



Harwinton Public Library

## Program Policy

### **Purpose**

The Harwinton Public Library, in keeping with its mission to meet the informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the citizens of Harwinton, develops and presents programs for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. Programming is an integral part of Library services that promotes and complements the Library's other services and collections. It supports the Library's role as the center of the community. Programs are provided to represent a wide range of interests and a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints. Programs provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of residents. The Library recognizes the importance of programs as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas, and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. This policy provides guidelines for the development, management, and oversight of programs presented by the Library.

### **Key Definitions:**

A Library program is a free event, virtual or in-person, planned by the Library staff for the benefit of those members of the public who choose to attend. It may involve outside presenters, facilitators, or performers and may be presented in cooperation with other organizations or entities. Note: Use of a public meeting room within the Library by an organization or individual to hold a public meeting or event is not a Library program.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Library Board delegates development, presentation, and oversight of programs to the Library Director and staff.

The Library Director, Adult Services Librarian, and Youth Services Librarian are accountable for planning, scheduling and implementation of programs. The final responsibility for Library programs is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by librarians that are professionally trained to curate and develop programs.

Attendees at Library programs are responsible for complying with the Library's Code of Conduct.

### **Program Selection**

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

1. Library programs must have an educational, informational, cultural, or recreational value to the community. Programs of a purely commercial nature or those designed for the solicitation of business will not be offered by the Library.
2. Programs that support or oppose any political candidates or ballot measures will not be approved or offered by the Library. However, educational programs such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates may be offered.
3. Programs that support or oppose a specific religion will not be approved or offered. Programs are planned to be inclusive of all cultures and of all religions or 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.

### **Program Development, Coordination, Supervision**

Library programs may originate from Library staff, partnering institutions, or members of the public.

In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization depending upon the timing and venue of the program. All programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library, however, must abide by this policy regardless of where they are hosted.

### **Program Access**

Library programs are free and open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration may be in advance online or at the door. For programs targeted to a specific audience, e.g. children or teens, and promoted as such, preferential admission may be offered to those groups on a first-come, first-served basis, limited to those individuals the Library deems appropriate. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a Library program should contact the Library no less than 2 weeks before the program to discuss accessibility needs.

### **Virtual Programs**

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

Some virtual programs may be pre-recorded and broadcast via the internet or recorded as presented for later viewing. In the event an interactive program is being recorded, attendees will be informed of that fact at the start of the program.

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

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

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

### **Program Materials**

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

## **Program Evaluation**

To provide the highest quality and most useful programming, Library staff will gather data about program results to guide future programming decisions. Information such as number of attendees, cost per attendee, ease of preparation and clean-up, professionalism and expertise of presenter, as well as input from attendees via feedback and survey forms are examples of data which will be evaluated.

## **Procedures for Reconsideration of Library Programs**

The Library's Materials Review and Reconsideration Policy outlines the procedures whereby concerned individuals may question materials, displays, or programs within the Library. The Library limits requests for reconsideration of programs to individual Harwinton residents. Please see our **Request for Reconsideration** form for further information on this process.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes. The Harwinton Public Library supports intellectual freedom and endorses the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, and the Library Bill of Rights.

This policy is available on our website at <https://www.harwintonlibrary.org/about-us/policies/>

A hard copy may be requested at the Library.

Approved by the Library Board 10/6/2025