

## **Governance and Organizational Structure**

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Policy development is essential to the work of the Bucks County Free Library (BCFL) Board of Directors, which is responsible for oversight of the full range of county library branch and system operations (24 P.S. § 4411).

The library's written policies:

- Articulate the philosophy and regulations for library services;
- Ensure that goals and objectives are accomplished in a consistent manner across all locations;
- And function as an information resource for board members, staff, library users, and others connected with the county library branches and library system.

#### **REGULATIONS**

##### **General**

The BCFL Board maintains a general policy review timeline to ensure that each BCFL policy is reviewed for potential updates or revisions every three years. However, changes in needs, conditions, purposes, and objectives may require revisions, deletions, or additions on an accelerated schedule, on an emergency basis or when necessary or needed.

Development of new policies or revisions may be suggested by any Board member, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or any Bucks County resident. Assignment of the CEO or Board member or members that will prepare a proposed policy or conduct the review (or initial review) of current policies for revision, on an emergency basis or when necessary or needed is within the discretion of the Board. It is also within the Board's discretion to take action or not take action, as it deems appropriate, with respect to suggested policies or suggested revisions.

In order to ensure that policies comply with the library code and applicable local, state, or federal laws and regulations, library policies are also subject to review by legal counsel at the discretion of the Board.

## Policy Adoption

All policies and revisions will be adopted only at regularly scheduled Board meetings and will require a majority vote of the Board to be adopted. Except for policy actions taken on an emergency basis, the adoption of Board policies will follow this sequence:

1. An announcement regarding the proposed or revised policy will be posted as an agenda item of a regularly scheduled Board meeting by the assigned Board member, Board committee or the CEO.
2. A first reading of the proposed or revised policy will take place at that meeting and copies will be provided to all Board members.
3. The Board's decision on whether to adopt a proposed or revised policy, generally, will be made at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting following the first reading of the proposed or revised policy. The Board at its discretion may choose to waive adoption and reschedule action for a future board meeting.
4. Proposed or revised policies will be made available to the Board and public no less than 30 days prior to the Board's decision concerning the policy's final approval. The proposed or revised policy will be made available to the general public on the Board page of the library's website not later than 7 days after the regularly scheduled meeting where it is announced and provided to the Board.
5. The Board will provide opportunities for public comment on proposed library policies and revisions both electronically on the library's website and during the public comment period of the regularly scheduled Board meetings at which the first reading occurs and at the meeting when the Board will vote on its adoption. The Board may respond, take action, or not take action as it deems appropriate with respect to a public comment.
6. Formal adoption of policies and revisions will be recorded in the minutes of the Board and will be effective immediately upon adoption unless a specific date is attached to the adopted resolution.
7. Decisions on rescinding any policy will follow the same process as adoption decisions.
8. On matters of urgency, the Board may waive the 30-day notice period and take immediate action to adopt new or revised policies at the first presentation. The agenda for the public meeting will reflect this waiver by the Board, unless an exception under the Sunshine Act applies.

## Types of Policies

The Board develops and maintains policies in the following areas:

- **Circulation (CIR)** policies document the parameters and operation of the library's Integrated Library System (ILS), which is used to manage borrower records and the flow of checkouts.
- **Collection Management (CM)** policies document how the library makes decisions about what belongs in the library's collections.
- **Customer Service (CUS)** policies outline the standards and expectations of how library staff interacts with and supports patrons and users of the library, as well as certain rights and responsibilities of patrons and users of BCFL's several branches.
- **Development (DEV)** policies govern how the library handles fundraising and donations.
- **Governance and Organizational Structure (GOV)** policies define the responsibilities of the board and document the library system's infrastructure.
- **Information and Group Services (ING)** policies outline basic parameters for library reference, programming, and technology services.
- **Management (MNG)** policies regulate the day-to-day internal operations of the library, including finance, facilities, and human resources.

## Policy Format

All policies are documented in a standard format, numbered according to policy type, and include the original approval date, latest revision date, and year of the next review. BCFL policies include the following elements:

- A policy statement that articulates the philosophy and goals behind the policy
- Definitions of terms used in the policy if any are used in a special sense
- Regulations or rules applicable to enforcing the policy

*Procedures* are steps for employees to follow in enforcing a policy. *Guidelines* are recommended processes or ideals for staff to consider in determining the best way to achieve service goals. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, procedures and guidelines are established and enforced by the CEO in consultation with staff and, generally, are not subject to the Board process for policy review and approval.

## **Policy Distribution**

All library policies are posted on the library's staff website. Policies in the following areas are posted on the library's public website:

### **Circulation (CIR)**

- Library Cards
- Borrowing & Renewing
- Fines and Fees
- Lost or Damaged Materials
- Claims Returned or Never Had
- Holds
- Inter-Library Loan
- Material Recovery

### **Customer Service (CUS)**

- Library Behavior
- Unattended Children

### **Development (DEV)**

- Fundraising and Donations
- Gifts of Library Materials
- Use of Patron Data in Library Advancement

### **Governance**

- Policy Development
- Public Comment

### **Information and Group Services (ING)**

- Programming
- Computer and Acceptable Internet Use
- Social Media

### **Management (MNG)**

- Collection Management
- Privacy & Confidentiality of Library Records
- Inclement Weather and Closing
- Meeting Rooms
- Photography, Filming, and Audio Recording
- Security Cameras
- Study Rooms
- Volunteers

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