



4024 Guilford Center Road Guilford Vermont 05301-8454 802-257-4603

## **Guilford Free Library By-Laws and Policies Revised 6/20/2026**

### **1. Mission Statement**

In a small, informal, user-friendly setting, the Guilford Free Library nurtures the life-long learning and reading interests of residents of the town of Guilford and the surrounding rural towns. The library is also a center of cultural life for Guilford.

### **Policies**

#### **2. Borrowers**

- A. The library will serve all residents of the community (that is the town of Guilford and adjacent areas.) Service will not be denied or abridged because of religious, racial, social, economic, or political status.
- B. Service and loan privileges will be denied only for due cause as determined by the librarians. Due cause may include misuse of library materials or the building, negligence in returning materials when due, or failure to make proper restitution for lost or damaged materials.
- C. Any adult resident and all children may borrow books and other materials for a period of one month, renewable for another month with the consent of the librarian at the desk. Teachers in the Guilford Central School may borrow materials for classroom use for one month, renewable upon request.
- D. No one shall remove any library material without the knowledge and consent of the librarian. The materials are the property of the Guilford Free Library, and the librarians are the custodians of that property.
- E. While it is our policy at this time not to charge for overdue books, patrons are expected to return books on time.
- F. Borrowing privileges may be curtailed if materials are not returned within three months from the due date, after due notice has been given.
- G. All materials except reference books and local history books, those in special demand or that cannot be duplicated, including rare and fragile items, will be lent for home use under library regulations and procedures.
- H. The library will not be used for any of the following:
  - a. Political advertising, by party or candidate

- b. Cash donations boxes of any sort (except for library purposes)
- c. Sale of commercial products, except for charitable purposes, specifically authorized by the librarians or trustees.
- d. Signing of petitions, except as specifically authorized by the librarians or trustees.

### **3. Building use by outside groups**

The inside and outside of the Library are available for programs and meetings that are cultural, informational, and recreational which are free of charge and open to the public. No petitions, political or commercial, nor any charitable solicitations, unless library related, shall be permitted. The Library reserves the right to refer to the Board of Trustees decisions regarding programs/meetings. Individuals or groups denied access have the right to appeal to the Library Trustees. Programs/meetings must be scheduled with the librarians to avoid conflict with library services and ensure the space is available.

In accordance with the ALA Bill of Rights, which assures that the resources of the library are made available on an equitable basis, regardless of the benefits or affiliations of the individuals requesting their use, the program/meeting facilities of the library are available on a first come, first serve basis, provided that such programs/meetings do not conflict with regular library services.

Use of the library does not imply library endorsement or sponsorship.

If the library sponsors an event, the library is responsible for publicizing and overseeing the event. If the event is initiated by a person or group other than the library, then this individual or group is responsible for publicizing and overseeing the event.

Full library services are only available during open hours.

Adopted 2/26/2026

### **4. Hours**

The library hours may change from time to time as the librarian and trustees deem necessary to be in the best interests of the community or library resources.

### **5. Confidentiality of Records**

As a public library we report the library status each year at Town Meeting.

We keep all circulation records in confidence and we do not identify the names of Library users with any specific material. Our relationship with the users is strictly confidential in nature. Nothing shall be made available to any agency of the government, whether state, federal or

local, unless we are compelled to do so under the process of law. We will resist such encroachment on the Library's powers until a ruling has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction, as stated in the policy of the Council of the American Library Association.

## **6. Selection Policy**

The authority for selection of books and/or specific materials rests with the Librarian, within the framework of the following:

- A. The librarian uses his or her judgment and expertise, enhanced by an understanding of our community needs, from the pre-school child through the adult.
- B. The selection and withdrawal of library materials should meet the needs of the community, and should be in keeping with the allotment for the annual budget, except for large purchase items such as furnishings and equipment, which must be approved by the Board of Trustees.
- C. Special collections such as VT authors, local history and rare items, will be decided on by the Librarian and Trustees.
- D. We also support and abide by the materials selections policies of the Vermont Department of Libraries.

## **7. Censorship**

Materials serving the purposes of the library and relating to an existing need or interest will not be removed from the collection because of pressure by groups of individuals expressing disapproval.

Children have free access to all library materials. It is deemed the responsibility of parents to determine what their children, and only their own children may read. The selection of materials will not be restricted by the possibility that young people may obtain materials which their parents consider inappropriate.

