or oppose a specific religion in order to be inclusive of all cultures and religions and of no religion. Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe or proselytize a particular religious conviction. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of Library patrons.

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

Operation

Library programs are open to the public and most are without charge, although free will donations in support of programming or the Library are accepted. Some programs may require a fee to cover the cost of materials or supplies. Some programs presented by non-Library staff may require an instructional or materials fee paid directly to the presenter. Limits on attendance or registration may be required for planning purposes, when space is limited, or for safety. All program participants must comply with the Patron Conduct Policy and all other Library policies.

The Library may design programs for specific audiences and they will be publicized as such. The Library reserves the right to set age limits or recommendations for programs. In determining appropriate age recommendations, staff will consider the suitability of the program's materials, format and program presenters, the relevancy and suitability of topic, messages and programming methods for the intended audience. The responsibility for child attendance at Library programs rests with their parent or guardian and some programs may require an accompanying parent. Parents are responsible for picking up their child after the end of a program and before Library closing time.

Assessments of the effectiveness of Library programs may be based on attendance, audience satisfaction, attraction of new Library patrons, the promotion of Library goals, and program evaluation forms.

Request for Reconsideration

A Library patron may request that the Director reconsider a program that they find objectionable. The Massena Public Library's Collection Development and Maintenance Policy describes the process using the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials or Program Form.

This policy was adopted by the Massena Public Library Board of Trustees on August 12, 2025.