

**Forsyth Public Library**

**POLICY MANUAL**

**Fourth Edition**  
*Approved April 14, 2021*



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## **Our Mission**

### ***Mission Statement***

The mission of the Forsyth Public Library is to provide an environment in which all patrons may access the materials, services, and programs they need for the pursuit of information, education, and entertainment.

### ***Our Commitment***

At Forsyth Public Library we are committed to providing:

- Friendly, quality library service.
  - Quality print and non-print materials, including works of current fiction and popular culture.
  - Non-fiction materials that facilitate life-long learning at any age.
  - Preservation of materials and memorabilia that pertain to the founding and development of Forsyth.
  - Current library practices and trends, including technological advances, which enhance library services.
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## **Access to Library Services**

### ***Americans with Disabilities Act***

Policies and practices of the Forsyth Public Library are in accordance with the standards outlined in *The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*, making available equal employment opportunities and accessibility to library services. In addition to providing access to Library facilities, activities, and programs, Library staff makes every effort to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities seeking to obtain Library services. Questions concerning ADA, accessibility to Library facilities, and other aspects of service, including requests for service to individuals with disabilities, should be directed to the Library Director.

### ***Access to Library Collections***

The Forsyth Public Library is a free public library established and supported by the Village of Forsyth to serve all of its residents equally. The Library subscribes to the

tenets set forth in The Library Bill of Rights, which assures the rights of all library users to have equal access to all library resources. The Library does not restrict access to material nor shield users from controversial information. Parents of minor children must provide guidance to their children, and only their children, and assist them in making selections that are appropriate and consistent with their personally held values.

### ***Public Participation in Library Decision Making***

Forsyth residents and other citizens are welcome to attend open meetings of the Forsyth Public Library Commission which are held in compliance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Any member of the public who wishes to speak will be limited to three minutes in which to convey his/her message. Providing written information to support or restate the speaker's information is encouraged and welcomed, but not required.

The Library Commission meets on a regularly scheduled basis with meetings announced and posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. A copy of the meeting agenda is posted on the public bulletin board in the Library and at village hall 48 hours prior to each meeting.

Suggestions and comments regarding Library programs, materials, and policies are always welcome. Suggestions for titles to be added to the collection and other comments related to the Library and its programs may also be submitted via the Library website at [forsythlibrary.com](http://forsythlibrary.com).

### ***Library Programs***

Programming is an integral part of the Library's service to the community. Programs are planned and presented for residents of all ages, though special emphasis is placed on the Summer Reading Program and other programs that promote child/parent interaction and reading to young children. The Library welcomes opportunities to cooperate with other community organizations in providing programs.

Sales by outside presenters before, during, or after programs are prohibited unless permission is granted to do so. Business cards and brochures may be exhibited or included in displays for attendees. No fees may be charged for Library sponsored programs by presenters. If, in the case of programs intended for either children or adults, a fee for craft or other materials is deemed necessary, the collection of such fees must receive prior approval from the Library Commission.

Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute endorsement of the presenter's views or program content. Concerns, questions, or complaints regarding programs will be handled in the same manner as those concerning reconsideration of print and non-print materials, as stated in the Forsyth Public Library Collection Development Policy. A complaint form, "Resident Complaint Concerning Library Programming," on which to

document objections is included in Appendix G of this policy. The form must be completed in full by a current Forsyth resident for further consideration to be given.

### *Public Use of Computers and Electronic Devices*

Forsyth Public Library provides public access computers and electronic devices for the convenience of residents and visitors. **Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of the Internet through the Library's connection.**

Software purchases are made using the same guidelines that are applied to other Library materials. The Library does not attempt to provide the latest version of any particular software program.

Library staff is available to assist patrons in finding information and in using the computer software programs. However, patrons should be aware that the time that can be spent with any one person is limited. Users must observe all copyright and licensing laws and will not be permitted to duplicate any computer programs or documentation. Use of personal software is prohibited from being downloaded onto Library computer hard drives; no private files may be stored on Library computers. Persons who download files onto Library computers, who change settings, or leave messages and images on computers for other patrons, may lose their access privileges.

Signing up for computer use is mandatory. Use is for one hour. If no other patron is waiting to use the computer, use may be extended at the discretion of Library staff.