## **8. Procedure for Patron Complaints About Library Materials**

- A. Inform the complainant of the selection procedures.
- B. If the complainant wishes further consideration of their objection to the library material, they will be requested to submit a formal "Request for reconsideration of library materials"
- C. Inform the library Board of Trustees, and other appropriate personnel.
- D. The challenged materials will be kept on the shelves during the reconsideration process.
- E. Upon receipt of the completed form, the Library Director requests review of the challenged material by the trustees within 30 working days.
- F. The trustees will take the following steps after receiving the patron's complaint:
  - a. Read, view or listen to the material in its entirety

- b. Check general acceptance of the material by reading reviews and consulting recommended reading lists and book awards announcements, if available
- c. Determine the value of the material to the library
- d. Complete an appropriate review of the material judging it for its strength and value as a whole and not in part.
- e. In the event a library user wishes to protest the inclusion of a particular item in the collection, they must submit a written complaint. This form should be completed in full and submitted to the librarian, who will refer it to the Board of Trustees with a recommendation for appropriate action. The written decision of the trustees is presented to the complainant and to the Library Director.

## **9. Acceptance of Gifts**

### PURPOSE

To clarify how the Guilford Free Library will accept gifts and donations, and how they will be used; to clarify when a vote of the Board of Trustees is needed to approve acceptance of gifts.

### STATEMENT OF POLICY

#### A. Gift Acceptance Overview

The Guilford Free Library is pleased to accept monetary gifts as well as donations of materials and in-kind services. Donations enable the Guilford Free Library to acquire materials and offer resources and services which it could not have provided otherwise.

The Guilford Free Library reserves the right to decline any gift that interferes with its ability to fulfill its mission, that unduly encumbers the Library, or that is determined to not be in the best interest of the Library.

#### B. Monetary Donations

The Guilford Free Library receives monetary donations via two main avenues:

1. First are donations received via fundraising efforts by the Library's Board of Trustees. This includes an annual year-end appeal and other occasional fundraising activities. The monies raised in this way are generally intended to be allocated toward the annual operating budget of the Library.
2. Second are all other gifts to the Guilford Free Library, including bequests, memorial contributions, and donations of money or financial instruments. Unless advised otherwise by the donor, these gifts are assumed to be intended to enhance the Library's ability to provide services and shall therefore be considered supplements to current or future operating budgets, not substitutes for any portion of income in those budgets.

#### C. Donations of Physical Materials

The Library will accept donations of books and other materials at the discretion of the Library Director. Once accepted, such physical materials become the property of the Guilford Free Library. The Library Director, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, shall determine whether to add them to the collection, donate them, or sell them for the benefit of the Library.

The Guilford Free Library will not accept any gift if the condition of acceptance requires permanent exhibition of the item or requires that the material be kept together.

Except for temporary exhibit purposes the Library will not accept storage responsibilities for historical documents or objects owned or controlled by groups or individuals.

The Guilford Free Library cannot appraise the value of a donation of materials or art. The Library may issue the donor a letter acknowledging what was donated, but it is up to the donor to utilize an independent appraiser or other means to determine its value and tax-deductible status for his or her particular circumstances.

#### D. Donations Requiring Board of Trustees Approval

A majority vote by the Guilford Free Library Board of Trustees is required for the following types of gifts:

- a. Gifts with donor restrictions or requests to direct or earmark the gift for a specific purchase, project, or program.
- b. Gift of art or other appraisable valuables that will encumber the Guilford Free Library either financially or administratively.
- c. Securities that are not readily marketable. These may include closely held stock, limited partnership interest, joint venture interests and other forms of investment that may not fall into the marketable securities category.
- d. Real estate. Every proposed gift of real estate must be examined on its individual merits, including, but not limited to the title to the property, its insurability, the results of environmental investigations and marketability. A current appraisal completed by a qualified appraiser must be provided by the donor. All real estate gifts must also be approved by the Selectboard of the Town of Guilford.
- e. Any other gifts of value not specifically referenced herein.

