

Thomas Memorial Library
Petition and Passive Engagement Policy

Purpose and Goals

The Thomas Memorial Library, as a “limited public forum” has the authority to make reasonable rules that are universally applicable regarding the allowed use of the library buildings and property, including content-neutral restriction of conduct involving petition gathering, passing out literature, and other passive engagement. The public sidewalks on and around library property are a traditional public forum subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions on those wishing to use them for purposes protected by the First Amendment. As such, the library allows such petition and passive engagement outside of our facilities. It is expected that petitioners/individuals engaging in these activities will conduct themselves with civility and respect toward library visitors and staff.

Guidelines

- Petitioning, leafleting, and passive citizen engagement initiatives designed to contact, survey, gather signatures, share information, and inform citizens about various topics may stand on library property, however, they may not engage in such activities inside the library building.
- Petitioners/individuals conducting such activity shall be at least ten feet (10’) from the library’s public entrances.
- Petitioners/individuals shall not block, hinder, interfere or otherwise impede patrons and staff wishing to exit or enter the building or utilize the book drop.
- Petitioners/individuals must adhere to the library’s Use Policy for behavior and may not actively pursue, harass or intimidate library patrons or staff. Individuals who are reported to engage in improper behavior may be asked to leave the premises.
- Petitioners/individuals shall not occupy areas designated by the Fire Department as fire or emergency lanes.
- Petitioners/individuals shall not occupy parking spaces or disrupt the flow of vehicular traffic by standing in traffic lanes, drop off areas, or entrances.
- Petitioners/individuals shall not use sound amplification and/or other equipment.
- No monies or donations may be collected, solicited, or accepted.
- No leafleting or distribution of literature, or solicitation is permitted for the purposes of selling items, merchandise, tickets, or other for-profit activities.
- Individuals engaging in petitioning, leafleting, and passive citizen engagement initiatives shall inform the Library Director during normal business hours of their desire and intent to engage in such activities.
- The individual or group petitioning or conducting similar citizen initiatives is responsible for the information presented. Use of library property does not imply that the Thomas Memorial Library or the Town of Cape Elizabeth endorses the purposes, policies, or contents of the organization, group, or individual.

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Revised: November, 2021

Voted for recommendation of approval by the TML Committee on: November 18, 2021

Amended by the Town Council Effective Date: January 10, 2022

Adopted by the Town Council Effective Date: January 10, 2022

Policy Review: This policy shall be reviewed at least every five (5) years