SERVICE POLICY
OF THE
HARNETT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

Adopted by the Harnett County Library Board of Trustees
January 28, 2004

Amended by Board vote
November 21, 2016

Vision Statement

Supporting the love of reading, the joy of learning, and the search for information.

Mission Statement

In order to achieve its vision, the Harnett County Library System provides its users with the means to meet their recreational reading interests; to continue to learn throughout their lives; to find, evaluate, and use information in a variety of formats; to get answers to their questions; and to enhance their formal education from preschool through high school.

This document sets forth the principles on which the Harnett County Public Library has been constructed and the policies of operation that result from these principles.

Goal 1. Adults who use the library will have access to current and popular materials that stimulate their thinking, satisfy their curiosities, expand their knowledge of contemporary culture and society, and make their leisure time more productive and enjoyable.

Goal 2. Children who use the library will have access to a current and aesthetically pleasing collection of books that satisfy their personal reading interests.

Goal 3. Adults who use the library will have the information, resources, and assistance they need for personal independent learning.

Goal 4. Children who use the library will develop a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Goal 5. Library users will have access to space that facilitates a variety of activities that meet the needs of our community.
Goal 6. Library users will have access to programs and materials on a wide variety of topics to address their need for ongoing educational opportunities and their desire for personal growth.

Goal 7. Adults who use the library will have access to instruction and resources to develop the skills needed to find, evaluate, and use information effectively in meeting their daily needs.

Goal 8. Children who use the library will have access to instruction and resources to develop the skills needed to find, evaluate, and use information effectively in meeting their school-related needs.

Goal 9. Library users will be able to get answers to their questions on a broad array of topics.

Goal 10. Children who use the library will have the information, resources, and assistance they need to achieve success in their schooling.

Goal 11. Children who use the library will be supported in the development of the skills, interests, and passions necessary to succeed in school and other learning activities.
I. GENERAL LIBRARY OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve these goals, the general objectives of the Harnett County Public Library shall be as follows:

A. To assemble, preserve and make accessible, in organized collections, books and related educational and recreational materials in order, through guidance and stimulation in the communication of ideas, to enlighten citizens and enrich their personal lives.
B. To serve the community and county as a center of reliable information.
C. To provide local government officials with information and to perform research as needed.
D. To serve as a center for local history and the preservation of local archives in a variety of forms.
E. To provide a place where inquiring minds may find opposing views on controversial subjects. The library does not promote any particular belief or view, but it should provide a resource where the individual can freely examine both sides on controversial issues or ideas and make his or her own decisions.
F. To support educational, civic and cultural activities of groups and organizations.
G. To provide opportunity and encouragement for all to continually educate themselves.
H. To seek continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service to meet such needs, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies and institutions which can provide programs or services to meet community needs.
I. To provide opportunity for recreation and cultural entertainment through the use of literature, music, films and other art forms.

II. WHO MAY USE THE LIBRARY

The library will provide its services to all residents of Harnett County in the main library in Lillington and the municipal libraries and the Outreach Services van. Membership will not be denied or abridged because of religious, racial, social, economic or political status. Library materials may be borrowed by any resident of Harnett County. Persons residing outside the county but owning property, employed, or attending an educational institution in the county shall have the same status as residents. Persons residing in contiguous counties may also have membership privileges at the library.

Specifications concerning library use are included in the Harnett County Public Library Procedures Manual.
III. SERVICE STANDARDS FOR THE HARNETT COUNTY LIBRARY

The library will attempt to provide enough materials to make it a reliable and dependable source of information and recreation for the people of Harnett County. Books and non-book materials such as periodicals, documents, etc. shall be provided in adequate supply and be of high quality.

The library will keep informed of other available resources of books and other materials in the area in order to avoid unnecessary duplications.

The library will not attempt to furnish materials needed for formal courses of study offered by elementary and secondary schools and by institutions of higher learning. The public library has materials for individual programs of study but is not equipped to furnish research and professional journals required for most academic study.