#### E. Donor Restrictions

In general, the Guilford Free Library prefers unrestricted gifts as they allow greater flexibility in fulfilling the mission of the Library. If a donor wishes to request that their gifts be restricted and used for specific purposes, they are encouraged to speak with the Library Director or a Library Trustee. The Guilford Free Library will honor such requests when it is in the best interest of the library as determined and voted

on by the Board of Trustees. Monetary donations for specific book purchases, including those made in memorial or to honor named individuals, will be accepted subject to the approval of the Library Director. The Library retains the right to determine the appropriate use of any gift or to refuse any gift which is not in the best interest of the Library's mission. Restricted gifts should be accompanied by a *Restricted Gift Agreement Form* (See Form B).

F. Bequests

Bequests to the Guilford Free Library represent a vital source of support in ensuring the continuing vitality of the library for future generations. Anyone considering naming the Guilford Free Library as a beneficiary in their estate is encouraged to discuss their plans with the Library Director or a Library Trustee. When possible, it is helpful for bequests to be accompanied by an *Unrestricted Gift Agreement Form* or *Restricted Gift Agreement Form*, signed by the Donor and the Chairperson of the Guilford Free Library Board of Trustees (See Forms A and B).

A) Unrestricted Gift Agreement Form

This document is general in nature and does not represent a rendering of legal advice. Prospective donors are urged to consult their personal tax, legal and financial advisors concerning the specific consequences of making gifts to the Guilford Free Library.

Unrestricted gifts provide the Guilford Free Library with the option to designate funds to the most pressing needs at a given time.

I hereby give, bequest and devise to the Guilford Free Library, a municipal library located at 4024 Guilford Center Road, Guilford, Vermont the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ USD or the property described as:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ for use in furthering the charitable purposes of the Guilford Free Library.

Date                      Donor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date                      Guilford Free Library Board of Trustees Chairperson  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

B) Restricted Gift Agreement Form

This document is general in nature and does not represent a rendering of legal advice. Prospective donors are urged to consult their personal tax, legal and financial advisors concerning the specific consequences of making gifts to Guilford Free Library.

Restricted gifts may be designated for a specific intent, subject to the approval and acceptance of the Guilford Free Library Board of Trustees. We kindly request that you consult with the Guilford Free Library before designating a purpose for your bequest.

I hereby give, bequest and devise to the Guilford Free Library, a municipal library located at 4024 Guilford Center Road, Guilford, Vermont the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ USD or the property described as:

for the purposes of

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I empower the Guilford Free Library Board of Trustees to alter the application of the restricted gifts as they deem most appropriate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Donor Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Guilford Free Library Board of Trustees Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

*Revised 6-20-2026*

## **10. Interlibrary Loan Policy**

- A. The Librarian may loan books to other libraries in the state for their use of their members without charge, and to out-of-state libraries for the price of the mailing fees. These loans will be subject to the rules and regulations of the Guilford Free Library.
- B. Materials not available from the present collection may be requested by the patron through the Catamount Library Network or inter-library-loan. Any fees charged by the lending library will be the sole responsibility of the patron, as well as restitution for lost or damaged items.

## **11. Internet Access and Use Policy**

- A. **Mission Statement:** Internet access at Guilford Free Library is an extension of the library's commitment to meeting the community's information needs. In addition to using the Internet as an information resource, the library also seeks to provide the opportunity for Internet use, with limitation, to members of the public.
- B. **Acceptable Use:** The Guilford Free Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. The Internet is a world-wide community with a highly diverse user population and it is the patron's responsibility to use this resource wisely.

Internet resources accessible through the Library are provided equally to all library users. Parents or guardians, not the Library or its staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected and/or accessed by their children.

The Internet workstations must be used in a responsible manner, respecting the right of others, and taking care with use of the equipment. Computer and Internet settings may not be changed. You may download/save information to your USB drive, but not to the library computer.

The workstations cannot be used for any fraudulent or unlawful purpose, including any activities prohibited under any applicable federal, Vermont, or local laws.

Please be aware that material on the Internet and the World Wide Web is copyrighted. It is the patron's responsibility to be aware of the display of any notices concerning the copyright of information on the Web and to respect the copyright laws of the United States.

The Town of Guilford is committed to providing an environment free from sexual harassment. Do not display on screens and/or printers materials which may be objectionable.