The Library does not control the availability of information links, which often change rapidly and unpredictably. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information. Users are urged to be critical "information consumers" and to question the validity of information found on the Internet. The Library assumes no responsibility for any damages to consumers arising from the use of websites. The Library assumes no responsibility, and shall have no liability, for any claims or damages which result from public use of Library resources or Internet services.

Pornography is prohibited on Library computers. Patrons using the Internet in the Library may not display text or graphics defined by federal or state law as obscenity or child pornography or harmful to minors. Deliberate and continued display of some materials that are not obscene or pornographic may still constitute sexual harassment. Actions that violate federal, state, or local laws will be referred to appropriate law enforcement agencies. Repeated actions that create a disturbance or that may be considered sexual harassment may result in the loss of some or all Library privileges and will be handled as described in the Patron Conduct/Library Behavior section of this policy. U.S. copyright law governs unauthorized use or distribution of copyrighted materials. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials, except as permitted by the Fair Use regulation, without permission of the copyright owner.

### *Photocopying*

The Forsyth Public Library provides and maintains a photocopy machine for Library use and as a service to Library users. Fees are charged on a per copy basis. The fee structure is established by the Library Commission and is reviewed periodically. Refunds for poor copies are given at the discretion of the Library Director or the senior staff member on duty. Library staff is available to help those patrons who need assistance in using the copier. It is the responsibility of the individual user to adhere to the U.S Copyright Law when copying materials. Patrons who wish to make a large number of copies are advised that a professional copy printer can more appropriately meet their needs. The copier is a convenience and is not suitable for large copying projects.

### *Fax Machine*

Forsyth Public Library is pleased to provide fax service to the public. Library staff will send faxes for patrons. Charges for sending and receiving faxes are posted at the Library. A fax transmission cover sheet is available if requested. There is no charge for the cover sheet unless it is the only page sent. The Library will not send international faxes. The Library is not responsible for missing pages, bad transmissions or consequential damage arising out of the use of this service. Patrons are responsible for collecting incoming faxes. The Library will not monitor incoming faxes or contact the intended recipient.

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## **Use of Library Materials**

### *Library Cards and Users*

The village limits of Forsyth define the service area of Forsyth Public Library. Any person whose permanent residence is within the village and whose identification bears a Forsyth address is entitled to a library card which is issued for a period of three years. **Library card applicants must provide identification indicating current residence at a verifiable Forsyth address in order to receive a card.** Acceptable forms of ID include: a valid Illinois driver's license or Illinois state identification card, school identification, a water bill from the Village of Forsyth when presented with a picture ID, or another form of ID accepted at the Library Director's discretion. Materials may be checked out immediately if proper identification is shown at the time of application. Library cards must be renewed in person. A form of identification from the above list is required for renewal of the library card. A fee of \$1.00 is charged to replace a card that is lost or damaged. A stolen card should be reported immediately.

Children under the age of 14 are issued cards if they are able to write their names. These applications must be signed by a parent or guardian who assumes full responsibility for



materials borrowed. The parent or legal guardian must accompany the juvenile to the library and provide identification indicating current residence at a verifiable Forsyth address, as listed above. When the parent or guardian's address differs from that of the child, an application can be completed and kept at the circulation desk until the Forsyth resident parent or guardian presents identification confirming a current and valid Forsyth address.

Patron information provided on borrower card applications is protected by rules pertaining to confidentiality of records and privacy as outlined in the *Library Records Confidentiality Act (75 ILCS 70/1, 70/2)* and the *Federal Privacy Act of 1974*.

### ***Temporary Forsyth Residents***

Temporary Forsyth residents who do not otherwise qualify for a regular resident borrower's card may be granted short-term borrowing privileges even though they are not permanent residents of Forsyth. To obtain borrowing privileges a temporary resident must complete an application providing both the local and permanent home addresses, present personal identification in the form of a current valid driver's license or similar picture identification, and provide acceptable verification that confirms the temporary address as being in the Village of Forsyth. In addition, the applicant must pay a \$50.00 cash deposit to be returned to him/her when all materials are returned and the temporary residence is terminated.

