

Kent County Public Library PROGRAMMING POLICY

Policy: Kent County Public Library provides programming that supports the library's mission, vision, and values while responding to the information, education, and entertainment needs and interests of the community. Every effort is made to provide programs that represent a broad spectrum of knowledge, people, and opinions. The wide selection of programming offered is inspired by the community, staff, Maryland library initiatives, and other coordinated themes.

All library-sponsored programs are free and open to the public. The library does not discriminate against attendees or presenters on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or any other characteristics protected by local, state, and federal law.

The Library affirms and supports the freedom and responsibility of individual library users to choose whether or not to attend programs in accordance with their needs, wants, and beliefs. Library users may not restrict or interfere in any way with the freedom of others who choose to participate in programs. The Library does not assume parental responsibility for minors' attendance at programs, but does support and encourage parents and legal guardians taking an active role in selecting programs they deem appropriate for their children.

Library sponsorship of a program does not represent an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by participants, nor is it responsible for the factual correctness of the content of a presentation. Program topics, speakers, and resources are not excluded solely on the basis of possible controversy. A program that meets selection criteria will not be canceled or altered solely because it represents a particular opinion, belief, or philosophy.

The responsibility for library programming lies with the Executive Director who delegates the coordination of programming to members of staff in the Programming, Outreach, and Publicity Services department.

Criteria for Selection

Decisions about programming are made with consideration of the following elements:

1. Relationship to library mission and goals
2. Informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs and interests to members of the community

3. Budget and staffing considerations
4. Support for literacy (including, but not limited to: basic literacy; civic literacy; digital literacy; early literacy; financial literacy; functional literacy; information literacy; and media literacy)
5. Qualifications and reputation of the presenter
6. Representation of diverse cultural backgrounds, opinions, and viewpoints
7. Appeal to a range of ages, interests, and information needs
8. Connection to other community organizations, programs, exhibits, or events

Library programs are non-commercial in nature. Although a professional expert may present a program, the information presented should be generic in nature and the program may not be used to advertise a business or recruit customers.

The library does not offer programs that support or oppose specific political candidates, parties, or ballot initiatives.

The library does not offer programs that support or oppose specific religious convictions. Programs designed to provide information about religious traditions for the purpose of intellectual enrichment or multicultural education are permitted.

The library welcomes and considers program proposals from potential presenters, as well as patron suggestions for program topics.

Final programming decisions are made based on the application of the selection criteria and the professional judgment of library staff.

Program Reach

While staffing levels, budget concerns, and other factors impact the number and types of programs offered, the library endeavors to regularly offer programming at all of its official locations.

Library-sponsored programs may also be held off-site, as deemed appropriate, to expand the library's visibility in the community.

The library may choose to co-sponsor programs with other agencies and organizations. Co-sponsorship and collaboration decisions are made based on shared goals, mutual needs, and equitable benefits between the library and community partners.

Program Attendance

Program participation is voluntary. Depending on the nature of the program, library users may choose, but are not obligated, to bring and/or utilize personal devices or other technology. The library is not responsible for any identity theft, data loss, or device damage that happens during a program.

Program attendance may be limited and/or registration required if the safety or success of a program requires it. In these cases, admittance will be prioritized based on registration or on a first come, first served basis.

Program attendance may also be limited based on age, especially programs intended for children and teens that are geared to their unique developmental needs and interests.

Sale of Items at Programs

The sale of books, CDs, or other items created by authors, performers, or presenters as part of a library program requires prior approval and arrangement with the library. If approved, the financial transactions are between the presenter and the buyer and are separate from library finances.

Reconsideration of Library Programming

The library welcomes expressions of opinion from the public concerning programming.

Patrons should address questions and concerns about programming with the Executive Director. Patrons may request that a program decision be reevaluated by submitting the Request for Reconsideration form. This form will be reviewed by the Executive Director and all requests for reconsideration will receive a reply in writing.

Date: June 29, 2026

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. M. D.', followed by a long horizontal line.

Definitions: “Library-sponsored program” – Any program or event that has been primarily coordinated, facilitated, and/or arranged by library staff.

“Presenter” – Any person who has entered into an agreement with KCPL to provide educational, informational, cultural, or entertainment content to the public. A presenter may be paid or may volunteer their services.