



## **Collection Development Policy: Selection, Maintenance, Access, and Materials Challenge**

**POLICY:** It is the policy of the Norfolk Public Library (NPL) to provide residents and others access to materials that it acquires in the furtherance of its mission to promote and encourage lifelong learning, recreational interests, cultural exchanges, and a sense of community.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

*Commonwealth Catalogue:* a system that allows library users to locate and request library materials from all across Massachusetts and have them delivered directly to their home library.

*Massachusetts Library System:* a state-supported collaborative, established in 2010, that provides services to about 1,600 Massachusetts libraries of all types and sizes throughout the Commonwealth.

*SAILS:* a non-profit, private incorporation, funded by member libraries, government and state grants, and private grants that runs and supports the Enterprise Online Catalog and Circulation systems for 70 libraries and branches throughout 39 communities in Southeastern Massachusetts.

### **PROCEDURE:**

#### **Intellectual Freedom**

1. The Board of Library Trustees subscribes to the *American Library Association Library Bill of Rights*; its *Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights*; and the *Freedom to Read* statement
2. Specifically, the Board of Library Trustees believes that the NPL collection practices shall be guided by these basic principles:
  - As a responsibility of library service, books and other Library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and edification of all members of the community. In no case should materials be excluded because of race, nationality, or the social, political, or religious views of authors.
  - Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our time. No Library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries due to partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
  - It is essential in a free society to provide equal access to all Library materials. No restrictions are placed on what anyone may read. Well-intentioned individuals or groups may occasionally question the inclusion of an item in the collection because of fear or doubt about the effects of the material on impressionable persons. Although this concern is understandable, the risk to society is far greater if public access to ideas and information is

restricted. Neither an individual, group, nor the Library staff or Board of Library Trustees has the right to decide what others may or may not read.

- The Library staff does not remove materials from its shelves at the request of any individual or group. In addition, Library staff and the Board of Library Trustees will oppose coercion on the part of any individual or group seeking to have materials added to or removed from the collection that are contrary to the Collection Development Policy.
- The Library staff does not delete, excise, alter, edit, or obliterate of any part(s) of books or other library resources
- In the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment, censorship should be challenged by libraries.
- The rights of an individual to use the Library shall not be denied or abridged owing to age, race, religion, national origins, or social or political views. Unrestrictive selection policies developed with care for the principles of intellectual freedom and the Library Bill of Rights shall not be impeded by administrative practices that would serve to restrict any person's use of the Library collections or services.
- No materials are removed from open shelves or kept in restricted areas due to controversial nature, or because they are more suitable for one age level than another, nor because their subject matter, viewpoint, or treatment may be distasteful to certain individuals or groups.
- Ownership of Library material does not, however, constitute endorsement of the content, ideas or points of view contained in any material.
- Materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents, nor are they marked to restrict their use by ages.
- No person may use their personal prejudices, tastes, or moral standards to interfere with free and convenient access to materials.

### **Selection Process**

1. Collection development is the responsibility of the Library Director and their designees in accordance with policies established by the Board of Library Trustees.
2. Collection development decisions are driven by the NPL mission to promote and encourage lifelong learning, recreational interests, cultural exchanges, and a sense of community.
3. Collection development decisions are made on the basis of staff judgment and expertise, and by evaluating reviews in library reviewing journals and other library selection tools including but not limited to Booklist, Kirkus, Library Journal, and Publisher's Weekly. Factors used in the selection process includes:
  - popular demand
  - community needs and interests as determined by Library use,
  - current interest and usefulness,
  - cost,
  - physical characteristics and quality of the item, and
  - availability through other sources such as the SAILS Network, Commonwealth Catalog, or the Inter-Library loan network of the Massachusetts Library System.

4. Selections are made solely on merits of the material in relation to the collection and user needs. Inclusion of materials is based on quality of the material and community needs.
5. The NPL collection contains materials representing various viewpoints on public issues of a controversial nature. The selection of material does not constitute an endorsement of content or viewpoints expressed therein. Selections are made solely on merits of the material in relation to the collection and user needs.
6. In the interest of supporting the Norfolk community and providing a place for residents to share their work and find the work of community members, the NPL accepts donations of self-published materials.
7. Self-published materials will be considered for admission to the collection under the following conditions:
  - Materials are donated and have an editor or a professional literary agent.
  - Materials are in a format suitable for circulation.
  - The author provides a copy of one positive review from a trade publication. Examples of trade publications are:
    - Published paper review journals, such as *Library Journal* and *Booklist*
    - Newspapers, such as the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*
    - Professional journals, such as *Nature*
8. The following review sources are ineligible for use during consideration:
  - Blogs.
  - Websites without a paper component, such as Amazon for example
  - Self-written reviews.
  - Unsourced reviews.
  - Reviews written by friends or relatives.
9. Authors residing in the Town of Norfolk are eligible to have their donated materials considered for admission to the general, local history or special collections, without professional review.
10. Self-published print-on-demand titles are added only when they meet the general collection development criteria.
11. Individuals who wish to request the consideration of library materials for addition to the collection are required to put their request in writing by completing and signing the attached form entitled "Request for Consideration of Library Material." (Appendix A). Upon receipt of this formal written request, the Library Director will determine if addition of the specified material is consistent with the Collection Development Policy and financial resources of the Library. Once a determination has been made, the Library Director will notify the requestor in writing of the decision.

