

SIX MILE REGIONAL LIBRARY DISTRICT

Statement of Concern Policy

Publicly supported libraries are recognized as designated public forums established to provide all members of the communities they serve with access to information. Therefore, there is a significant public interest in maintaining a library environment conducive to all library users' exercise of their constitutional right to receive information.

The Board of Trustees of the Six Mile Regional Library District seeks to provide access to information and ideas for all people living within its service boundaries. The Six Mile Regional Library District upholds the [First Amendment](#), the [Library Bill of Rights](#), and the American Library Association's [Freedom to Read](#) and [Freedom to View](#) Statements by allowing individuals to freely access resources and make their own informed decisions.

Patrons are welcome to decide for themselves and their families what restrictions are right for them, however, they cannot exercise that right to restrict the freedom of access to others. Citizens of the SMRLD service area have the right to question library materials, programs, and practices.

The Illinois Public Library District Act of 1991 (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Ch. 75, 16/1-10) states: "That library shall be forever for the use of the residents and taxpayers of the district in which it is located, subject to reasonable rules and regulations the board adopts to render the use of the library of the greatest benefit to the greatest number of those residents and taxpayers."

The resources of the Six Mile Regional Library District are provided for the use and enjoyment of the entire community served by the library. All individuals, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, are welcome to make use of the facilities, collections, and services of any agency of the Six Mile Regional Library District.

The Six Mile Regional Library District intentionally maintains a diverse and rich array of resources and programs and recognizes that patrons may take issue with the inclusion of specific items, programs, or practices. The library welcomes formal expressions of concern from any taxpayer residing in the ZIP code 62040 (Granite City, Mitchell, and Pontoon Beach, Illinois) and will handle such concerns as detailed in this policy.

Concerned patrons receive a 'Statement of Concern' packet from the library which contains the following:

- [The Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [The Freedom to Read Statement](#) by the American Library Association
- [The First Amendment](#)
- Statement of Concern form
- Executive Director's business card

The Six Mile Regional Library District will handle taxpayer concerns about library resources, programs, and practices courteously and promptly.

After reviewing the information within the packet, concerned taxpayers may complete the Statement of Concern form and submit it to the Executive Director. Once received, the Executive Director will

schedule a meeting with the taxpayer via phone or email to discuss the concern directly. This meeting will be scheduled within a timely manner after submission of the Statement of Concern form. The Executive Director will follow established procedures for addressing patron concerns.

If the concern cannot be adequately addressed with the Executive Director an appeal to the Library Board of Trustees may be requested. Any item in question will remain in the collection and available during the review process.

Upon request for an appeal, a review committee may be formed.

Resources used to examine and review concerns include the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, the First Amendment, the Illinois Code, U.S. law, and SMRLD policies, programs, or practices outlined in the submitted statement of concern. This policy will ensure that the library and trustees adhere to all duly enacted laws pertaining to the concern (for example – any laws against obscenity as that term has been interpreted by the United States Supreme Court, Illinois courts, or the laws of the United States or the State of Illinois and 75 ILCS 10/8.7).

Any final decision lies with the 7-member governing board. Their decision will be communicated in writing to the concerned patron.

Once a resource has been challenged and a decision is made, that decision stands for ten years from the date of the decision. Patrons concerned about a particular resource already decided on will be given all documentation regarding the process and decision-making for review.

This policy supersedes any previous policies, forms, guidelines, procedures, or references to materials, programs, or practices reconsideration or reevaluation forms

Adopted by Board Action
August 13, 2024