

Collection Development Policy

Purpose Statement

The Library Board of the Jefferson Public Library has adopted the following collection development policy to guide librarians and inform the public about the principles used to select materials.

Goals of Collection Development

Staff develops and manages the library's collection to meet the majority of the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of those in the library's service area. The library builds and maintains a patron-oriented collection by anticipating and responding to community needs and expectations.

Responsibility for Selection

Responsibility for the selection of materials lies with library staff designated by the Library Director, operating within the policies of the Library Board. Other staff members and the general public may suggest materials for consideration.

General Principles for Collection Development

The Library Board affirms the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements in support of acquiring and managing collections. These documents can be located on the Jefferson Public Library website for viewing.

Note: "Materials" has the broadest possible meaning. It includes, but is not limited to, print, audiovisual, and electronic formats.

It is the responsibility of the library to provide circulating, reference, and research material for the general public. When indicated by community interest, the library will develop and maintain special collections such as genealogy, local history, career information, and municipal documents.

Staff make collection decisions in accordance with the library's mission and planning documents. Collection decisions position the library as the preferred partner for lifelong learning, embracing diversity, incorporating both physical and virtual collections, committing to excellence in service, improving effectiveness, and removing barriers.

Staff contribute to the development of patron-oriented collections by:

- Engaging in open, continuous communication with library patrons.
- Handling all requests equitably.
- Working with one another to understand and respond to community needs.

- Understanding and responding to changing demographics and societal changes.
- Evolving the collection to reflect current electronic and audiovisual formats.
- Recognizing that materials of varying complexities and formats are necessary to satisfy the diverse needs of library users.
- Balancing individual needs and broader community needs in determining the best allocation of collection budget.
- Seeking continuous improvement through ongoing measurement.
- Reviewing the collection regularly to ensure it reflects current areas of community interest.
- Preserving local history materials as appropriate.

A balanced collection attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues as far as materials, space, and budget allow. The race, religion, nationality, or political views of an author or creator; language; depictions of violence or sexual activity; controversial content; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group does not result in the automatic inclusion or exclusion of an item from the library's collection. The library may select materials that some patrons may find objectionable, and might omit materials some patrons feel are important. In either case, the library has procedures for requesting the purchase or reconsideration of materials.

Responsibility for children's choice of library materials rests solely with their parent or legal guardian. Staff's selection decisions shall not be inhibited by the possibility that some materials could come into the possession of children.

Selection Criteria

Selection is based on the merits of a work in relation to the needs, interests, and demands of the community.

Staff follow these principles when selecting materials:

- Contemporary significance or permanent value.
- Accuracy of content.
- Authority of the author/creator.
- Relation of the work to the existing collection.
- Price, format, and ease of use.
- Scarcity of information in the subject area.
- Availability of material elsewhere in the community and Library System.
- Patron requests and the authority of the requestor.
- Popular demand: The library should provide materials for enlightenment and recreation even if they are not of enduring value or interest. Staff will purchase a representative sampling of experimental or ephemeral material, but will not attempt to be exhaustive.
- Duplication of materials already in the collection: Purchase of additional copies of materials should be governed by intrinsic or historical value and popular demand.

- Textbooks and curriculum materials are generally not the responsibility of the library. Staff may purchase textbooks or supplemental materials for the collection when they represent the best, or only, source of information on a subject.

Gifts and Donations

All gifts to the Library are subject to the Gifts and Donations Policy.

A gift for the library collection may consist of materials or funds. The library encourages monetary gifts that are not earmarked for specific items in order to permit the most flexible use of the donation for the enrichment of the collection.

Gift additions must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. If the library receives an offer of a gift of marginal value, staff consider processing costs and use of shelf space when accepting or declining the gift.

The library will not affix a value for income tax purposes to any gift accepted; rather this is the responsibility of the donor. The library will, however, upon request, acknowledge the gift by letter, and specify the type, quantity, condition, etc. of the gift for the donor's records.

