

Policy Name: **Public Programs #10.27**

Adoption Date: August 16, 2023

Supersedes: August 1981

BACKGROUND

Tacoma Public Library (TPL) offers programs to further the library's mission. Programming is a fundamental component of library service that aims to expand TPL's role as a cultural and community center, introduce attendees to library resources and materials, provide entertainment and learning opportunities, raise awareness and visibility of the library, and attract new library users.

POLICY

PROGRAMMING OVERVIEW

Tacoma Public Library programs shall support TPL's strategic priorities, collection of materials, services, resources, and community goals. In addition, programs serve the public's popular, recreational, informational, and social needs and reflect equitable outreach and engagement to a diverse community while promoting a culture of inclusion.

Library programs shall generally be voluntary, free, and open to the public. The Library supports free and open access to information and ideas. The Library provides programs to support each individual's journey and does not place a value on one customer's needs or preferences over another's. The Library upholds the right of the individual to access information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by presenters or participants. The Library does not sponsor programs that are purely commercial, partisan, or religious in nature.

The ultimate responsibility for programming rests with the Director. The Director may delegate this function to qualified staff members.

Library staff uses the following criteria in making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources:

- Advances the library's mission, vision, and values
- Relevance to the needs and interests of the community
- Availability of program space
- Presentation quality, presenter background/qualifications in the content area
- Budget
- Safety considerations
- Impact on operations and the capacity of internal staff

The Library draws upon community resources in developing programs and actively partners with local 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 programs; performers and presenters will not be excluded from consideration because of their origin, background, or views, or because of possible controversy. Library staff who present programs do so as part of their regular job and are not hired as outside contractors for programming.

Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited. Programs may be held on-site at any TPL location or off-site. The library is committed to ensuring access to all, and reasonable accommodations will be made to ensure people with disabilities may attend or participate. Any sales of products at Library programs must be approved by the Library Director or designee. External organizations or individuals partnering with TPL on programs must coordinate marketing efforts with our Public Information Office.

The Library reserves the right to not schedule a program and/or cancel a scheduled program. Canceled programs will not necessarily automatically be rescheduled.

TPL does not assume liability for injuries or damage to personal property that occur because of the actions of individuals, organizations, or community groups using library facilities for programming purposes or those attending programs at the library.

PUBLIC PROGRAM REQUEST APPEAL PROCESS

Appeals to any decisions made under this policy of a program may be submitted in writing to the Director or Assistant Library Director. Final decisions will be issued within 30 days of receipt of the reconsideration. The program in question will not be canceled or modified during the reconsideration process. Contact information for Library Administration can be found on tacomalibrary.org

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

This policy supports the following library strategic priorities:

Intellectual Freedom and the right to access information is a fundamental right. TPL is committed to cultivating an environment allowing all Tacoma residents to access information and resources representing their varied interests. TPL shall not censor programming or restrict individuals from participating in a meaningful learning experience due to the content of the information being shared, regardless of any controversial nature of the topic. As a public library, TPL is committed to fostering an environment that allows all community members to utilize its resources to every extent possible.

	<p>Equity and Access We are committed to racial equity and social justice. It guides our work in serving Tacoma’s diverse communities, especially the most vulnerable and underserved.</p>		<p>Cultivate and Engage Community We will be the center for connecting people, ideas, and places.</p>
x	<p>Learning, Creativity, and Innovation We will be the place for learning, discovery, and innovation. This policy guides our decision-making process when it comes to learning opportunities sponsored by the library</p>		<p>Responsible and Resilient We will be an integral partner in a sustainable network that supports a thriving Tacoma.</p>
	<p>Investment in Youth We believe that youth are the future and will prioritize services, programs, and partnerships that nurture and develop young minds.</p>		

POLICY HISTORY

Action	Date	Notes
New Version replacing the 1981 version	August 1981	
Board adopts revised version	August 16, 2023	