All library materials will circulate except for the reference collection, local history materials reserved for library use only, and certain audio visual equipment.

In accordance with its sincerely held objective of providing equal service to all, this library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights (http://www.al.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill) of the American Library Association and to the Freedom to Read ((http://www.al.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/freedomreadstatement) statement adopted by the American Library Association.

IV. SELECTION POLICIES

The Harnett County Public Library selects, without bias or limitation on the right to know, a comprehensive collection of print, non-print and electronically accessed materials to meet the informational, educational, recreational, and cultural needs of all citizens of Harnett County. The Library offers wide-ranging collections to meet the various ages, interests, educational and reading levels, and cultural backgrounds of its citizens. The Library provides collections through which an individual may explore all points of view and issues of interest.

Patron use is the most powerful influence on the Library's collection. Circulation, patron purchase requests and holds levels are all closely monitored and may result in the purchase of new items and additional copies of high demand items.

Selection of books and all non-book library materials is the culmination of a process that begins with suggestions from staff and patrons and with recommendations made in the
professional literature. While the ultimate responsibility for selecting materials for the Library rests with the Director, selection responsibilities may be delegated to appropriate professional staff members. Suggestions from the general public are encouraged and are evaluated by the staff based on the Library’s criteria for selection.

There is no single standard that can be used to evaluate all the types of materials included in the Library’s collections. Each type of material will be evaluated in terms of its own qualities and merit for the collections. All works by an individual author may not be considered for purchase.

Collection Development staff use their training, knowledge, and expertise along with the following general criteria to select materials for the collection:

- Relevance to interests and needs of the community
- Authority or significance of the author/producer/publisher of the work with preference given to titles vetted in the edited and publishing industry (training, competence, reputation, other contributions)
- Content of the work (objectivity, accuracy, and timeliness of information and data)
- Value (permanent, current, temporary, educational, recreational)
- Suitability of format for Library use (size, paper type, print, binding)
- Extent of publicity, critical review, and current or anticipated public demand and its nature
- Local significance of the author or subject
- Price, availability, and Library materials budget
- Relative importance in comparison with existing materials in the collection on the same subject
- Suitability of subject, style, and level for the intended audience
- Availability and suitability of format
- Favorable reviews in professionally recognized sources
- Date of publication

All criteria need not be met for purchase consideration.

Professional and specialized materials, such as legal, medical, and religious works are purchased if they are shown to be of general interest. The Library does not purchase textbooks or educational curriculums. Textbooks may be added to the collection if they provide the best or only source of information on a subject, or to complement an existing area with another perspective.
A. Self-Published Works
Self-published books are considered on a case-by-case basis, when they fit the scope of the Library’s collection and meet our selection criteria as outlined above. A positive review in one or more of the major review journals, such as Library Journal, School Library Journal, Kirkus Reviews, Booklist, and/or Publisher’s Weekly is the best way to bring a title to the Library’s attention. Library staff is more likely to consider the addition of a self-published book if it has been reviewed in a major journal.

B. Periodicals
Periodicals are added to the collection on the basis of relevance and community interest.

C. Technology
Technology is selected upon usefulness, interest, permanence, and the broadness of its implications and performance.

D. Audiovisual Material
Audiovisual material is added to the Library’s collection with consideration to patron demand and budget constraints. The Library acquires this material primarily in the most popular format.

V. BOOK CENSORSHIP POLICY

The Library Director and staff attempt to choose the best materials available. The Harnett County Public Library subscribes to the Freedom to Read Statement prepared by the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers’ Council.

All library patrons shall have full access to the library collection. Library personnel may attempt to dissuade a young patron who has chosen a book obviously beyond his or her comprehension, but if that young patron insists upon checking out that specific book, the library staff member cannot be held responsible in any way.

Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no materials will be sequestered except for the express purpose of protecting that material from mutilation or theft. Responsibility for the reading material of minors rests solely with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of adult materials will not be limited by the possibility that they may come into the possession of minors.
VI. GIFTS TO THE LIBRARY

Gift material will be accepted with the understanding that the books or materials may be added to the collection, sold, exchanged, given to other libraries, or discarded. The Library will not discriminate among its citizens on the basis of race, sex, or religion in the acceptance or administering of gifts. Gift items will be added to the collection in normal sequence because separate collections limit use by the public and complicate the location of materials. Gift items will be acknowledged and may be designated by a bookplate if so desired.

- RESTRICTED GIFTS are those to which the donor has attached terms, conditions, and purposes. These may be quite specific, such as in the case of funds “for the purchase of the 1900 Census for North Carolina” or very general, as “for books on CD”.
- NONRESTRICTED GIFTS are those to which the donor has not attached terms, conditions, or purposes.

It is the prerogative of the library to accept or reject any gift. Gifted cash may be spent without budgeting or appropriation. If restricted, a check or cash must be spent according to the donor’s conditions. If not restricted, gifted cash may be spent on authorization of the Library Board of Trustees within the scope of its statutory authority for any library need, in accordance with Harnett County’s policy regarding gifts.

VII. COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

Harnett County Public Library recognizes the need for continuous evaluation of its collections in response to the changing nature and needs of the community it serves. This necessary collection maintenance is accomplished through the deaccessioning, replacement, and duplication of its titles. For more details, see the Procedures Manual.

VIII. POLICIES ON AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS

The Harnett County Public Library attempts to maintain a balanced supply of audiovisual materials. Audiovisual material is added to the Library’s collection with consideration to patron demand and budget constraints. The Library acquires this material primarily in the most popular format. The Harnett County Public Library System subscribes to the American Library Association’s Freedom to View policy statement. This includes videos, audiobooks, DVDs, and all other formats.
APPENDIX I

PHYSICAL FACILITIES

A. To achieve the goal of good library service, the Board of Trustees accepts the responsibility to strive for public library building facilities that adequately meet the physical requirements of modern, aggressive library service: such facilities offer the community a compelling invitation to enter, read, look, listen, and learn. Each building or outreach vehicle must fit an expanding program of library services.

B. The Board of Trustees will recommend acquisition of sites and/or new facilities only after:

1. they have adopted a service program

AND

2. the Library Director has written an outline of the community's library building needs.

C. The Board of Trustees accepts the responsibility to see that funds are obtained for needed facilities.

D. The Library Director, the architect, the Board of Trustees, and county commissioners--as a planning team with the assistance of consultants--will endeavor to plan facilities to meet recognized standards and needs of the community.

E. Meeting rooms in the library may be reserved for use by educational, civic, cultural, business, and government groups. Neither admission fee nor any sales recruitment is allowed. The specific rules regarding the meeting room are set forth in the Harnett County Public Library Procedures Manual.
APPENDIX II

LIBRARY PERSONNEL

The personnel policies that appear in the Personnel Ordinance apply to all employees of Harnett County. See the staff handbook training manual for detailed up-to-date job descriptions, classifications, recommendations, and details of library routine, as well as job pay range guidelines.

STAFF AND BOARD RELATIONSHIPS

The library Board of Trustees has official authority to supervise and formulate policies for the library. The Board delegates to the Library Director the administrative responsibility of the library and all its services. The Library Director serves as the liaison between the county manager, county commissioners and county library Board of Trustees and the library staff. The Library Director is responsible for determining the needs of the library public by regularly undertaking a planning process to set goals and objectives. The Library Director serves as secretary for the county library Board of Trustees, which meets quarterly, or as needed.

The Board, consisting of nine members plus the representative from the county commissioners, actively assists in the preparation of the budget. The Board periodically reviews and adopts library policies and makes recommendations regarding staff. The Library Director assumes full responsibility for the staff of the library. With advisement from the county manager, the Library Director has authority to hire and dismiss personnel. No important library business shall be transacted between any individual member of the staff and the county library Board or the county commissioners without the knowledge of the Library Director.

