

NEW BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY PROGRAM POLICY

The New Bedford Free Public Library, through free and equal access to materials, information, knowledge and technology, enriches the lives of the community by cultivating lifelong learners and readers. The New Bedford Free Public Library supports its mission by developing and presenting programs that provide additional opportunities for lifelong learning, cultural enrichment, literacy support, and community connection. Programming is an integral component of library service that serves as an opportunity for education, expands the Library's role as a community resource and visibility, introduces patrons and non-patrons to Library resources, provides entertainment, and more.

The ultimate responsibility for programming is with the Library Director, who, in turn, delegates program management responsibility to designated library staff. Programs are not used for commercial, religious or political purposes or for the solicitation of business.

New Bedford Free Public Library's criteria for program proposals may include:

- Relation to the library's mission and service goals
- Community needs and interests
- Budget, cost, and staffing needs of program
- Space and availability required for program
- Presenter background/qualifications/reputation, including mandatory CORI background check

Anyone interested in collaborating with the library for a public program may submit a proposal that will be reviewed according to the above criteria. Programs will be developed with consideration for the principles of accessibility and equity. These include, but are not limited to, access for people with disabilities and times and locations that maximize convenience and encourage attendance by the target audience. The library staff has the discretion to cancel programs, to be rescheduled or not.

Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited. 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 or by visiting the library. Some library programs do not require registration. In some cases, the nature and success of a program may require a limited attendance based on age. For example, programs intended for children and teens that are geared to their interests and developmental needs may require limitations on attendance.

All programs at the library are open to the public and normally free of charge. Programs sponsored by the Library or 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 designated library staff. If sales are authorized, the program presenters are responsible for the handling of all sales. Programs may not be purely commercial or for the solicitation of business. However, the presenter may leave business cards

for participants to pick up after the program should anyone be interested in purchasing items or services from the presenter.

The New Bedford Free Public Library is dependent on the Friends of the Library as a major source of funding for library programs. Library staff who presents programs do so as a part of their job. In addition, the library draws upon community resources in developing programs and attempts to partner with other community organizations, educational and cultural institutions or individuals to present and/or co-sponsor programs. The library also utilizes various grants and private donations to support program offerings.

The New Bedford Free Public Library welcomes expressions of opinion from patrons concerning programming. If a patron questions a library program they may be asked to fill out a patron complaint form which will be submitted to the Library Director.

Adopted by the Board of Library Trustees

September 24, 2019