### ***Non-Resident Card Status***

In Illinois, people living outside the service area of a public library are considered non-residents and may be eligible to purchase a library card from participating public libraries. By vote of the Library Commission, Forsyth Public Library is on record with Illinois Heartland Library System as a **non-participating** library. The policy was enacted on June 30, 2002 and is reviewed and voted on annually as required by law. The Library does not sell non-resident cards, but patrons who present non-resident cards that have been purchased at other libraries may check out materials as reciprocal borrowers. A list of participating and non-participating libraries is available on the Illinois Heartland Library System website.

### ***Reciprocal Borrowing/Interlibrary Loan***

Reciprocal borrowing is an agreement among libraries which permits borrower cards issued by one library to be honored by another. Residents of other library service areas who wish to check out materials from the Forsyth Public Library may do so if they are in good standing at their "home" libraries. Outstanding fines may be paid at the Forsyth Public Library, but lost items and disputed charges must be resolved at the "home" library. Reciprocal borrowers are encouraged to present their library cards when checking out items at Forsyth Public Library, however, a valid photo ID with an address

that matches the address on the library account may be used. Changes to patron records, such as updating expired cards or changes in address must also be completed by the “home” library. Likewise, Forsyth Public Library cards may be used at any library in the Illinois Heartland Library SHARE System.

All materials borrowed are subject to the loan periods and policies established by the lending library; however, fines for overdue materials are determined by the patron’s “home” library. Services extended to residents, such as placing requests for interlibrary loans, and “holds” are also extended to reciprocal borrowers, with the exception of requesting materials from outside the SHARE database. Patrons are required to place these requests through their “home” library.

Interlibrary loan is a service wherein libraries lend materials to one another directly. Materials that the Forsyth Public Library does not own can be obtained for our patrons through this service, thereby greatly expanding the choices of available items. Patrons can request items by phone, in person, or by using the Library website. Materials not available through Illinois Heartland Library System can be obtained through WorldShare, which is a world-wide online union catalog of titles. It is not the practice of the Forsyth Public Library to impose charges for interlibrary loan processing. However, some libraries do charge fees for photocopying, sending materials, and lending items; when applicable, patrons must be willing to bear such fees if they wish to receive certain materials.

### ***Confidentiality of Library Patron Records***

The Forsyth Public Library staff supports and abides by the *Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act* which specifically prohibits the disclosure of patron information contained either in patron records or in reference to identifiable materials accessed or charged by patrons.

We will not make Library records available to any agency of state, federal, or local government unless required to do so under law or to report a suspected violation of the law. Nor will information on individuals be shared with other parties except as required by law.

### ***Reading History Retention Policy***

An optional feature of the Forsyth Public Library’s circulation system is Reading History, the ability for patrons to keep a list of everything they have checked out from the Library. Standard circulation procedure maintains no record of what a patron has borrowed once it has been returned, but activation of Reading History begins retention of this list. This list can only be accessed by someone with the library card number and PIN; however, Library patrons must be aware of potential privacy issues that can result from activation of this feature. Patrons are advised that they should not use this feature if they have any concerns about others seeing a list of what they have read. The law does allow law

enforcement officers to see any existing Library records if they first obtain a subpoena from a judge. Library patrons are responsible for opting in to the optional Reading History feature and can turn it off and remove book titles at any time.

### *Circulation Policies*

The loan periods for library materials owned by Forsyth Public Library are as follows:

All DVDs	1 week
New Adult Fiction	2 weeks
Magazines (Adult's & Children's)	2 weeks
Tech Kits and Puzzles	1 week
All other materials owned by FPL	3 weeks

***Overdue Items:*** Forsyth Public Library does not charge late fines. If a reciprocal patron owes late fines at his/her home library, he/she may pay those fines here. Patrons who have overdue items may not check out more materials until the overdue items are renewed, returned, or paid for.

Notices are generated at 7 and 21 days overdue. An item is considered lost if it has not been returned at 45 days overdue and a bill for replacement of materials will be sent. If materials are returned in good condition prior to payment, the bill for replacement cost is waived. Once the payment has been processed, refunds will not be made. Replacement costs will be based on the price the Library paid for the materials. A \$5 processing fee is added. Replacement items provided by patrons will not be accepted in lieu of payment.

