

Washington Parish Library

Patron Grievance Procedures

For the purposes of this procedure, a patron grievance is a formal complaint submitted by a member of the public regarding library services, policies, facilities, or staff conduct. The patron grievance process provides a structured method for reviewing and addressing concerns raised by library users in a fair and consistent manner.

Informal Resolution

Whenever possible, patrons are encouraged to address concerns directly with library staff at the time the issue occurs. Many concerns can be resolved quickly through informal discussion with the staff member providing service or with the staff member on duty.

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, or if the patron prefers not to raise the issue directly with staff, the patron may submit a formal complaint.

Level One: Branch Management

Formal complaints may be submitted to branch management in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, or *through the library's website*.

When submitting a complaint, patrons should provide:

- Full name and contact information
- A description of the concern
- Relevant details regarding the incident or issue

- The outcome or resolution being requested

Branch management will review the complaint and provide a response within five (5) business days, whenever possible.

Complaints concerning branch management or headquarters staff should be directed to the Assistant Director.

Complaints concerning the Assistant Director should be directed to the Library Director.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response received at this stage, they may appeal the decision to the Library Director.

Level Two: Library Director

Upon appeal, the Library Director will review the complaint and any previous responses.

The review process may include:

- Reviewing documentation submitted by the complainant
- Contacting the complainant for clarification or additional information
- Meeting with staff members involved to gather relevant information

The Library Director will determine whether the complaint is substantiated based on the information available and determine the appropriate resolution.

The complainant will receive a written response within ten (10) business days, whenever possible.

Complaint documentation will be maintained in a confidential administrative file and retained in accordance with the Library's records retention policies.

The Library reserves the right to discontinue review of complaints that contain abusive language, threats, or repeated submissions of previously resolved issues.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the Director's response, they may appeal the decision to the Library Board of Control.

Level Three: Library Board of Control

If a complainant appeals the Director's decision, the matter may be submitted to the Library Board of Control for review.

Complaints concerning the Library Director should be directed to the Library Board and will follow the same review process.

The Board may review the complaint, supporting documentation, and the administrative response. At the discretion of the Board, the complainant may be permitted to present information.

After review, the Library Board of Control will issue a final determination.

The decision of the Board is final.