

William B. Ogden Free Library
PROTEST POLICY

Purpose

People have a constitutional right to protest on the public sidewalk and other public spaces not controlled by the library. This policy aims to ensure the constitutional rights of members of the community to protest while also ensuring the safety of patrons and their right to utilize library resources without interference.

Procedure

- While the library grounds are considered property of the William B. Ogden Free Library (WBOFL), the library does allow people to protest peacefully as long as protestors do not interfere with patrons entering the library.
- The library is not a public square, and therefore does not allow any protest inside the library that interferes with patrons' quiet use and enjoyment of the library.
- The Library Director or designee will make every effort to communicate with leaders of the protest group(s) and maintain an open line of communication with them.
- If people are upset about a program or event being offered and want to organize a protest, library staff will:
 - Recognize concerns and take steps to address concerns with respectful and civil conversation.
 - Follow their reconsideration policy for programs, events, and speakers.
 - Carefully review any publicity to ensure that it describes the event properly.
 - Consult with law enforcement to ensure that staff and individuals attending or providing the program/event are safe.
- Group leader(s) will be asked to establish a tone of respect and civil discourse during the protest.
- Group leader(s) will also be reminded to consult with local government regarding the permitting process for any organized protest/demonstration
- WBOFL staff will notify law enforcement if a protest becomes violent, if there is the chance that a protest will become violent, if there are threats of violence, or if protestors interfere with patrons entering the library. When there is an early indication of multiple protest groups attending, the Library Director will consult local law enforcement about proper procedure. If there is any question of safety or sign that groups will clash, the Library Director will request local law enforcement support

Reference

For more information about the American Library Association's (ALA) guidance regarding protests and demonstrations, visit:

[https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/controversialprogramsqa.](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/controversialprogramsqa)

Adopted May 2024