



HAMILTON EAST PUBLIC LIBRARY

Petitions, Electioneering, and Leafleting Policy The Hamilton East Public Library

This policy provides guidance for Hamilton East Public Library staff, members of the Board of Trustees, Library volunteers and members of the public with respect to petitions, electioneering, and leafleting. For the purposes of this policy, electioneering is defined in Indiana Code § 3-14-3-16.

The Hamilton East Public Library has the authority to make reasonable rules that are universally applicable regarding the allowed use of Library buildings and property, including content-neutral restriction of conduct involving passing out literature and the collection of signatures for petitions. The sidewalks around the Library 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 of the United States Constitution. As such, the Library allows people to circulate petitions, electioneer for political candidates, and distribute literature outside Library facilities subject to the following rules and regulations:

- Persons circulating petitions for signatures or leafleting may stand on Library property; however, they may not engage in collecting signatures, electioneering activity or distributing leaflets inside the Library building.
- Electioneering for political candidates is limited to the dates and times that the Library serves as an active polling location.
- Campaign materials and signs may be displayed by political candidates on Library property 12 hours before polls open on election day when the Library is used as a polling place subject to legal guidelines governing such displays. Signs must be removed four hours after polls close or they may be destroyed.
- Petition circulating, electioneering or leafleting must take place outside the Library building and at least a fifty-foot (50') radius from entrances and exits of the room in which voting is taking place. Blocking entrances and exits to the building is prohibited.
- Persons circulating petitions, electioneering for political candidates, or leafleting shall not block, hinder, interfere, or otherwise impede patrons and staff wishing to enter or exit the Library building or to use book returns, nor seek to intimidate, pressure or harass patrons or staff into signing a petition, accepting electioneering materials, or accepting a leaflet.
- Persons circulating petitions, electioneering, or leafleting shall not stand in parking spaces or other areas designated as fire or emergency lanes.



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- Leaflets are prohibited from being placed on vehicles in Library lots.
- The use of sound amplification equipment is prohibited.
- Persons circulating petitions, electioneering, or leafleting are not permitted to erect tables or chairs, or affix signs to Library property.
- Only one person at a time is permitted to solicit signatures for a single petition.
- No leafleting or distribution of literature, or solicitation is permitted, except as allowed by Indiana Code for Election purposes. Panhandling is prohibited on Library property, as well as collecting monies or donations, for any purpose, other than Library approved activities or programming.
- Any person wishing to solicit signatures for a petition shall inform Library Administration at least 24 hours in advance and provide their name, address, and a copy of the petition to Library Administration.
- Library Staff, Friends of the Library, Library Foundation Board Members and members of the Library Board of Trustees are exempt from the above constraints **while** promoting Library activities and issues.

Persons who fail to comply with this and other general Library policies or with any of the above rules and regulations will be asked to leave the Library premises and may be barred from the right to circulate petitions or distribute leaflets in the future.

The Library will not assume responsibility for any harm or injury suffered by persons circulating petitions, electioneering for candidates, or distributing leaflets, or by those who are signing a petition or receiving electioneering materials or leaflets.

The presence of persons circulating petitions, electioneering for candidates, or distributing leaflets outside the Library does not constitute the Library's endorsement of any candidate, nor does it constitute support or opposition of the subject matter of any petition or leaflet.

Approved by Hamilton East Public Library Board of Trustees August 2024