

ALBERT WISNER PUBLIC LIBRARY

GUIDELINES AND POLICY: *STATEMENT OF CONCERN*

Albert Wisner Public Library cardholders with a current (not expired) library card who wish to register a concern regarding a library item will be asked to fill out the *Statement of Concern* form, available at any public service desk. The completed form may be returned to any staff member or emailed to the Library Director.

Please note the following guidelines and requirements:

- Residents of the Town of Warwick, NY but whose library taxes support either the Greenwood Lake Public Library or the Florida Public Library are not eligible to submit this form.
- The form must be completed in its entirety. Forms missing information or responses, or which are unsigned, will not be reviewed.
- The form may address concern about only one item/resource, not the entire body of work of a given author/creator, nor all the Library's items of a given genre, theme or topic.
- Organizations and groups are not eligible to submit this form.

Before submitting the form, it may be helpful to review the following summary of the Library's policy on library materials:

Albert Wisner Public Library's professional staff chooses books and other materials to meet the informational, educational and recreational reading needs of the citizens of the community. The staff is guided by the Materials Selection Policy adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Library. The Trustees and staff support the belief that the right to read and the right to free access to library collections for persons of all ages are essential to the individual's freedom of thought, which is fundamental to democracy. The Trustees have also adopted the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement and the Freedom to View Statement, which represent the Library's interpretation of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In practice, this means that the Library will resist efforts to remove or censor materials.

The Library Director, and a committee designated by the Director (to include selectors and department heads), will review the completed form and the item in question, taking into consideration the Library's Materials Selection Policy, Exhibits & Display Policy and book/media review sources. The Director will respond in writing within thirty (30) days of receipt of the completed form. Accompanying the decision, as applicable, will be relevant professional book/media reviews, the Library's Materials Selection Policy, the Library's Exhibits and Display Policy, the *Library Bill of Rights*, the

American Library Association's *Freedom to Read* and/or *Freedom to View* statements. The Director will provide the Library Board of Trustees with copies of the *Statement of Concern* form and the Director's written response.

The Director's decision may be appealed in writing, by the person who submitted the *Statement of Concern*, to the Library Board of Trustees within thirty (30) days of the date of the Director's response. Please mail a brief letter appealing the decision addressed to the Board of Trustees, 1 McFarland Drive, Warwick, NY 10990, or fax the letter to (845) 987-1228, Attn: Board of Trustees.

The Board reserves the right to undertake a thorough investigation prior to making a decision. That investigation will include a complete examination of the resource itself and of the relevant Library policies. It may also include consultation with staff, the Library's attorney, the Ramapo Catskill Library System, and professional organizations or other resources as the Board deems necessary in order to make a fully-informed decision. The Board may take up to 90 days from receipt of the appeal for this process.

Until a decision is made by the Board, the item in question will remain available without restriction. Once a decision is made, the person who submitted the appeal request will be notified in writing of the Board's decision through U.S. mail.

The Board's determination is final. The determination will stand for five years from the date of the decision before a new *Statement of Concern* regarding the same item/resource will be considered.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees: 4/25/2023