Policy Often About Relationships
Policy: Written policies ensure effective and efficient running of library

- Supports the library & staff
- Guiding principle for decisions and actions
- Prevents confusion
- Promotes consistency
Policies

- Operational
  - Deals with functions that support library service objectives
    - Collection Development
    - Public Relations
  - Deal with interactions with the public
  - Guide patrons and staff

- Managerial
  - Deal with functions related to planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling
Need

• Recurring problem(s)
• New service(s)
• Inconsistency in how things happen in practice
How to tell if you need a policy

- Different staffers and/or volunteers are enforcing standards differently.
- **EXAMPLE:** One staffer is very strict about noise in the library, and will expel teens who get rowdy. Another is lenient and enjoys kidding with the teens.
- **EXAMPLE:** Some staffers aren’t offering services that the library can make available.
- A policy would provide standards for staff and library user behavior and for consequences of not meeting those standards.
Creating Policy

Background and Issues
Process

1. Research
2. Writing
3. Revision
4. Library Approval
5. Board Approval
6. Distribution
Writing

- Understandable to a wide range of readers
- Text clear, brief, free of jargon
Valid and Legally Enforceable

• Conforms to current law
• Reasonable
• Nondiscriminatory
• Measurability
  • For example, dress codes: “appropriate shirts” versus “no tank tops”
  • Not open for interpretation
Policy Statement

Brief statement that describes why the library does something.

Example:

“To ensure that all patrons and visitors are able to use the Library’s resources and services effectively, the Indiana State Library requires all visitors to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws as well as the following rules and regulations.”

http://www.in.gov/library/2435.htm
Criteria for a Policy Statement

A policy statement

• is brief.

• describes what is to be accomplished and why.

• is written from the customer's point of view.

• has been developed and approved by the library's governing authority.
Ethics and Confidentiality/Privacy

• **Code of Professional Ethics for Librarians**
  • It is the librarian’s responsibility to make the resources and services of the library known to its potential users. Impartial service should be rendered to all who are entitled to use the library.
  • It is the librarian’s obligation to treat as confidential any private information obtained through contact with library patrons.
    • Purge personally identifiable information regularly
Board Deliberation

- Really necessary?
- Consistent with our mission statement?
- Within the scope of our authority as a board?
- Consistent with our other policies?
- Compatible with our other policies?
- Practical?
- Broad enough to cover the subject completely?
- Enforceable?
- Affordable?
Board Approval

- Simple majority approval
- Sign and date the policy
- Maintained in a Policy Manual
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Access Policy

• Principles of Access
  Access will not be denied or abridged because of religious, racial, social, economic, or political status; or because of mental, emotional, or physical condition; age; or sexual orientation. The Library abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act and will endeavor to make reasonable accommodation to provide access to library materials for people with impairments.

• Rights of Library Users
  • Responsibilities – circulation rules
Collection Development Policy

- American Library Association
  - Library Bill of Rights
  - Freedom to Read
- Broad-based on providing materials for recreation, education and information
  - All ages and all viewpoints
Procedure for Complaints or Challenges

- Challenged Materials Forms
  - Bibliographic Information
  - Page number or scene of objectionable material
  - Reason for objection

- The Librarian shall read the book or view the material, noting the objections. The Library Board shall also review the material and consider the objection.

- Personal bias or prejudice is not a valid reason for objection.

- The decision to remove the material from the collection will be based on the same considerations used when selecting new material.

- The complainant will be notified of the decision of the Librarian and the Library Board.
Internet Use Policy

- **IC 36-12-1-12**

  (c) The board of a public library shall adopt a policy concerning the appropriate use of the Internet or other computer network by library patrons in all areas of the library.

  (d) The board shall make the policy adopted under subsection (c) readily available to all library patrons.

  (e) The board of a public library shall annually review the policy adopted under subsection (c).
Hearing for Internet Use Policy

• 47 CFR 54.520

**Public Notice and Meeting or Hearing:** Libraries must provide reasonable public notice and hold at least one public meeting or hearing to address the proposed filter and the Internet safety policy. Additional meetings are not necessary – even if the policy is amended – unless required by local or state rules or the policy itself.
Policy Review

• Periodic
• Weed out old and obsolete policies
Policy tells \textit{what}

Procedure tells \textit{how}
Summary

• Operational Policies and Managerial Policies
• Govern relationships between library staff and the public
• Need for Policy
• Written by library board with input from director and staff
• Gather in a Manual
• Weed and Update Annually
Resources: Books, Webpage, Slideshow

- IN Public Trust Chapter 3 “The Board Develops Policy,”
  [http://www.in.gov/library/files/In_the_Public_Trust_20141001_Chap_03.pdf](http://www.in.gov/library/files/In_the_Public_Trust_20141001_Chap_03.pdf)


Resources: Books, Webpage, Slideshow

Resources: Recordings


Websites

  resource for
  • ALA Library Bill of Rights. http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/intfreedom/librarybill/lbor.pdf
  • Freedom to Read Statement http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/LBOR%20%26%20FTR%20Statement.pdf
Websites