RELATION TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The library Board of Trustees recognizes that adequate financial support is basic for good library services; and as the legally appointed governing board, it accepts the responsibility for securing this support.

The library Board of Trustees also acknowledges its responsibility to make periodic reports to the governing officials. These reports will cover services rendered and will include new services for which need is recognized. The Library Director monitors the budget using the county automated finance system.

Authority delegated by the government unit to the library Board will not be relinquished because of political or financial pressure; nor will it be used in a high-handed and arbitrary manner by the library Board.
The following authorities have been officially delegated to the library Board of Trustees:

1. to formulate and adopt programs, policies, and regulations for the government of the library;
2. to make recommendations to the governing body concerning the construction and improvement of buildings and other structures for the library system;
3. to supervise and care for the facilities of the library system;
4. to advise the county personnel committee in the appointment of a chief librarian or director of the library system. If some other body or official is to appoint the chief librarian or Director of library services, to advise that official body concerning that appointment;
5. to establish a schedule of fines and charges for late return of, failure to return, damage to, and loss of library materials, and to take other measures to protect and regulate the use of such materials;
6. to participate in preparing the annual budget of the library system;
7. to extend the privileges and use of the library system to nonresidents of the county on any of the conditions the board may prescribe;
8. to otherwise advise the board of commissioners on library matters.

The Board of Trustees shall make an annual report on the operations of the library to the Harnett County Commissioners and shall make an annual report to the North Carolina State Library as required by G.S. 125-5. If the Board of Trustees is abolished, the County Commissioners shall make the annual report to the State Library.
APPENDIX III

POLICY ON THE DISPLAY OF POSTERS, PAMPHLETS, AND FLYERS

The library is a public forum for ideas and information. Because access to information is fundamental to our social, political and cultural heritage, the library holds the position that posters, pamphlets and flyers should be permitted whenever possible, in the designated display areas.

Regulations regarding the posting of information are set forth in the Harnett County Public Library Procedures Manual.
APPENDIX IV

POLICY ON UNATTENDED CHILDREN AT CLOSING TIME

Library Staff will exercise appropriate procedures when the library is closing to ensure the safety of unattended children fifteen years and younger. (See the Harnett County Public Library Procedures Manual). See also the SAFE CHILD POLICY in Appendix VIII of this document.
ACCESS TO CIRCULATION RECORDS

The library will protect, as far as possible, the privacy of any patron who uses the library and not make any inquiry into the purposes for which a patron requests information or books. Records which may be required in lending books or answering reference questions are for the sole purpose of protecting public property. Under no circumstances shall the staff of the library ever answer to a third party about what a patron of the library is reading or calling for from the library's collection. Furthermore, it is the policy of the library not to yield any information about its patrons or their reading to any agency of government, whether local, state, or federal, without an order from a court of competent jurisdiction.
APPENDIX VI

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY

It is the policy of the Harnett County Public Library to offer the full range of library service to all residents of the community, regardless of age, sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion, economic status, etc. It is the intent of the library to provide its services with a minimum of regulations and restrictions, adopting only those which are absolutely essential to the library's operation.

The library recognizes that the users of the library are in fact the owners of the library. As user/owners, the public has certain expectations of the library. These include an outstanding collection of library materials; pleasant, attractive surroundings; and courteous, efficient, and effective service from the staff. Library users have a right to assume that visits to the library will be free from harassment; free from physical discomfort and danger; free from psychological and emotional stress.

The library staff has the same rights. Each member of the staff should be able to do his/her work free of harassment, abuse, discomfort, and undue psychological stress.

The rights of both the public and the staff are sometimes violated by the attitudes and behavior of a very small minority of persons.