Every attempt is made by the Library to recover overdue materials and unpaid accounts. In the event that the Library is unsuccessful in the recovery of materials from patrons who refuse to return materials or acquire excessive debt, the names of these patrons may be referred to the Village Attorney for legal action. Such action is initiated at the discretion of the Library Director.

***Renewals:*** Items owned by this library may be renewed twice (online, by phone, or in person) unless they are requested by another patron. Items from other libraries are subject to the owning library's renewal limits.

***Lost or Damaged Materials:*** The cost of replacement or repair of any lost or damaged materials will be borne by the cardholder under whose name the materials were checked out. Patrons who have lost items on their accounts cannot check out additional items until the items are returned or paid for. The patron may keep the damaged item after it has been paid for.

***Privacy:*** When an individual other than the registered borrower is present to pay fees, the Library will provide only that information which is necessary to transact the business.

Authors, titles, and subjects of overdue or lost materials will not be discussed unless the borrower's card is presented or the borrower gives consent.

### *Protection of Copyright*

It is the intent of the Forsyth Public Library to comply with Title 17 of the United States Code, titled "copyrights," and other federal legislation related to the duplication, retention, and use of copyrighted materials. Library patrons are expected to comply with restrictions when using or duplicating Library materials. Library staff members are not experts in copyright law and their understanding and interpretations of copyright restrictions should not be taken as legal advice. Interlibrary loan requests will be subject to copyright restrictions as well.

The Library observes copyright laws in the selection and use of art used to produce Library publicity items, displays, and decor.

### *Fees for Services*

The Forsyth Public Library is a free public library that does not require residents to pay to access or borrow materials. However, as a convenience to patrons, the Library offers some services for which a fee is charged. These services include, but are not limited to: sending FAX copies, laminating, computer printouts, and photocopying.

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## **Personnel and Employment Practices and Staff Conduct**

Forsyth Public Library is a department of the Village of Forsyth. Matters concerning human resources are coordinated through the Village administration and governed by policies contained in the *Uniform Personnel Rules and Regulations for the Village of Forsyth, Illinois*. Information contained in this section of Library policies is intended to supplement Village personnel policies and to contain policies which are specific to the Library environment.

### *Staff Development*

Well-trained staff members who can assist Library patrons in their discovery of the Library make up one of the most significant resources the Library can offer. In order to provide such a staff, senior Library staff members are expected to take part in the task of orienting and training new hires, developing learning materials to aid in the training process, and providing periodic reviews of competency development during the training period.

Staff members are encouraged, and may at times be required, to attend library conferences, workshops, seminars, and other continuing education sessions relating to their duties within the Library. Employees will be reimbursed for expenses involved in travel and registration fees, as well as receiving regular pay during attendance, in accordance with the policies set by the Village of Forsyth. Meals cannot be paid unless overnight travel is also involved. In addition, all staff is encouraged to participate in professional organizations and local groups that promote librarianship. Basic dues for membership in state and national organizations are paid for all permanent, full-time staff and professional part-time staff who wish to join appropriate organizations.

### ***Volunteer Services***

Members of the community of Forsyth are welcome to offer their time and services at the Forsyth Public Library to help with special events, projects, and activities, or for on-going projects such as collection and shelf maintenance. Services provided by volunteers will supplement, not supplant, the positions of library staff, nor will volunteer services be viewed as an alternative to hiring trained paid staff. Volunteers may apply for paid positions under the same conditions as other applicants. Forsyth Public Library volunteers are expected to adhere to the policies of the Library, including those involving confidentiality of patron and circulation records and other information. Volunteers may be required to sign a waiver before beginning service at the Library.

In addition to adult volunteers, as tasks are available, the Library welcomes the occasional request by individual students, scouts, and members of public service organizations who are required to perform public service to fulfill education or other requirements. Requests to work in the Library must be approved by the Library Director or Youth Services Librarian, who will also schedule the work time. Persons fulfilling public service requirements are subject to all rules and policies which govern Library employment, including confidentiality of patron information. Upon request the Library Director or Youth Services Librarian will provide documentation that the work was performed satisfactorily.

