



POLICY

Carroll County Public Library

Collection Development Policy

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I. General Statement of Philosophy

Purpose

The purpose of the Carroll County Public Library Collection Development Policy is to guide library staff and to inform the public about the principles of collection development.

The Collection Development Policy supports the mission of the Carroll County Public Library which is:

Join us to experience lifelong learning through impactful programs, resources, and services.

2021-2024 CCPL Strategic Plan

Carroll County Public Library's service commitment is to the people within its service area including people of every race, ethnicity, gender, color, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and/or physical appearance.

A policy cannot replace the judgment of library staff, but stating goals and indicating boundaries will help them choose from many available materials.

Definitions

Materials is used for all forms of media and has the widest possible inclusion. Examples could include books, pamphlets, maps, magazines and journals, newspapers, comics and graphic novels, manuscripts, photographs, DVDs, compact discs, audiobooks, electronic databases, videogames, and eBooks.

Selection refers to the decision that must be made to add a given item to the collection. It does not refer to assisting a library user.

Collection Development refers to an ongoing process of assessing the materials available for purchase or licensing, and in making the decisions, first, on their inclusion, and second, on their retention if they are added.

Objectives

The objective of collection development is to provide quality library service by making available a well-selected, well-maintained collection. The collection will include library materials in adequate numbers and in a variety of formats, based on patterns of use and anticipated demand.

II. Responsibility for Materials Selection

- a. All titles new to the collection of Carroll County Public Library are selected by staff in the Materials Management Department. They are aided by advisory committees of librarians from branches who channel information between the library users and selectors. Input is also sought from other Headquarters staff with knowledge of and experience in using technology for sources of information.

- b. Final responsibility for material selection lies with the Board of Library Trustees. However, the Board delegates to the Executive Director authority to interpret and guide the application of the policy in making day-to-day selections. The Executive Director will authorize other staff to assist in applying this policy. Unusual problems will be referred to the Executive Director. In exceptional cases, the Executive Director and staff will present comprehensive information to the Board.

III. Criteria for Selection

1. Overview

Library staff employ professional judgment and expertise in making collection development decisions, including decisions about choosing titles and identifying quantities for purchase. Anticipated demand, community interests, strengths, and weaknesses of the existing collections, systemwide availability, physical space limitations, and level of funding for materials are all factors considered.

Materials are acquired in multiple formats when appropriate, including print, audiovisual, and digital resources. Highest selection priority is given to those materials in all formats having the broadest appeal. Multiple copies of materials are purchased in response to user demand as evidenced by the number of holds, anticipated popularity, repeated customer requests, and monitoring of the collection.

Library staff use their training, subject knowledge, and the selection criteria to make selections for the Library's collection. The following criteria are used to evaluate materials for inclusion in the collection. An item need not meet all these criteria to be selected.

2. Criteria

- a. Relevance to community needs and interests and to the Library's mission and service roles.
- b. Local or national significance
- c. Professional reviews or recommendations from subject specialists
- d. Reputation and qualifications of the author, artist, publisher or producer and accuracy and uniqueness of content
- e. Permanence or timeliness of subject or title
- f. Suitability of format for library shelving and circulation including, type of binding, paper quality, readability of type, packaging, specialized equipment needs and technical quality of nonprint and electronic media.
- g. Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- h. Availability of information in the community or other resources held by the library and available readily through interlibrary loan.
- i. Legal or licensing issues
- j. Representation of diverse points of view
- k. Support of library programs and initiatives
- l. Price, availability, and budgetary constraints

3. Selection Sources

Sources for selection decisions encompass, but are not limited to, published reviews from recognized review sources, publisher/vendor catalogs and advertisements, professional and trade bibliographies, and customer recommendations. The Library strongly encourages customer input, and all customer recommendations are subject to the selection criteria outlined above.

Please refer to our [Customer Purchase Request](#) document for further information regarding customer requests and recommendations.

4. Consortia Considerations

Carroll County Public Library seeks out opportunities to purchase materials as part of various state and local consortia. This allows us to use the library materials budget in a more fiscally responsible way. However, because of that, we follow the selection guidelines established by the consortia. There may be times when these guidelines will differ from our own Collection Development Policy. One example of this is our participation in a consortium with the surrounding colleges (McDaniel and Carroll Community College). Because of our shared library catalog arrangements, items may appear in the library catalog which are not owned by CCPL.

5. Author Requests to Add an Item to the Collection

Carroll County Public Library is happy to represent local or self-published authors whose work fits within our collection development guidelines. Please refer to this [list of standard procedures](#) for authors who would like to have their titles added to our collection.

