

## Program Policy

Responsibility for programming rests with the Library Director (under the authority of the Board of Library Trustees), who in turn, delegates program management responsibility to the Assistant Library Director, the Children's Librarian, the Young Adult Librarian, and other designated staff.

The Athol Public Library defines a program as an activity or event developed to meet the educational, social, recreational, cultural, or informational needs of an anticipated audience in the community. Programs can be a single event, a short series, or continuously recurring.

In developing and delivering programs, the library staff utilizes staff expertise, collections, equipment, and facilities. The following criteria are used in making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources.

- Community needs and interests
- Historic, cultural, or educational significance
- Budget and cost of program
- Space required for program
- Presenter background/qualifications in content area
- Relevance/appropriateness of program to library's mission, strategic plan, and service goals
- Staff time
- Balance of current programs being offered at the library

The library respects the freedom of information of its users and adheres to the principles expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read and Freedom to View. The library's goal is to offer a diverse set of ideas and opinions. The library opposes any attempts by individuals or groups to censor programs it offers.

Parents and guardians are responsible for overseeing their minor children's use of the library's services. The library will not act in the role of censor for any age level, material type, or subject matter. Offering a program will not be restricted by the possibility that it may be accessed by patrons beyond the intended audience.

Anyone interested in presenting a library program may submit a proposal that will be reviewed according to the above criteria. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by participants.

The library reserves the right to decline a program for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, staffing, budgetary constraints, space, or scheduling.

All programs at the library are open to the public and normally offered free of charge. A fee may be charged for certain types of library programs, such as where there is a cost for materials to participate in the program. Tickets may be sold for special library events.

Library programs are non-commercial in nature. Programs are not used for the solicitation of business. Presenters and performers, whether individual or organizational, shall not use a library program to petition, advertise, or recruit members or customers. While the library welcomes professional experts to present at its events, library programs cannot be used to directly further commercial, religious, political, or partisan purposes. Presenters are permitted to have business-related brochures, flyers, or other information available for attendees to pick up if interested. Presenters cannot distribute such materials as part of the event.

Performers or authors may sell books or CDs as part of a library program. Programs sponsored by the Friends of the Library may include the sale of merchandise as a fundraiser to benefit the library. Sale of any other products at library programs is not permitted unless authorized by the Library Director or designee.

Individuals reserving spaces within the library for meetings or events not co-hosted with the library are responsible for their own marketing. These meetings/events will be listed in the library's event calendar but are not promoted by the library.

Due to space limitations or due to the nature of the program, attendance at programs may be limited. Registration for programs may be done on the library's website calendar of events, or by calling or visiting the library. Some library programs do not require registration. The library reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone becoming disruptive to audience members or the program facilitator, and to anyone in violation of the Use of the Library Policy.

Adults who wish to attend a program specifically designed for children must be accompanied by a child. Tween and teen programs are limited to tweens and teens only, except when they require an adult assistant or companion.

Concerns about programs currently offered at the library may be expressed following the Objections procedure as outlined in the library's Collection Development Policy.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees May 17, 2023