### ***Code of Ethics***

Members of the Library staff and Library Commission endorse the American Library Association Code of Ethics (Appendix B). All staff is expected to maintain the highest levels of personal and professional integrity in carrying out their duties, and to maintain strict patron confidentiality both on and off the job. As public employees, staff members are prohibited from using their positions for private gain and from transacting Library business with any entity in which they have a financial interest.

Library Commission members will follow the code of ethics established by the American Library Trustees Association in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of their office. Their positions cannot be used for personal gain. Members of the Library Commission

are expected to act as library advocates in promoting the use and support of the public Library and its programs.

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## **Patron Conduct**

### ***Library Behavior***

The Forsyth Public Library encourages people of all ages to visit the Library. Those using the Library and its resources have the right to expect a safe, comfortable environment that supports appropriate Library services. Library users are asked to respect other users, the Library staff, and themselves.

Behaviors which require staff intervention and possible repercussions include, but are not limited to:

- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Any sort of illegal activity or possession of illegal items
- Smoking on Library property shall be limited as provided by Illinois law. “Smoking” means the carrying, smoking, burning, inhaling, or exhaling of any kind of lighted pipe, cigar, cigarette, hookah, weed, herbs, or any other lighted smoking equipment or the use of any electronic device that simulates smoking (i.e., electronic vaping devices, commonly referred to as “e-cigarettes”).
- Any display of violence or threat of violence.
- Disruptive, threatening, abusive, obscene, and/or erratic behavior or activity.
- Disrespectful behavior or language toward other users or staff.
- Harassment of other users or Library staff.
- Theft of any property or destroying/mutilating property.
- Violation of other Library policies.

The Forsyth Public Library follows Illinois State Law, which prohibits the carrying of any weapon, concealed or partially concealed, in the Library building or on Library property. In conformance with State Statute, the Library will post at all entrances to the building the required signs as approved by the State Police. Any violators will be reported to law enforcement and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Depending on the severity and continuation of the behavior, Library staff may ask patrons to discontinue their behavior, leave the premises, bar them from the Library, revoke their Library privileges, and/or call the police. Parents or guardians of patrons younger than 18 years old who are involved in severe incidents will be informed of the child’s behavior and any consequences.

Library users who have had privileges revoked and/or who have been barred from Library property may appeal in writing to the Library Commission members within ten business days of the date of the revocation. Said appeal shall be sent to the following

address and directed to the Library Commission Chair: Forsyth Public Library, 268 S. Elwood, Forsyth, IL 62535

The Library Chair will have the appeal hearing posted for the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting. However, if said appeal is received after the posting of agenda for the regularly scheduled commission meeting, the appeal will not be set for hearing at that Commission meeting but will be docketed for the subsequent commission meeting.

The Library Commission shall hold an appeal hearing once the appeal is appropriately placed on the agenda for review. Upon completion of hearing the appeal, the Library Chair will issue a written opinion based on the Commission's vote within twenty (20) business days.

The library user may appeal the decision of the Library Commission to the Village of Forsyth Board of Trustees in writing within ten (10) business days of the date on the written opinion issued by the Library Chair. The Village of Forsyth will schedule the hearing and send notice to the appellant regarding the date of the hearing.

Library users should not try to correct a situation that does not involve them, but should instead ask a staff member to intervene.

Please turn your cell phone to vibrate or silent while in the Library. Be respectful toward other Library patrons by speaking softly and keeping your phone conversations brief.

The Library strives to provide a safe and welcome environment for its patrons. Therefore, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, service animals are allowed to accompany their handlers anywhere the individual with disabilities is allowed to enter. Pets, therapy dogs, and emotional support animals are not considered service animals under the ADA and are not allowed in the Library with the exception of animals that are included in programs or events sponsored by the Library.

Library users must understand the Library is a public building with many activities. At certain times, such as after school or during a program, the Library cannot guarantee a certain noise level, seating, or table space. Accommodations for users will be made as appropriate.

### ***Tutoring***

The Library is available to the public for the reading and enjoyment of Library materials and to support the research and educational needs of its patrons. As part of this educational purpose, the Library permits tutoring on the premises. The Library's Patron Conduct policy applies to all tutor teams.

The Library does not sponsor, recommend or assume liability or responsibility for the work and/or activities of tutors who use the Library space. All arrangements must be made between the tutor, student, and parents.