6. Accessing Publicly Available Digital Materials

The Library provides in-library Internet access to customers but does not select the content that is available through this access. The Library follows the guidelines enacted by Congress under the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) to protect children during their use of Internet resources. To comply with these guidelines, the Library uses filtering software on all in-library Internet access stations and Wi-Fi to the extent necessary to block access to sites which may violate obscenity statutes or are deemed harmful to children under the age of 17, with the understanding that the filter will be removed for any adult customer who requests unfiltered access. Internet access stations located in children's areas of library branches use broader filters that may not be bypassed. Please see our [Internet Acceptable Use Policy](#) for further explanation of our filter and Internet access within the Library.

7. Materials Owned by Community Partners

On occasion, the library will make specific arrangements to house a collection belonging to a community partner. The materials that make up these collections do not fall under CCPL's defined selection criteria. CCPL does not train and provide dedicated staff to support the use of these collections. In-depth research questions are referred to the community partner owning the collection. The Carroll County Genealogical Society's collection, housed at the Westminster Library, is such a collection.

IV. Use of Library Materials

1. The library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some library user. Selection will not be made based on any anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the merits of the work in relation to collection building and to serving Carroll countians' interests.
2. In keeping with the tradition of access to ideas through public libraries, Internet access is available at all library locations. The Internet is not governed by any entity, so there are no limits or checks on the kinds of information therein.
3. Filtering software will be used on all in-library computers to the extent necessary to block access to sites which may violate obscenity statutes, with the understanding that immediately upon request from an adult, the filter will be deactivated on the computer to be used by that adult. Computers in children's areas of library branches will use broader filters.
4. Selection designates neither Library approval nor Library disapproval of the contents. No item will be sequestered except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.
5. The use of rare and scarce items of great value may be controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm, but no further.

V. Guidelines for Selection

1. General Guidelines

- a. The Library recognizes the purposes and resources of other libraries in Maryland and shall not needlessly duplicate functions and materials. Through cooperative agreements with Maryland's public libraries and select academic libraries, the resources of these libraries may be available to Carroll County readers.
- b. Because the Library endorses the practice of a shared collection, selection of materials will be made with due regard to the collective interests of the Carroll County community.
- c. The Library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some library user. Selection will not be made based on any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to collection building and to serving Carroll County residents' interests.
- d. Selection of materials deemed appropriate for the CCPL collection will not be inhibited by the possibility that the materials may inadvertently come into the possession of or seen by children.
- e. Selection of materials designates neither Library approval nor Library disapproval. No item selected for the collection will be sequestered except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.

2. Guidelines for Selection According to Type of Reader

- a. Because the Library serves a public which includes a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, and reading abilities, it will seek to select materials of varying complexity.
- b. The Library is aware of the needs of preschool children who are not served in a formal way for their collection interests except by the public library. Meeting their needs constitutes educational preparation before their years in school.

3. Guidelines for Selection According to Form or Nature of Material

- a. The Library acknowledges the purposes of educational programs for all students of all ages provided by the educational institutions in the area. Textbooks and curriculum related materials for these programs are provided where the materials also serve the public as an introduction to the subject or where they provide information not otherwise available.
- b. We do not currently purchase any abridgments; however, abridgments may be available to our customers through our digital content providers.
- c. Where illustrations are the primary form of telling a story or conveying information, they will be an integral part of determining a material's acceptability.²

4. Guidelines for Selection According to Subject

- a. Legal and medical works will be acquired only if they are useful to the layperson.
- b. The Library acknowledges a particular interest in local and state history; therefore, it will seek to acquire state and county public documents, and it will take a broad view of works by and about Maryland authors as well as general works relating to the state of Maryland. However, the Library is not under any obligation to add to its collections everything about Maryland or everything produced by authors, printers, or publishers with Maryland connections.
- c. The Library collection contains materials on different peoples and faiths. Bible stories, lives of saints, biographies of religious figures as well as materials of general spiritual content and those on diverse customs and traditions must meet the general standards of selection.
- d. The Library provides information on sex designed for all age levels of readers. Materials for varying levels of education and differing social and religious customs are provided using the guidelines for selection. The Library carefully examines children's materials that deal with this subject, selecting those that present the information with clarity and scientific accuracy.
- e. Principles governing the selection of materials as stated in this collection development policy are also applicable to the selection of children's materials with additional consideration given to appropriate content and vocabulary for the intended reader.

