LS 209 Kotler Art Gallery

Section: 200-Public Services
Effective: June 2026

Purpose

The Kotler Art Gallery supports the Library's mission, presents public access to art, and provides a space for artists to display their work. This policy defines, establishes, and communicates the intent and criteria related to temporary exhibitions.

Policy

With final approval from the Director of Library Services, the Fine Arts Program Coordinator evaluates potential use of gallery spaces based on criteria or guidelines, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Suitability of subject: Art displayed should be appropriate in material, form, and content for the library environment and for all ages.
- Experience or knowledge of exhibiting artwork in a public space or institution.
- Capacity to meet deadlines and ability to work with a variety of library staff.

Preference is given to artists/organizations that are based in Hillsborough County or primarily serve Hillsborough County residents.

The Kotler Art Gallery is limited to rotating customer exhibitions and a permanent Burgert Brothers Photographic Collection display. Library employees are not eligible to show work in the Kotler Gallery as individual exhibitors. Customer exhibitions are provided for free and based on space availability. Applications are reviewed throughout the year on a first-come, first-serve basis. Exhibits can be booked up to one year ahead of the exhibit date. Library staff cannot provide physical assistance in installing and deinstalling artworks.

Art displays do not constitute a limited public forum or a Public Forum. The gallery's exhibitions will be publicized in the library's events calendar. Exhibitors are required to sign an indemnity agreement prior to setting up their exhibit. The library assumes no responsibility for loss or damage to exhibited and/or stored items.

Customer concerns or complaints about art display areas will be handled in the following manner: The customer should first seek resolution from the Branch Manager. If unsatisfied with the response of the Branch Manager, the customer may seek resolution from the Regional Manager. If unsatisfied with the response, the customer may send a letter to the Library Director requesting review of the art display. The letter must be received no later than 15 days after the initial complaint to the branch or department supervisor. The Director of Libraries or designee appoints a panel to review the customer's complaint. This panel should consist of two managers and a representative of the Friends of the Library.

The panel reviews the exhibit, the customer's letter, and any relevant policies and informs the customer in writing of their decision within 15 days of receipt of the customer's letter of complaint., the customer may appeal the panel's decision by letter to the Director within 7 days. The Director reviews the panel's decision and responds to the customer in writing. Within 7 days of receipt of the Library Director's decision, the customer may send a letter of appeal to the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library Board. The Library Board reviews the decision at their next regularly scheduled Board meeting and informs the customer of their decision in writing. The decision of the Library Board is final.

Procedure

Priority should be given to works of art that meet criteria cited in this policy, but exceptions can be made for traveling exhibits with the approval of the Director.

The standard exhibition time frame is two to four months. In order to exhibit in Kotler Art Gallery, Library staff must receive a completed application from the party requesting to exhibit. Selected exhibitors will receive written confirmation of the time reserved and exhibit terms/conditions along with a copy of this policy and the Indemnity Agreement which must be signed before an exhibition can be set up. Library-owned items do not require indemnity agreements in order to be exhibited at the Library.

The library assumes no responsibility for loss of, or damage to items exhibited. Artists are responsible for hanging their own works. The Library will provide suitable materials to be used during the installation. All artwork must be display-ready (framed or mounted in finished form). Price tags may not be displayed. Staff may keep business cards and price lists for the artist(s) at the reference desk. Artist provided identification labels generally cannot be affixed to the building walls but can be attached to the frames of the artwork.