

310. POLICY ON SOLICITING ON LIBRARY PROPERTY

To fulfill its mission, the Seekonk Public Library must ensure that all users can freely access the building and quietly enjoy the services it provides. In addition, the library has an obligation to mitigate potential threats to the safety of those visiting the library. Free, unimpeded, and safe access to the library building and its grounds is a necessary precondition for meeting these obligations.

The library prohibits all active solicitations in areas immediately adjacent to the entrances to the library building and parking lot. The library also prohibits active solicitations within the building and on library grounds unless it is a library function, or an activity related to fundraising for the library. Active solicitation refers to any person-to-person communication for the purposes of (1) obtaining contributions and donations, (2) selling merchandise, coupons, or tickets, (3) collecting signatures (4) distributing educational or promotional materials, and (5) recruiting members or clients. Unless an activity is defined elsewhere in this policy, the library director shall determine whether a solicitation is active or passive, and if an activity is permissible under this policy.

Solicitation of signatures for petitions to gain ballot access is not defined as active solicitation for the purposes of this policy. The Seekonk Public Library permits people to solicit voter's signatures for nomination papers and ballot referendums and initiatives in all areas of the library and on its grounds that are normally open to the public as long as the solicitation is done in a reasonable and unobtrusive manner. People may also personally distribute literature related to a person's candidacy or a ballot referendum or initiative when soliciting signatures. The Board of Library Trustees authorizes the library director to establish reasonable rules as to the time, place and manner of this type of solicitation. The passive solicitation and collection of donations by community-based, non-profit organizations is permitted. Public bulletin boards and collections bins in the lobby may be available for this purpose. Use of these resources is subject to the rules established by the library director. The library shall also designate a visible location within the building where the public may leave petitions and related literature. The library assumes no responsibility for petitions or donated items left at the library.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as preventing the sale of publications, artwork, or recordings by writers, artists or performers who have been engaged by the library for a presentation or performance. The terms and conditions of these sales shall be stated as part of the written agreement between the library and the presenter or performer.

The Board of Trustees authorizes the library director to make appropriate rules and procedures to enforce this policy. The director's decisions are subject to review by the Board of Trustees under the library's appeal procedures.

This policy replaces in its entirety the Library's Lobby Policy that was adopted on August 15, 1990.

Date Approved: 1/16/2013

Amended: 1/17/24

Last Reviewed: 2/12/25