THEREFORE, it is the policy of the Library Board of Trustees to support the library staff in their efforts to maintain in the library system a quiet, pleasant environment conducive to serious study as well as casual use. To ensure the successful implementation of this policy, the board holds that the following are examples of unacceptable behavior:

1. Harassment of patrons or staff, whether physical, sexual, verbal, or otherwise.
2. Engaging in disorderly conduct, committing a nuisance, panhandling in the library or on library property, or unreasonably disturbing library users.
3. Obscene or abusive language.
4. Following staff or users around the building, or other harassing behavior such as staring or other intimidating acts.
5. Carrying unauthorized weapons of any sort.
6. Use of laptops, CD-players, mobile phones, etc., if not using headphones.
7. Willful destruction of or damage to any library property.
8. Blocking or in any way interfering with the free movement of any person or persons.
9. Bringing animals other than service dogs into the building.
10. Consumption of food or drink in any public-access area unless the Director has specifically authorized it.
11. Removal of any library property from the building without authorization through established lending procedures.
12. Soliciting or sales of any kind.
13. Distribution of leaflets or posting of notices in areas not authorized for this purpose.
14. Use of library telephones not authorized by library personnel.
15. Unauthorized rearranging of any library furniture or equipment from one location to another.
16. Loud conversation, laughter, or other disturbances (for example: crying babies), which is disturbing to other users.
17. Engaging in disorderly conduct, committing a nuisance, or unreasonably disturbing and offending library users.
18. Smoking anywhere in or within 50 feet of the building.
20. Failure of patron to wear proper attire at all times in the library building. Shirts and shoes are required.

The following violations of the **Disruptive Behavior Policy** will result in law enforcement being called and the immediate banning from the library:

- Any situation that poses a threat to staff or library patrons
- Assaulting or threatening staff or patrons
- Willful destruction or theft of library property
- Improper interference with library employee performance of duties or other harassing behavior that constitutes an actual or imminent disruption or disturbance to either library employees or patrons
- Fighting (all parties)
- Dispensing chemical or noxious substance, including but not limited to:
  - pepper spray
  - stink bombs
  - fireworks
  - mace
  - tear gas
- Selling legal or illegal drugs
- Solicitation of sexual acts
- Posing chronic behavior problems
- Illegal drugs use
- Any illegal acts or conduct in violation of a federal, state, or local law, ordinance, or regulation
Incidents of unacceptable behavior may result in one or more of the following actions:

- Oral warning
- Written warning
- Immediate dismissal or banning from the library in which the behavior occurred

The penalty will be decided by the management of the individual library.

Disruptive behavior meeting the criteria of immediate banning will be enforced at all Harnett County Public Libraries and Affiliate Libraries. The management of the Branch will:

- Send the patron a form letter
- Change the account information to indicate that the patron is banned
- Notify each Affiliate Library
APPENDIX VII

OUTREACH SERVICE POLICY

The purpose of the outreach program is to provide basic public library services to individuals confined to their homes, nursing facilities and day care centers and who are unable to come to the county library or municipal libraries in the county.

OUTREACH SERVICES

Services include programming for preschool children in childcare centers, registering library users, lending materials, readers advisory service, very general reference service, and reserves.

ADMINISTRATION

The Outreach Service operates as a part of the Harnett County Public Library System under the direct supervision of the Director of the Harnett County Library.

Recipients of the outreach service may include:
- childcare centers
- nutrition sites
- nursing homes
- homebound citizens

Outreach Services are provided by the Harnett County Public Library to the homes of persons who meet the criteria for homebound service as established by the Harnett County Public Library Board of Trustees. These criteria are similar to those of other counties, as well as to the Medicare Home Health restrictions and the Meals on Wheels guidelines.