### **C. Guidelines for Public Internet Use**

- A. Computer use by a patron may be limited to 30 minutes at a time.
- B. Extension of the time limit may be granted at the librarian's discretion and only if the computer does not need to be accessed by other patrons or library staff for the Internet or other resources.
- C. Printing may be done. There is a fee of ten cents (\$.10) per page for printing.
- D. Internet access may not be available due to technical problems.
- E. Guilford Free Library cannot be responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information found on the Internet.
- F. Internet access will be denied to anyone breaching this use policy.

The Internet is an unregulated medium. Although it is a valuable tool for accessing information, the Internet also provides access to information that is inaccurate, illegal or that some may find disturbing. The Library does not control a user's access to Internet sites. Library computers are not filtered, and the Library will not monitor content, nor deny or limit access, except when a clear violation of this policy has occurred.

*adopted 4/11/2000, revised 11/15/21*

## **12. Areas of Special Concern**

Textbooks are not generally purchased, except in cases when suitable material is not readily available in other forms. The public library collection should serve as a complement to the resources

already available to students and should enrich their resources for personal interest or individual projects.

The library does not attempt to develop a comprehensive research collection in any one field, with the exception of local history. Books of a highly technical or specialized nature are inappropriate to the general needs of the library community.

An attempt is made to acquire authoritative material representing all points of view and all sides of controversial issues. The library does not promote particular beliefs or views, but instead presents quality materials containing opposing views for examination by the public. The presence of an item in the library does not indicate endorsement of its content by the library.

The library will resist efforts to force inclusion of proselytizing works representing political, economic, moral, religious, or other vested positions when these materials do not conform to the selection policies.

In no case should any material be excluded from the collection because of the race, nationality, sexual orientation, political or religious views of the author.

The library will strive to initiate whatever programs and materials necessary to stimulate the use of the library for the enlightenment of people of all ages.

A periodic review of our services will be made to determine whether the needs of the community indicate that present services should be discontinued or added.

We recognize that no single library can meet all the demands of the community, and will be alert to opportunities of cooperation with other libraries to strengthen our resources.

### **13. Personnel Policies**

#### **A. Hours and Days**

The Librarian will be paid for the number of hours per week as determined by the trustees. Extra hours will be at the Librarian's discretion and with the understanding that they will only be paid as the budget permits. Volunteers may be asked to staff the library at other times as the librarian deems necessary to serve the community more fully.

#### **B. Leaves**

Should the Librarian require time off for personal reasons, and a volunteer is not available, a member of the library board volunteers his or her time, and the Librarian retains their salary.

When it is necessary for the Librarian to visit the State Library on business for the Guilford Library, they will receive extra payment for these trips.

On days when the library would be normally open and the librarian attends lectures and courses given by the State Library, no deduction

is made from their salary, and a board member or volunteer takes over the duties at the library.

C. Grievances

If there are any grievances, the Librarian contacts the Chairman of the Board, who after discussing the problem with the other trustees, takes appropriate action.

D. Dues and Other Fees

The library pays the Librarian's dues to the Vermont Library Association, and fees to attend the VLA Conference.

E. The Board of Trustees accepts the responsibility to secure the funds for staff needed to administer the library's objectives.

F. Volunteers must possess qualities to fit the need of the task. The librarian decides which volunteers will be accepted.

- a. The Board will make provision for other library needs such as maintenance, clearing walks, grooming lawns, and pre-heating the library building when necessary.

#### **14. Holidays To Be Observed**

The Librarian is paid if the library is closed on these holidays: New Year's Day, President's Day, Town Meeting Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day.

The Library will close during inclement weather.

#### **15. Governance**

A. The Library is governed by a Board of 7 Trustees, each one of whom serves six years. One trustee is elected each year at the annual Town Meeting. Trustees reorganization meeting is the first meeting after Town Meeting.

B. The Library Board meets the third Monday of each month, and more often if the occasion demands.

C. Each meeting is to be announced in accordance with the open meeting law.

#### **16. Policy Revision**

Policies may be reviewed and revised at any monthly meeting of the Library Board of Trustees. Once a year, the policies are reviewed and discussed.

Adopted at Guilford, Vermont

16 Feb 2026

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Amber Hunt, Librarian

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Laura Lawson Tucker, co-chair

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Judith Serkin, co-chair

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Jeannette Tokarz

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Emma Hallowell

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Meghan Ohrstrom

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Josh Nelson

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John Shaw, Treasurer