### **Collection Development for Children and Young Adults**

1. Both juvenile and young adult materials are selected with the same care and judgment as adult materials. The collection is carefully chosen for children of all ages and abilities, with emphasis on materials that educate and entertain, stimulate the imagination, develop reading ability and enable children to learn about the world around them. Materials are purchased in both print and non-print formats.
2. The Library maintains a collection of materials specifically selected for young adults. Materials are selected as a bridge to the adult collection.

3. The Library is committed to developing a collection of materials that support the local school district curriculum. Children and young adults are not limited to the special collections provided for them. Rather, they are encouraged to make full use of the entire collection to the extent that their interests and capabilities allow.

### **Reconsideration of Library Materials**

1. Anyone wishing to express concern about any material in the NPL collection may meet with the Library Director to discuss their concern.
2. Any person who wishes to formally challenge the placement of an item in the NPL collection must fill out a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material. This form may be obtained in person at the Library. The form is also attached to this policy (Appendix B). The signed form must be submitted in person at the library.
3. The Director shall notify the Board of Library Trustees that a formal challenge to library materials has been submitted.
4. The Director, in consultation with the appropriate staff member(s), will then re-examine the item in question. A decision on the inquiry around the item for inclusion in the Library collection will be made on the basis of the Collection Development Policy.
5. The Director's decision may be appealed to the Board of Library Trustees, who shall be the final authority.

### **Scope of the Collection**

1. The scope of the collection recognizes two main service roles: that of a popular materials Library and an education support center.
2. The adult collection highlights genres and topics for which local interest and need is known to exist. These areas include current, high-interest fiction, biographies of popular figures, self-help, cooking and crafts, home-repairs, how-to material, and other high demand non-fiction.
3. The juvenile collection focuses on highly recommended materials for preschoolers and on popular reading of standard titles by school age children.
4. In order to meet the diverse needs and interests of all residents, the Library provides materials in a variety of formats including print materials such as books, magazines and large print editions, as well as non-print materials including audio books, videos, and music. The library also hosts electronic databases and participates in a collective resource through SAILS that provides downloadable materials.
5. Since it is not feasible for a small library to individually own a balanced, comprehensive collection sufficient to meet all community needs, the NPL is a member of the SAILS Network and the Massachusetts Library System. The NPL supplements its collection with materials borrowed from these sources. In addition, requests for materials not available in the NPL collection and the SAILS Network may be obtained through the Commonwealth Catalog and Inter-Library loan.

### **Use and Accessibility of the Collection**

1. The Library aims to make the collection easy to use, without reluctance or embarrassment on the public's part in seeking materials, and to serve all members of the community efficiently, pleasantly and without discrimination.
2. The collection is on open shelves, arranged to provide maximum self-service. Valuable books and other forms of media may be kept in closed shelving for safety or security reasons only to the extent necessary to protect them from damage or theft.
3. The entire collection is available to all community residents and registered borrowers.
4. Responsibility for use of materials by children and young adults rests with their parents or legal guardians.
5. Materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents, nor are they marked to restrict their use by ages.

### **Weeding the Collection**

1. In order to maintain a collection that is current, reliable, in good condition, well used, and relevant to community needs and interests, materials are withdrawn on a systematic and continuing basis.
2. Materials are discarded when they are judged to be dated, inaccurate, seldom used, in poor condition or otherwise no longer fit to maintain.
3. The criteria used in material selection also applies to the process of material withdrawal. Materials withdrawn from the collection are disposed of in a manner consistent with their quality and condition. Materials removed because of dated content or poor condition are not imposed on other libraries or institutions.
4. Self-published and donated materials are weeded from the collection under the same guidelines as the general collection.

