

Carter Lake Public Library

Library Programming

Purpose:

A program is defined as an event sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library, having a presentation component and lasting 20 minutes or longer. A program can be a single event or a series of events, be a scheduled or a pop-up event, take place inside or outside of a library, or take place online. Programming furthers the mission, vision, and values of the Carter Lake Public Library.

Programming is a fundamental component of library service that:

- Introduces attendees to library resources and materials;
- Provides learning and entertainment opportunities to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of those attending the program;
- Raises awareness and visibility of the library to the community;
- Supports and responds to emerging community interests as well as established interests and demands;
- Expands the Library's role as a cultural and community center; and/or
- Extends outreach for underserved populations.

The Library uses partnerships with non-profit and civic organizations, and government and commercial entities in order to reach new audiences and to create opportunities to meet the goals of programming.

The Carter Lake Public Library prioritizes patron safety in the delivery of its services. Programs will be developed with consideration for the principles of accessibility, equity, and inclusiveness, and will contribute to the Library's welcoming environment. Reasonable accommodations will be made to ensure that programs are accessible to all who wish to attend and participate.

Library selection of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by presenters. Decisions to provide programs will not be made based on any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the program in serving the interests of Library patrons.

The Library's philosophy of open access to information and ideas extends to programming. Most Library programs are free and open to the public. Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited. Patrons who register and do not show for two consecutive library programs will be suspended for 90 days from all library programs.

Some programs may be developed for a particular audience, i.e. attendees should be within the appropriate age group such as children or teens, or may require an accompanying adult. All program participants must comply with the Library's Patron Code of Conduct. The Library reserves the right to set age limits or recommendations for programs. In determining appropriate age recommendations, staff will consider the suitability of the program's materials, format, and program presenters, the relevancy and suitability of topic, messages, and programming methods for the intended audience. Programs designed for specific audiences will be publicized as such. The responsibility for child attendance at Library programs rests with their caregivers.

Library programs must have a special educational, informational, or cultural value to the community. Programs of a purely commercial nature or those designed for the solicitation of business will not be offered by the library. Examples of programs that would be considered of a commercial nature include, but are not limited to, presentations offered for free but with the intention of soliciting future business.

Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be approved or offered by the Library. However, educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates may be offered.

Programs will not be offered or approved that endorse or oppose a specific religion. Programs are planned to be inclusive of all cultures and of all religions and no religion. Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe, or proselytize a particular religious conviction. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of library patrons.

The following activities will be permissible at Library-initiated programs or on property governed by Library policy:

- Fundraising to benefit the Library.
- The sale of books, music, movies, or other items by authors, performers, or presenters as part of a library-sponsored program.

Library staff uses many criteria when making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources, including:

- Community needs and interests
- Relation to library collections, resources, services, and events
- Connections to other community programs, exhibits, or events
- Historical or educational significance
- Treatment of content for the intended audience
- Presenter expertise and/or public performance experience
- Popular appeal

The Library may draw upon other community resources when developing programs and may actively partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational and cultural institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored public programs.

Professional performers and presenters that reflect specialized or unique expertise may be hired for Library programs. Performers and presenters will not be excluded from consideration because of their origin, background or views, or because of possible controversy. The Library may conduct reference checks in advance of contracting with the performer or presenter to ensure quality standards.

Performers or presenters hired for programs intended to serve those under 18 years of age, and who are over 18 years of age, will undergo a background screening. A background screening will be completed for all performers and presenters who work individually with patrons. The Library will not contract with performers or presenters for reasons including but not limited to:

- Conviction of a crime of violence or a sex crime
- Conviction of any crime with a victim under age 16 and under

The Director of Libraries may waive the requirement for background screenings for specific programming demands on a per-program basis. When this waiver is exercised, performers or presenters will remain supervised by Library staff.

Unsolicited offers from individuals and organizations to present programs will be considered and evaluated to further the mission, vision and values of the Carter Lake Public Library as outlined in this policy.

Organizations or individuals collaborating with the Library on programs must coordinate marketing efforts with the Library.

Assessments of the effectiveness of Library programs are based on attendance and audience satisfaction. Other evaluation criteria include the attraction of new patrons to the Library, the promotion of City/Library goals, and program evaluation forms.

The Library reserves the right to use video or photographs taken of program participants for internal use, publication, use in Library promotional outlets, and evaluation purposes.

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion from patrons concerning programming. Patron concerns about a Library program should be shared with the Library staff member in charge of the event. Patrons who wish to continue their requests for review of a program or the denial of a request to present a program may submit a Request for Review form. Requests for review of programs will be considered in the same procedural manner as requests for reconsideration of library materials. Patrons who disagree with the findings of a Review Committee may appeal the issue to the Director of Libraries, and then to the Library Board of Directors.

Library Programming Policy
Adopted July 2022
Revised January 2025
Amended January 2026