



Serving Appling, Bacon, Clinch, Pierce, and Ware Counties

## Displays and Exhibits Policy

*Approved by Regional Library Board of Trustees on August 7, 2023*

*\*Replaces the Policy for Public Information Distribution, Display, and Exhibits Policy*

### Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Okefenokee Regional Library System (OKRLS) to allow for the display of materials of information and interest which is free and equally accessible to all library users. Areas used for display may include bulletin boards, brochure racks, cases, shelves, designated wall space, galleries, or other designated spaces at or in the OKRLS headquarters or branch libraries. All library property and areas contained within its bounds are covered by this policy, including the parking lot and outside grounds. All materials must adhere to the standards set forth in this policy.

### Policy Interpretation and Implementation

1. Space is designated in the order of priority to:

- OKRLS headquarters and branch libraries and Friends of the Library materials;
- 1. Appling, Bacon, Clinch, Pierce, and Ware County government materials;
- 1. Non-local government materials of local interest;
- 1. Appling, Bacon, Clinch, Pierce, and Ware County public educational institution materials;
- 1. Appling, Bacon, Clinch, Pierce, and Ware County non-profit organization materials of local interest.

2. Items devoted solely to the sale, advertising, solicitation, or promotion of products or services, including personal notices (e.g., lessons, childcare, roommates, free pets, yard sales, etc.) are unacceptable.

3. Materials serving primarily as political campaign literature or utilizing persuasive and/or coercive language, or containing symbols which promote religious, political, or sex-based ideology are unacceptable.

4. Materials containing obscenity, child pornography, defamation, or "fighting words", or that are suggestive of lawless action are unacceptable.

5. Requests for contributions other than OKRLS and Friends of the Library campaigns or events are prohibited.

6. Bulletin Board postings are for public display of announcements and notices regarding local community events which do not charge attendees, do not require a donation, and must be open to the general public.

7. Distribution of free materials (i.e., handouts) may be provided on display racks or other designated spaces for the purpose of sharing information.

8. Displays and exhibits, whether initiated by library staff or the public, must not remain in place for longer than 31 days from the date of creation unless granted special approval by the local board which oversees the branch library in which the display or exhibit is housed.

9. The Director or Branch Manager shall assign placement of material(s) into appropriately sized space(s) following the guidance above. All items must identify the issuing organization, including name, address, and phone number.

10. The local and regional boards recognize the right of individuals to question and even challenge decisions made regarding displays and exhibits. It is expected that the library patron will first speak with the Director about any concern he/she may have. A Request for Reconsideration of Display/Exhibit Form may be found online at the Okefenokee Regional Library System website or may be provided by the Director or Branch Manager. The Director will accept a completed Request for Reconsideration of Display/Exhibit Form and provide a written response to the patron no more than three business days after receipt. If the patron is unsatisfied with the written response of the Director, he/she has the right to request the concern be forwarded by the Director to the local board of trustees. The Director shall promptly forward the Request for Reconsideration of Display/Exhibit Form to the trustees of the local board overseeing the branch library in which the material(s) is/are placed for review and consideration. The following conditions must be met:

1. The concern/topic disclosed on the form has not been addressed by either the local or regional board within the last three months.
2. The Director has notified the patron by way of in-person conversation, phone call, email, or letter that his/her concern has been forwarded to the local board.

11. All referrals to the local board must be received one week prior to its next regularly scheduled board meeting in order to be considered for placement on the upcoming meeting's agenda. If the deadline for referral to the local board has passed, the materials questioned/challenged shall remain in place for the remainder of the 31 day period set for displays and exhibits and the concern will be addressed at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. If during the local board meeting the material(s) is/are deemed to be in violation of this policy, the material(s) will be removed by the end of the next business day (if not already removed). The concern will be referred to the OKRLS Regional Board for further review and consideration. At the least, a two-week period of time exists between the regularly scheduled local and regional board meetings; therefore, ample time is available for the Director to make the necessary referral to the regional board. The following conditions must be met:

1. The concern/topic disclosed on the form has not been addressed by the regional board within the last three months.
2. The Director has notified the patron by way of in-person conversation, phone call, email, or letter that his/her concern has been forwarded to the regional board.

12. All referrals to the regional board must be received one week prior to its next regularly scheduled board meeting in order to be considered for placement on the meeting's agenda. Final judgment will be made by the OKRLS Regional Board and the matter shall not be readdressed within three months unless new information is made available or a new law is set forth to trigger such review. Any deviation from the board's ruling or the implementation of this policy will be handled accordingly.