VI. Gifts and Memorials

- a. The Library accepts gifts of materials but reserves the right to evaluate and dispose of them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. Gifts which do not meet the Library's objectives and policies will be refused.
- b. Once a gift is accepted by CCPL, it becomes the unconditional property of CCPL. Gift materials not added to the collection may be sold by the library in branch book sales or through third party vendors. A receipt for the gift materials will be given to the donor upon request, but CCPL staff are not allowed to place a value on them.
- c. A memorial is created when money or material is donated to add books or other materials to the collection, usually in memory or honor of an individual or group. CCPL welcomes suggestions for purchases but reserves the right to make the final decision regarding all materials. A memorial may be placed in the library collection for reference or circulating use and a bookplate will be added to these materials. Memorial materials are subject to the same policies and procedures for weeding as all other purchased materials.
- d. Gifts of magazine subscriptions are not accepted. Magazines are an annual expense and if a subscription is given by a customer for one year only, this places a burden on the library's magazine budget to continue the purchase of the magazine when customers have come to expect it to be part of the magazine collection.

VII. Maintaining the Collection

- a. Selection is only one aspect of collection development. Rigorous attention must be given to the systematic assessment of the collection to ensure it is still serving the community's needs. The Collection Development Policy serves as a guide for weeding and maintaining the collection and for selecting materials.
- b. Weeding the library collection is as much a routine as the acquisition of new materials. The purpose of discarding materials from the collection is to maintain an accurate and up-to-date collection for library customers. Materials that are inaccurate, outdated, unused, or in poor condition detract from the usefulness and aesthetic appeal of the collection. These materials take up shelf space that could be occupied by needed and requested materials.
- c. Weeding the collection is an ongoing process and is the branch librarians' responsibility with guidance from the Materials Department. The goal of the library is that each section of the collection is weeded regularly to keep it accurate. Special attention is paid to those areas of the collection that can become rapidly outdated.
- d. Materials that are weeded from the collection include items that are: damaged, soiled or worn; outdated or superseded by a new edition or newer title on the same subject; irrelevant to the needs and interests of the community or contain information that may be obtained more easily elsewhere; factually inaccurate; recalled by the publisher. Materials that have not circulated in a chosen time period, duplicate titles no longer needed, or damaged materials are also considered for discarding.
- e. Items in damaged or outdated condition will be recycled whenever possible or discarded. Items in good condition may be sold by the library in branch book sales, through a third-party vendor, or donated to appropriate local organizations. Funds raised through book sales go back to the CCPL budget to support ongoing services.
- f. Materials are not removed from the collection for the sole purpose of selling them.

VIII. Reconsideration of Library Material

Support of the Right to Read

1. The Library does not operate in a vacuum, but in a community representing all shades of opinion. It is the very essence of a democracy that its people have the right of free inquiry and the equally important right of forming their own opinions. Therefore, the Library should stand firm in the face of any segment of the community which might seek to impress its special viewpoint through censorship. It should not withdraw a book at the request of any individual or group since to do so would be to limit the rights of other individuals and groups and to place the Library's selection policy in the hands of shifting public opinion.
2. If customers wish to discover the worth of certain publications for themselves, they should be given the opportunity to do so. Furthermore, history shows that many books that have been most controversial or objectionable to some persons or groups have, in due course, been recognized to be among those books which most, rather than least, belong in public libraries. If an idea is truly dangerous or evil, the best protection against it is a public which has been exposed to it and has rejected it; the worst protection is a public which has been shielded from exposure to it by official or self-appointed guardians.
3. Therefore, in the event that anyone in or out of the community should object to the Library's acquisition or retention of a certain publication on moral, political, religious, or philosophical grounds, the objection should be recognized as an indication that the publication in question may well be of more than routine interest and may be likely to be requested by members of the community who wish to judge its merits and demerits for themselves.

IX. Challenged Materials

1. The library believes in freedom of information for all and does not practice censorship. The library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and so asserts that while anyone is free to reject any materials of which he/she does not approve, he/she may not exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of others.
2. The library tries to place materials within age-appropriate collections and maintains separate collections for children, young adults, and adults. However, responsibility for materials selected and read by children and young adults rests with parents or legal guardians. Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to minors. No items are sequestered except to protect them from damage or theft.
3. The Board of Trustees recognizes that the collection of diverse materials may result in some complaints or requests for reconsideration. Procedures have been developed to ensure complaints are handled attentively and consistently.
4. Materials that have been reviewed by the Library Board of Trustees as the result of a formal request will not be reconsidered for a period of two years. Should a new reconsideration request for the same material occur within two years of a decision, a copy of the response to the previous complaint will be sent to the individual or group submitting the new reconsideration request. However, if the request submitted is seeking a substantially different outcome, the reconsideration process will proceed as normal. An individual or group may only have one title in the challenge process at a time.

X. Endorsements of National and State Policies

The Carroll County Public Library Board of Trustees supports the following statements from the American Library Association:

Library Bill of Rights

Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights

- a. Labeling Systems
- b. Evaluating Library Collections
- c. Diverse Collections
- d. Expurgation of Library Resources
- e. Challenged Resources

Freedom to Read Statement

Freedom to View Statement

XI. Revision of Policy

This policy will be revised as times and circumstances require.