



Section 7:4 Facilities

Policy on Picketing, Petitioning, and Other Expressive Activities

The Alleghany Highlands Regional Library recognizes the vital importance of the First Amendment to its mission:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

The Library seeks to encourage and permit expressive activities by members of the public to the extent compatible within the mission and purposes of the Library. This policy regarding expressive activities on public library properties is formulated with the following considerations in mind:

- The Library's basic mission of providing access to written and recorded information and literature requires space dedicated to reading, studying and research in an atmosphere free of unnecessary interruption or distraction caused by activities not related to Library business.
- Patrons of the public library have the right to unimpeded access to the facility as well as the right of privacy and confidentiality as they use the services in the facility.
- There is very limited space around the entrance of the library building. Entry and exit to the library facility, as well as the principal walkways from the main entrance to the public sidewalks must be regulated to protect public safety in this restricted space.
- The footprint of the library building, in combination with the walkways and landscaping, leaves very limited land area between the Library and the public sidewalk. The use of this limited land area is not conducive to gatherings of any size and must be regulated to protect public safety.
- The restrictions imposed by this policy do not extend to the public sidewalks adjacent to the Library.

Guidelines

1. Petitioning, picketing, pamphleting, carrying or erecting signs or banners, conducting surveys and similar expressive activities are not

permitted inside the Alleghany Highlands Regional Library building or on library grounds. This does not prohibit political, religious or other activities in any meeting room reserved for, and in exclusive use by, a group or organization and scheduled in accordance with the Policy on Public Use of Library Space.

2. Any group or organization that reserves any meeting room in the Library for the purposes listed in Item 1 above is expected to comply with all of the requirements identified in the Policy on Public Use of Library Space.

3. An announcement of a gathering in a reserved meeting room for the purpose of expressive activities may be posted in accordance with the Policy on Exhibits and Displays and the Policy on Bulletin Boards and Handouts.

These regulations shall not be applicable to activities sponsored or sanctioned by the Alleghany Highlands Regional Library and conducted on library premises in conformance with guidelines promulgated by the Library Director.

A person in violation of any provision of this policy will be specifically advised of these restrictions and given the opportunity to comply. If the violation continues, library staff will request that the individual leave the Library premises. If the individual fails to comply with this request, the local law enforcement agency may be summoned and the person may be charged with trespassing.

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