### *Unattended Children*

Children are encouraged to use the Library as a place of study and inquiry and as a place to develop a love of books and reading. Parents and caregivers are responsible for monitoring the activities and regulating the behavior of their children while in the Library. Responsibility for children's selection of materials rests with their parents or legal guardians.

Children under the age of eight years old must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caregiver over the age of 14. Unaccompanied children age eight and above may be left unattended provided they are mature enough to stay alone and observe proper conduct. Children are subject to the same rules of conduct as other patrons and the same consequences, and may be asked to leave if their behavior is disruptive to others.

The Library is not responsible for the safety or security of children left unattended. If children are left unattended in violation of this policy, the matter may be referred to the local deputies or other authorities.

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## **Reference and Information Services**

### *Reference Services*

An important function of the Forsyth Public Library is providing reference service, which is defined as answering patron questions with fair, accurate, unbiased, and factual information. Reference service represents a broad category of public service; it includes instruction in the use and organization of Library materials and services, assistance in locating items on the shelf, and advising patrons on reading materials which may be of interest to them. Reference service and access to the reference collection are available to all library patrons regardless of age or purpose of inquiry. Reference service will be provided in response to all forms of inquiry: in person, by telephone, by electronic means and through the mail.

Reference requests that are received via the phone are answered at the time of the call or as soon as possible if extensive research is not involved or required. Requests made in person are given precedence over those that are received on the phone. Detailed information requiring interpretation or analysis cannot be delivered over the phone. When answering reference questions, staff members will cite the source of the answer, especially for any medical, legal, tax, or financial information that is sought, and only read information given from the source. In answering reference questions, staff will



scrupulously avoid giving any information that could be interpreted as advice, particularly in these areas. Personally held beliefs, opinions, and personal experiences are not acceptable in answering reference questions.

In accordance with American Library Association Code of Ethics (see Appendix B), the Library will protect users' right to privacy and confidentiality, including information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted in the provision of reference service.

The Library has basic local history materials. Requests for genealogy research that require searching beyond those resources will be referred to the appropriate libraries or agencies.

Staff cannot photocopy requested materials to be mailed except under circumstances authorized by the Library Director and as allowed by copyright law. Standard library copying fees apply.

Digital resources provided by the Forsyth Public Library may be subject to licensing agreements and available only to Forsyth Library card holders.

### ***Homework Assistance***

The Forsyth Public Library will make every effort to work cooperatively with area schools and teachers.

Homework assignment questions, regardless of the age or grade level of the student, are answered in the same manner as other reference questions. Priority is given to questions asked by patrons who are in the Library. Telephone assistance will be limited to brief, factual questions that do not require interpretation of material or extensive reading from texts. Staff may set checkout limits on assignment materials when large numbers are in demand.

Staff cannot perform such tasks as tutoring, interpretation of homework assignments, or extensive interpretation and explanation of research materials. These are beyond the scope of normal reference service. Library staff should use discretion in determining when giving homework assistance becomes doing homework.

### ***Proctoring Exams***

Proctoring exams is a service that the Library Director provides or assigns to other staff members for the convenience of Library patrons. Arrangements must be made in advance. The person requesting the service must arrange for the test to be sent to the Library and to bear all costs involved in returning it to the sender. The Library cannot incur expense in connection with the proctoring services.

### *Internet Services*

Internet access is available to patrons on the Library's public access computers. Staff members will help users who request assistance as part of the reference and information service the Library provides. Please refer to the "Public Use of Computers" portion of the policy manual for more information about use of the Library's computers.

Forsyth Public Library offers free and open access to the Internet, in accordance with its mission and the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights." The Internet offers access to many valuable information sources. However, not all sources provide accurate, complete, unbiased, or current information.

The Library does not monitor or control the content of the material accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its contents. Not all information found on the Internet is accurate, complete, up-to-date, legal, or philosophically acceptable to all individuals. The Library assumes no responsibility and shall have no liability for any direct, indirect, or consequential damages arising from the use of information found on the Internet or any communications sent through the Library's Internet computers. The Library does not monitor an individual's use of the Internet, nor does the Library employ filtering software.

As with other Library materials, restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian. The Library does not provide any monitoring or supervision.

