

Onondaga Free Library Challenged Materials Policy Procedure

The patron expresses concern about a particular work.

The patron is directed to the “Request for Reevaluation of a Library Resource” form to fill out and submit to the Library Director. This form specifically asks if this is material they themselves have read/seen or just something that they have heard about. It also asks if they are acting as individuals or making the challenge on behalf of an organization.

Upon receipt of the challenge, the Library Director will appoint a committee of three library professional staff members. The committee will consist of the Library Director, the staff member responsible for the selection of the book, and another staff member.

The committee will be given time to review the item(s), pertinent reviews, and state or national holding patterns. These are all important considerations. Often books that are called upon for challenge are speaking to/for a minority or marginalized populations.

The committee will meet and discuss before making a recommendation to the Library Director. The committee does not make the final decision, but makes a recommendation to the Library Director.

The Library Director reviews the committee’s recommendation and uses that as a basis to make a decision on the status of the item. They then communicate the decision and the reasons behind it to the patron who made the complaint. The decision will be made within 30 days of receipt of the “Request for Reevaluation of a Library Resource” form. The patron will be notified by letter via mail of the decision.

If the complainant is not satisfied, then an appeal may be made to the President of the Board of Trustees within 10 days of the date of the letter. The Board will then review the Library Director’s decision and determine if a hearing is merited. If they determine that a hearing is not necessary then the Library Director’s decision is final. If they have a hearing, then that determination is final. A time period of 45 days is required for resolution of an appeal.

- The item(s) under consideration are not removed from the shelves or taken out of circulation during the challenge process.
- The receipt and status of any materials challenges will be reported regularly at board meetings.
- The library will not convene a review committee relative to the same material for a period of 3 years.