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## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

- A. The purpose of the Merrimack Public Library's Collection Development Policy is to guide the staff in the selection of materials of all types, to fulfill the mission of the Library, and to inform the public of the policies of selection. This policy will be reviewed and revised periodically as the need arises. Collection development at the Merrimack Public Library is based on the American Library Association's (ALA) principles of intellectual freedom and equal access for all. The library maintains a collection for the general public that represents a broad spectrum of opinion and subject matter, in diverse formats, suitable to a variety of learning and recreational interests that is responsive to changing community interests and needs.
- B. Reading, listening and viewing library materials is an individual, private choice. Full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. To ensure this, the Merrimack Public Library and its Board of Trustees endorse and support the following documents:
1. [The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution](#)<sup>i</sup>
  2. The [Library Bill of Rights](#)<sup>ii</sup>
  3. The [Freedom to Read Statement](#)<sup>iii</sup>
  4. [Labeling and Rating Systems](#)<sup>iv</sup>
  5. [Challenged Resources](#)<sup>v</sup>
  6. The [Freedom to View Statement](#)<sup>vi</sup>
  7. [Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors](#)<sup>vii</sup>
  8. [ALA Statement on Book Censorship](#)<sup>viii</sup>
- C. The Director shall supervise selections, acquisition, processing and de-selection of library materials to meet public needs within the structure of the library selection policies and budgetary limitations and explore and implement new collection options as trends evolve.
- D. Selection of Materials
1. The main points considered in the selection of library materials are:
    - a. Popular appeal/demand/hold ratio
    - b. Space
    - c. Budget
    - d. Suitability of materials to the community
    - e. Existing library holdings
    - f. Consortium holdings

g. Individual merit of each item

2. Materials selected may include works of a recognized creator within the limits of their specific field regardless of their moral or political views; works of current or potentially historic significance regardless of political or social variance; materials in fields that represent a principle or idea which has not been completely accepted or developed; whenever possible both sides of a question are explored.
  3. Works which are obviously and exclusively created for pornographic or sensational purposes will not be selected. Objectionable language and vivid descriptions of sex and violence when dealt with realistically within the context of a work will not be criteria for rejecting the title.
  4. The responsibility for children's choices in reading material rests with the parents and legal guardians. The Library does not intrude on that relationship. Library material selection will not be determined by the possibility that controversial materials may come into the possession of children.
  5. Material is judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not by a part taken out of context.
  6. Judgment in book selection will be based on current reviews and professional library and literary opinion as shown in journals, standard bibliographies, and other publications.
  7. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting a title which is in demand. Consideration is, therefore, given to requests of library patrons and books discussed on public media.
  8. Material donations will be accepted in accordance with the Library's current Gifts and Memorials Policy.
- E.** The New Hampshire collection is a non-circulating, restricted access collection that is housed in the Lowell Room, with oversized materials housed in the Director's office. The Library endeavors to collect all town histories for Hillsborough County, state and local governmental information and reports, and other materials important to the study of New Hampshire and Merrimack history.

**F. Maintaining the Collection**

1. Replacements and Repairs: Materials are purchased as budget allows.
2. De-selection: In order to maintain a collection that is current, reliable, in good repair, easy to use, and appealing, materials are withdrawn on a continuing basis. Collections should change over time to reflect changes in the community and the library's goals. Materials will be de-selected when they are judged to be dated,

inaccurate, seldom used, in poor condition, or otherwise not in compliance with the criteria for selection.

3. Disposal of De-selected Material: If in salable condition, the material is placed in the library's book sales. If in poor condition, the material is disposed of.

**G. Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources:** Patrons requesting reconsideration and removal of items in the collection may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form. The Request shall be reviewed by the Library Director and appropriate staff in relation to the Library's mission and selection criteria. The Library Director will then issue a written decision to the challenger within 30 days. This decision may be appealed to the Library Board of Trustees; if an appeal is submitted, the challenger's appeal will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Merrimack Public Library Trustees. Decisions of the Library Board are final and are made within 60 days of receipt of the appeal. The item in question will not be removed from the shelf during the reconsideration process.

*Approved by the Merrimack Public Library Board of Trustees June 17, 2008; March 19, 2019; December 21, 2021*

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<sup>i</sup> "First Amendment and Censorship", American Library Association, June 13, 2008. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship> (Accessed March 2, 2019) Document ID: 2875609a-85af-be74-e98e-b951ad2b4859

<sup>ii</sup> "Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, June 30, 2006. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> (Accessed March 2, 2019) Document ID: 669fd6a3-8939-3e54-7577-996a0a3f8952

<sup>iii</sup> "The Freedom to Read Statement", American Library Association, July 26, 2006. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> (Accessed March 2, 2019) Document ID: aaac95d4-2988-0024-6573-10a5ce6b21b2

<sup>iv</sup> "LABELING AND RATING SYSTEMS", American Library Association, July 26, 2006. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/labelingrating> (Accessed March 2, 2019) Document ID: 58e77ed9-1cb1-45a4-892d-061e9fdf0209

<sup>v</sup> "Challenged Resources: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, July 26, 2006. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/challenged-resources> (Accessed March 2, 2019) Document ID: 364dc4b3-1446-8ba4-79a8-84618cf35ac4

<sup>vi</sup> "Freedom to View Statement", American Library Association, May 29, 2007. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement> (Accessed March 2, 2019) Document ID: 95444382-9c6c-e904-0962-be3aa96cdb5a

<sup>vii</sup> "Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors", American Library Association, July 26, 2006. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/access-library-resources-for-minors> (Accessed March 2, 2019) Document ID: 65e2f033-21c0-d724-f166-6a6def0dcd4e

<sup>viii</sup> "ALA Statement on Book Censorship", American Library Association, November 29, 2021. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/statement-regarding-censorship> (Accessed January 26, 2022) Document ID: 934d7bbb-ffb4-41e3-bcc1-43e6b032b1ce