Gifts that are not added to the library's collection but that are in suitable condition shall be forwarded to the Friends of the Jefferson Public Library, or to other organizations when the Library Director deems it appropriate. Any items unsold by the Friends of the Library may then be donated to another organization or discarded.

Replacement

A replacement is an item purchased to take the place of an identical title previously in the collection of which the last copy has been withdrawn.

It is the library's policy not to automatically replace all books withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear. Need for replacement in each case is judged by two factors:

1. Existence of adequate coverage in the item's field by similar material.
2. Demand for the specific title.

Binding & Mending

Keeping materials in good physical condition is essential. Staff shall decide how to handle worn materials —whether to mend, bind, or withdraw them. Each decision is based on the physical condition of the book, current validity of its contents, availability for reorder, and cost of binding versus replacement.

Replacement is preferable to binding if costs are comparable. Binding is preferable to mending if a title is expected to have long-term usefulness. Mending is done only when need is detected early, except in special cases.

Weeding

Weeding is the withdrawal of items no longer suitable or useful in the collection. Weeding is a thorough, conscientious, and continuous effort to achieve a well-balanced and up-to-date collection. The library bases its weeding decisions on a number of factors, including physical condition, publishing date, frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer, more current, and/or more accurate materials. Local history materials are an exception, as are certain classic and/or award-winning materials, and materials by local authors.

Recommendation and Reconsideration of Library Materials

The public has a right to request materials to be added to the collection and to question materials currently in the collection. Recommendation and reconsideration request forms are available at the Jefferson Public Library or on the library's website.

Reconsideration of Materials

The Jefferson Public Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this collection policy.

Library patrons' choice of library materials is an individual matter. While an individual may reject materials for themselves, they cannot exercise censorship by restricting access to the materials by others.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be sequestered, except to protect it from damage or theft.

Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that these items may come into the possession of children. Responsibility for what children read or view rests solely with their parents or legal guardians and at no time will the library take responsibility for monitoring what items children read, view, or select. Parents/guardians may inquire with library staff about the library's policy and procedure for placing restrictions on their child's library card.

To request that a material be withdrawn from the collection or moved a Material Reconsideration Form must be completed.

Material Reconsideration Process

The process for responding to the Material Reconsideration Form will be as follows:

1. A Material Reconsideration Form may be obtained from the Jefferson Public Library and must be filled out by the complainant. Use one form per item.
2. The inquiry will be reviewed by the Librarian in charge of the section/collection and the Library Director.
3. During the process of reconsideration, questioned materials remain in the active collection until an official decision is made.
4. The Librarian in charge of the applicable section or collection will meet with the individual making the complaint.

5. If agreement is not reached, then the next step is to create an ad hoc Reconsideration Committee consisting of the Library Director, the Librarian in charge of the section/collection, and a full-time staff member whose name is drawn at random.
6. Each member will submit, in writing, their recommendations to the Library Director.
7. The Library Director will make a decision regarding the disposition of the material. The Library Director will communicate this decision, along with the reasons for it, in writing to the individual who initiated the request.
8. If the complainant desires further action, they may submit a written appeal to the Library Board within ten business days. The written appeal will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Jefferson Public Library Board which is open to the public. The Library Board reserves the right to limit the length of public comments. Appeals received less than seven days before that month's meeting may be postponed to the next month's meeting.
9. The Library Board will determine whether staff followed the library's Collection Development Policy and the procedure for material reconsideration.
10. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or overrule the decision of the Director.
11. The Library Board will prepare a written response to the complainant.
12. The Library Board's decision is final.

Previous Reconsideration Requests

Requests to reconsider materials which have previously undergone the reconsideration process will be referred to the Library Director. Repeated or redundant requests by an individual or a group to reconsider materials with differing titles but similar content will be restricted as follows:

- The Library will not accept requests for materials that have been reconsidered within the past three years.
- If the Library Director concludes a request may be redundant, the Director will notify the complainant(s) that the item(s) in question, having already undergone a thorough review and reconsideration process, will not be reevaluated.
- In the event that a complainant charges a particular item is not protected under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America, the onus of proof rests with the complainant.

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