**Copyright law governs unauthorized use or distribution of copyrighted materials. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials, except as permitted by the Fair Use regulation, without permission of the copyright owner.**

The Forsyth Public Library maintains a website at [forsythlibrary.com](http://forsythlibrary.com) and is responsible for its content and upkeep. Links are monitored regularly to ensure that they remain valid and consistent with the roles of the Library.

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## **Meeting Rooms and Displays**

### *Meeting Rooms*

The Village of Forsyth provides and maintains a community room in the Library building for use by citizens of Forsyth. All requests for reservations, bookings, maintenance assistance, keys, and services must be made directly to Village Hall staff. Rules and regulations governing the use of the community room are established by the Village of Forsyth and must be observed by those using the rooms. Occupants are reminded that the

Library shares space with the community room and are asked to respect the rules and policies of the Library, including those rules pertaining specifically to unaccompanied children and disruptive behavior.

Use of the Library's Program Room is limited to Library events and services. Forsyth's American Legion group is allowed monthly use of the room as a grandfathered exception.

### ***Audio-Visual Equipment***

Use of the Library's audio-visual equipment, including LCD projector and sound system, is limited to Library or Village of Forsyth events. Equipment is not available to groups reserving the community room.

### ***Exhibits and Display Cases***

Display cases and other exhibit spaces within the Library are generally limited to the display of Library materials relevant to the Library's mission and current collections or events. Library staff members create the displays, are responsible for their content, and may on occasion invite individuals to share items for display. Forsyth organizations may request space in which to exhibit items that are deemed to be of general public interest locally or of particular interest to Forsyth Library users. Requests to use Library exhibit space by outside parties should be made to the Library Director. Exhibitors are required to complete a "Request to Display/Exhibit Items in the Forsyth Public Library" form which is included in Appendix G of this policy. The Library is not responsible for the safety and protection of displayed objects while in the Library's care.

### ***Bulletin Boards***

Legal notices and items that publicize community organizations and local events, and thus highlight the role of the Library as the central source for civic, cultural, educational, and recreational information, may be displayed on the bulletin board adjacent to the community room. Posters and flyers displayed on the bulletin board should not exceed 8 ½ inches x 14 inches and must contain appropriate content regarding subject matter and language, and be of general interest. All items must be dated with the posting date. Items are displayed at the discretion of the Library Director for a maximum of one month. Library staff will remove items that have expired and will generally maintain the orderliness of the postings. Items removed will be discarded by the staff. The bulletin board closest to the Library is for the display of Library materials only; any other materials posted on this bulletin board will be removed and discarded immediately.

Items intended for distribution, including flyers, brochures, leaflets, newspapers, and pamphlets that provide information about non-profit civic, educational, cultural, or recreational organizations and events will be displayed and available to the public as long

as they are timely and display space can be found. Distribution or posting of items by the Library does not indicate endorsement of the issues, events, or services promoted by those materials. Solicitation is strictly prohibited in the Library and on Library grounds.

## **Appendix A: Access, Review, and Revision**

A copy of the policy manual of the Forsyth Public Library will be available in the Library at all times for review by Library personnel, patrons, and members of the Village Board and the Library Commission.

The policy manual of the Forsyth Public Library will be reviewed and updated as necessary by the Library Director and the Library Commission. Each policy will be marked with the date it was adopted or revised.

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## **Appendix B: Ethics Statements**

### *American Library Association Code of Ethics*

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staff.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.

- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted.
- IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

*Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; and January 22, 2008.*

### ***Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees***

***(adapted for use by the Village of Forsyth Library Commission)***

- Commission members must promote a high level of library service while observing ethical standards.
- Commission members must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the institution.
- It is incumbent upon any commission member to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.
- Commission members must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the commission even if they personally disagree.
- A commission member must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.
- Commission members must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.
- Commission members who accept appointment to the Library Commission are expected to perform all the functions of members of the commission.

## **Appendix C: Library Bill of Rights and Interpretations**

By inclusion of the Library Bill of Rights and the interpretation statements of the American Library Association in its policy manual, the Forsyth Public Library affirms these statements and their application in the Library's operations.

