
Board Policy



Accepting Unsolicited Materials and Campaign Literature and Political Forums

Policy Statement

Serving the community is at the core of the Pierce County Library System's (Library) service to communities, as such, and as a limited public forum, it accepts information from nonprofit and government organizations for sharing with the community. In the Library System's role to support civic engagement and participation and provide individuals with access to information to explore ideas, form opinions, and make decisions, the Pierce County Library functions as a limited public forum for campaign literature and political forums.

Purpose

This policy outlines the flyers, newspaper publications, announcements, and other printed and online materials the Library System will accept for display in libraries and on its website to inform the community. This policy describes making written materials available expressing varying points of view, ensuring a space for materials representing the diversity of Pierce County, to ensure equity and inclusion for all people.

In addition, it outlines a clear direction for the Library System to function as a limited public forum for campaign literature and political forums

Definitions

Limited public forum: a place or space opened by the government, in this instance, the Pierce County Library, designated for the public to conduct specified expressive activities.

Policy

Accepting Unsolicited Materials

The Library System shall:

- Make written community information, from nonprofit {501(c) (3)} or government organizations of local origin, available to the public, by displaying this material in a designated area in the libraries and/or on the Library's website, on a first-come, first-served basis within the limitations imposed by available space.
- Allow space for free periodicals (magazines, newsletters, annual reports, etc.).
- Allow space, for multiple copies of pamphlets, flyers, newsletters, etc., in a designated display area, on a first-come, first-served basis within the limitations imposed by available space.

Campaign Literature

During primary, general, and special elections for voters in the Library System's service area, the Library System may provide access to election information literature, such as voters' pamphlets and other similar documents that provide general information regarding elections. The Pierce County Elections Office, Washington Secretary of State, or third party nonpartisan organizations may provide such informational materials.

Public Forums

In accordance with the Library System's Public Meeting and Conference Room policy, individuals or organizations may conduct political forums in the Library's public meeting rooms on a first-come, first-served basis. The Library System's Public Meeting and Conference Room policy makes time, place, and manner regulations, which are necessary to conduct normal library operations.

Signature Gatherers

Signature gatherers and/or petitioners may solicit signatures on library property so long as these actions occur: outside of library buildings, at least twenty-five (25) feet from entrances to the buildings, during an election voting period (defined as the dates between ballots mailed and election day), and twenty-five (25) feet from ballot deposit boxes. Signature gatherers shall not interfere with people walking, parked vehicles, or other vehicle traffic into and out of the library property, interfere with the delivery of library services, or obstruct staff work. Signature gatherers may not set up tables, signs, or other structures. Posting of notices and distribution of material does not imply endorsement by the Library System. The Library assumes no responsibility for the preservation or protection of any item posted or distributed.

Displaying or convening forums for election information, or providing space for individuals or organizations to conduct forums, does not indicate the Library System's support of or opposition to any candidate, issue, or ballot proposition. The Library System provides for access to the election literature for information to the public.

Related Policies/Procedure

[Public Meeting and Conference Room Policy](#)

Board Policy

Accepting Unsolicited Materials Policy adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Pierce County Rural Library District, June 20, 1991.

Campaign Literature and Political Forums Policy adopted by the Board of Trustees August 9, 1978. Revised September 19, 1984, November 14, 1985, August 22, 1991, May 10, 2019

Policies combined, revised, and approved by the Board of Trustees December 13, 2023

By the enactment of this policy the Board of Trustees of Pierce County Library System is concurrently rescinding any prior policy or procedure within PCLS that is either in conflict with or expansive of the matters addressed in this policy.