A recipient of this service must meet one of the following conditions:

1. He/she must have a condition resulting from an injury or illness restricting his ability to leave the residence except with the aid of supporting devices or the assistance of another person, or he/she has a condition which is such that it is medically contraindicated.
2. He/she must be a senior citizen (age 60 or older) who has no other means of getting to a library facility.
3. He/she may need temporary homebound service; such will be provided to persons who are suffering from extreme weakness after surgery or illness. These persons must be incapacitated for at least six weeks.

Exceptions to these conditions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Outreach Library Assistant and the county Library Director.
APPENDIX VIII

SAFE CHILD POLICY

STATEMENT OF POLICY

During his entire visit to the library, a child seven years of age or younger must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or adult of at least 16 years of age who acknowledges responsibility for the child. These parents and/or adults are responsible for their children's behavior while in the building.

PHILOSOPHY BEHIND THE SAFE CHILD POLICY

The Harnett County Public Library welcomes children of all ages. It is a doorway through which life-long learning takes place. The public library is however, a public building. As such, anybody can come into it—law abiding or otherwise.

Library staff have many duties to perform in order to serve all citizens of Harnett County. They cannot monitor the behavior or whereabouts of any patron, including children. Staff does not take over parental responsibilities for children who come into the library.

A child could be tempted to go off with a stranger. A child could become ill. A child could get lost. Any of these or other emergencies could take place in a public building. It is for the safety of each child that the Harnett County Library has adopted this Safe Child Policy.

The safety of children left alone in the Library is of serious concern to Library staff. Parents and guardians, not Library staff, are responsible for the care, behavior and supervision of their children while using the Library and on its property. Library staff cannot be responsible for children who are unattended or demonstrating inappropriate behavior. Children in the Library should always be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or assigned caregiver of at least 16 years of age who acknowledges responsibility for the child, according to the guidelines listed below.

1. Children ages 7 and under must be supervised by a parent/caregiver who must remain in the immediate vicinity of the child(ren) at all times.
2. Children ages 8-12 must have a parent/caregiver in the Library building with them at all times, though the assigned caregiver does not have to be in the immediate vicinity of the child(ren).
3. Children ages 13 and older may use the Library on their own, provided they comply with all Library rules and policies. All children should have the telephone number of a parent/caregiver who could assist them in an emergency.
4. Children 12 years or younger who are attending a Library program need not be accompanied into the program by a parent/caretaker, unless otherwise indicated. Parents/caretakers must, however, be present in the building during the Library program in case an emergency should arise.

5. Parents are advised that, even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their child’s behavior while using the Library and on its property. The Library is not responsible for an unattended child while that child is in the building, on the premises, or if they leave the Library property.

**VIOLATION OF THE SAFE CHILD POLICY CONSTITUTES GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY.**
APPENDIX X

HOLIDAY WEEKEND CLOSING POLICY

Because, unlike most other departments of county government, the library is open on weekends and the county-declared holidays do not account for weekend days, the following closing policy shall apply.

Weekend Days Closed:

The Library will observe the same holidays as other county offices. In addition, if a holiday falls on Friday or Monday, and it is observed on Friday or Monday, the library will also be closed on Saturday; the only exception is Thanksgiving Saturday when the library will be open.

Closing Time:

The Library will close at 5:30 p.m. on the following days:
- Thanksgiving Eve
- Christmas Week (if Christmas falls on Sunday, it will be the week before Christmas)
- New Year’s Eve (if it falls on a week day)

(This policy will only apply to the County Headquarters Library. Hours at branch libraries will vary depending upon external factors and staffing.)

Main Branch (Lillington)
Monday – Thursday 9AM – 8PM
    Friday 9AM – 5PM
    Saturday 9AM – 1PM

Anderson Creek
School Year Hours
Tuesday & Thursday 4PM – 8PM
Saturday 10AM – 2PM

Anderson Creek
Summer Hours
(subject to change)
Monday & Tuesday 3PM – 7PM
Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday 10AM – 2PM
OTHER LIBRARY POLICIES

All persons are subject to the POLICIES AND PROCEDURES of the library that are posted in the library.