### ***Library Bill of Rights***

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

*Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.*

### ***Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors***

The American Library Association supports equal and equitable access to all library resources and services by users of all ages. Library policies and procedures that

effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users is in violation of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The right to use a library includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, emancipatory or other legal status of users violates Article V. This includes minors who do not have a parent or guardian available to sign a library card application or permission slip. Unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness should be able to obtain a library card regardless of library policies related to chronological age.

School and public libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and resources to meet the diverse interests and informational needs of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of providing library services and should be determined on an individual basis. Equitable access to all library resources and services should not be abridged based on chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, legal status, or through restrictive scheduling and use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. A library's failure to acquire materials on the grounds that minors may be able to access those materials diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, social media, online applications, games, technologies, programming, and other formats. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them. Libraries and their library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

Article VII of the Library Bill of Rights states, "All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use." This includes students and minors, who have a right to be free from any unreasonable intrusion into or surveillance of their lawful library use.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize libraries and their governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As "Libraries: An American Value" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services."<sup>4</sup> Libraries and their governing bodies



cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their own children. Libraries and library governing bodies should not use rating systems to inhibit a minor's access to materials.

Libraries and their governing bodies have a legal and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the communities they serve have free and equitable access to a diverse range of library resources and services that is inclusive, regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Libraries and their governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

*Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 under previous name "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; July 1, 2014; and June 25, 2019.*

### ***Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software***

On June 26, 1997, the United States Supreme Court in *Reno v. American Civil Liberties Union*, 521 U.S. 844 (1997), issued a sweeping reaffirmation of core First Amendment principles and held that communications over the Internet deserve the highest level of Constitutional protection.

The Court's most fundamental holding was that communications on the Internet deserve the same level of Constitutional protection as books, magazines, newspapers, and speakers on a street corner soapbox. The Court found that the Internet "constitutes a vast platform from which to address and hear from a world-wide audience of millions of readers, viewers, researchers, and buyers," and that "any person with a phone line can become a town crier with a voice that resonates farther than it could from any soapbox."

For libraries, the most critical holding of the Supreme Court is that libraries that make content available on the Internet can continue to do so with the same Constitutional protections that apply to the books on libraries' shelves. The Court's conclusion that "the vast democratic fora of the Internet" merit full constitutional protection serves to protect libraries that provide their patrons with access to the Internet. The Court recognized the importance of enabling individuals to receive speech from the entire world and to speak to the entire world. Libraries provide those opportunities to many who would not otherwise have them. The Supreme Court's decision protects that access.

The use in libraries of software filters to block constitutionally protected speech is inconsistent with the United States Constitution and federal law and may lead to legal

exposure for the library and its governing authorities. The American Library Association affirms that the use of filtering software by libraries to block access to constitutionally protected speech violates the Library Bill of Rights.

*Adopted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee July 1, 1997; Rev. November 17, 2000*

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## **Appendix D: The Freedom to Read**

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the

natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

*Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.*

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## **Appendix E: The Freedom to View**

The Freedom to View, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral,

- religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

*This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989. Endorsed by American Library Association Council January 10, 1990.*

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## **Appendix F: Libraries – An American Value**

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America's libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.

To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library's resources and services;
- We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services;
- We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library's resources;
- We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services;
- We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners - informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

*Adopted February 3, 1999, by the Council of the American Library Association*

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## **Appendix G: Policy Related Forms and Documents**

**Resident Complaint Concerning Library Programming**

The person completing this form must: 1) Be a current resident of Forsyth; 2) Have attended at least a portion of the program; and 3) Answer all questions on the form.

Name of program: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time of program:

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Specifically detail your complaint about the program. Use extra pages if space provided is inadequate.

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Is age appropriateness an issue? If so, for what age group would this program be appropriate? Was publicity misleading regarding age appropriateness?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Request to Display/Exhibit Items in the Forsyth Public Library**

Name of organization displaying items:

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Name of person responsible for set-up:

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person responsible for display removal:

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date display is to start: \_\_\_\_\_

Date display is to be removed: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of the display:

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Signature of Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Note to individuals and groups displaying items in the Forsyth Public Library: The Forsyth Public Library assumes no responsibility for the safety and care of items contained in any displays created and maintained by organizations or individuals other than the library. Items are displayed at the owner's risk. Displays that are not removed at the time specified above may be removed by library staff.