### **Donations**

1. Donations are accepted under terms of the Donation of Materials Agreement (Appendix C).
2. Materials acceptable for donation include print and commonly recognized digital media.
3. Materials must be in good and useable condition. Items contaminated by insects, mold, mildew or hazardous materials are not accepted for donation.
4. Materials that have been altered, manually annotated or otherwise changed from the form or content of their original publication may be subject to additional review by library staff before a determination is made as to acceptability for addition to the collection.
5. Under no circumstance shall the NPL be obligated to accept a donated item, nor shall it be obligated to add a donated item to the collection.
6. The NPL cannot accept duplicated materials in any format that would imply a violation of copyright law.

**REFERENCE:** American Library Association, *Library Bill of Rights* (retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>, *Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors*

(retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors>), *Challenged Resources*: (retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/challengedresources>), *Expurgation of Library Materials* (retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/expurgationlibrary>), *Evaluating Library Collections* (retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/evaluatinglibrary>), *Freedom To Read Statement* (retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>).

**CANCELLATION:** This policy cancels all previous policies, procedures, memorandums, messages, and directives on this subject.

**APPLICABILITY:** This policy applies to all NPL trustees, staff members, and patrons.

**REVIEW DATES:** Adopted 3/29/94, revised and adopted 3/19/2014, revised and adopted 10/15/2014, revised and adopted revised and adopted 3/16/2016, revised and adopted 6/22/2016, revised and adopted 3/15/2017, revised and adopted 2/21/2018, revised and adopted 2/21/2019; revised and adopted 2/26/20; revised and adopted 2/18/21; revised and adopted 2/17/22; revised and adopted 2/15/23; revised and adopted 2/12/24



**Appendix A: Request for Consideration of Library Materials**

Author/Producer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ISBN: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Edition: \_\_\_\_\_

Format: Book \_\_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_\_ Audiobook \_\_\_\_ DVD \_\_\_\_ Music CD \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

Requestor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Library card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience: (Please check one): Adult [ ].....Young Adult [ ].....Children [ ]

Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Source of information (Amazon, book review, media, etc.)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please give this form to any member of the Library staff. Thank you.

----- Library Use Only -----

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Library Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Requestor notified in writing on (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Library Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix B: Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

### Introduction

A singular obligation of the public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view on controversial or debatable subjects. The Norfolk Public Library does not declare particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item express or imply an endorsement of the author's viewpoint. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents. Comments from members of the community about the collection or individual items in the collection frequently provides librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. The Library welcomes expression of opinions but will be governed by the library's Collection Development Policy in making additions to or deleting items from the collection. Individuals who wish to request the reconsideration of library materials are required to put their request in writing by completing and signing the form attached entitled 'Request for Reconsideration of Library Material.' This form may also be obtained in person at the Library. Upon receipt of this formal written request, the Director, in consultation with the appropriate staff member(s), will then re-examine the item in question. A decision on the inquiry around the item for inclusion in the Library collection will be made on the basis of the Collection Development Policy. The Director's decision may be appealed to the Board of Library Trustees, who shall be the final authority.

Before completing this form, it is helpful to be familiar with the American Library Association documents cited as references on page 6 of the the *Library Collection Development Policy*

Author/Producer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Call Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Edition: \_\_\_\_\_

Format: Book \_\_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_\_ Audiobook \_\_\_\_ DVD \_\_\_\_ Music CD \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

Requestor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Whom do you represent? Myself [ ]



An organization (name) \_\_\_\_\_

Other group(name)\_\_\_\_\_

1. Did you read, view, or listen to the entire work or part of the work ? All [ ] Part [ ]
2. If you did not read, view, or listen to the entire work, which parts did you see or listen to ?
3. To what portion of the work do you object? (Be specific; cite pages, sections etc.)
4. In your opinion, is there anything good about this work ?
5. What do you feel might be the result of reading or viewing this work ?
6. What action would you like taken about this material ?
7. Which title would you suggest as a substitute ?

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Signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this form in person to any member of the Library staff, emailed or faxed forms  
will not be accepted. Thank you.

----- Library Use Only -----

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Library Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next regular Board of Library Trustees meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Decision of Library Board of Trustees: (to be filled in by the Clerk)



**Appendix C: Donation of Materials Agreement and Receipt**

I am donating the following materials to the Norfolk Public Library to be used as may be needed for its collection, to be given to the Friends of the Library for resale, or to be disposed of in any suitable manner. I understand that by signing this form I relinquish ownership of these materials and that materials donated will not be returned to me, even if they are not added to the Library's collection. I further certify the materials I am donating are not duplicated in violation of copyright law, are not contaminated with insects, mildew, or mold, and do not contain hazardous materials.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Donor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Items**  
(Books, paperbacks, magazines, videos, etc.)

**Type of Materials**  
(use reverse side for additional space)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_