

Collection Management Policies

Materials Selection Policy

A written materials selection policy aids Library staff in selecting and acquiring a useful, well-rounded collection of books and materials to meet the needs of the community.

A policy statement helps answer questions by the public regarding the presence or absence of certain materials and helps explain the basis on which materials have been selected.

National Statements Concerning Intellectual Freedom: *The Library Board and staff believe that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy, and hereby adopts these basic documents as official Library policy: Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to View and Free Access to Libraries for Minors. Copies of these are appended to this document.*

Objectives in Materials Selection: *The purpose of the Cape Girardeau Public Library is to obtain, organize and make conveniently available to all the people of the community recreational, educational and informational materials, including books, periodicals, newspapers (in paper and micro form), recordings and other print and non-print materials. It is the policy of the Library to maintain an up-to-date collection of standard works in all fields of knowledge, that are of permanent value, plus timely materials on current issues and items in current demand.*

Materials will be selected in consideration of the needs of business, the professions, government, and community organizations. Material selection will also include consideration of the needs of the homebound, the visually, physically and mentally disabled and those individuals with learning disabilities. The needs of adult beginning readers and of people for whom English is not the principal language will also be considered. Both the adult and young people's collections will serve as supplementary sources for student use, but materials selected for students must also be useful to the general reader. Ordinarily, textbooks will not be purchased.

Responsibility for Selection: *The selection of materials is the responsibility of the Materials Selection Committee. This committee includes the Adult and Youth Services Coordinators and the Library Director.*

Method of Materials Selection: *Any materials selection policy must be fairly general, and staff must always exercise their knowledge and experience of all Library materials and of the community served. Certain methods and principles should be followed as closely as possible.*

- 1. Criteria: Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own merit and intended audience. All selections, both purchases and gifts, must meet some of the following criteria:*
 - a. Appeal to the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational interests and needs of individuals in the community.*
 - b. Style and readability.*
 - c. Permanent value as source material or interpretation.*
 - d. Vitality and originality of thought.*

- e. *Contemporary significance.*
 - f. *Literary and/or artistic merit.*
 - g. *Accuracy and objectivity.*
 - h. *Suitability of physical form to Library use.*
 - i. *Skill, competence and purpose of the author.*
 - j. *Relations to other materials and existing areas of coverage in order to maintain a diverse collection.*
 - k. *Technical quality in selection of non-book material.*
 - l. *Reliability of publisher.*
2. *Reviews: Reviews in professionally recognized periodicals are a primary source for material selection. Standard bibliographies, booklists by recognized authorities and the advice of competent people in specific subject areas will be used. Purchases may also be made by librarians after examining the materials.*
 3. *Requests: All requests or suggestions from patrons for specific titles or subject requests will be considered. Multiple copies of high demand titles will be purchased according to a pre-determined ratio. Whenever there is enough demand or interest in a title or subject, an item with unfavorable reviews may be purchased, unless the subject in question is already adequately covered by better materials.*
 4. *Specialized Materials: Specialized professional materials of limited community interest will not ordinarily be purchased. Referral to other Library collections and interLibrary loan, primarily through Missouri libraries, will be used to supply patrons with these materials. Supplementary materials for students and information for specialists are provided in a limited number of fields, the Library taking cognizance of and avoiding unnecessary duplication in subject areas which are the special prerogative of other community resources.*

Replacement and Maintenance: *The Library keeps its collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing essential material and removing on a systematic and continuous basis those works which are worn, outdated, of little historical significance, or no longer in demand.*

Access: *Processing and shelving of materials shall in no way reflect a value judgment of the materials. There will be no labeling of any item or of its records to indicate bias. All materials will be shelved in their proper order on open shelves, freely and easily accessible to the public, except for Missouri and Cape Girardeau vertical file materials. For the convenience of the patron, such collections as fiction by genre, local history and genealogy, large type and a.v. are kept in separate collections and have shelving designations.*

The Library assures free access to its holdings for all patrons who are free to select or reject for themselves any item in the collection. Individual or group prejudice about a particular item or type of material in the collection may not preclude its use by others.

The library collections for patrons under the age of 18 are split into two collections, juvenile and teens/young adults. In general, decisions to place particular items in the collections are done by the standard of the average person, applying contemporary community standards nationwide, would find that the material, taken as a whole, has a tendency to appeal to ages 0 through 11 for the juvenile collection and ages 12-18 for the teen/young adult collection; and/or the publisher's

suggested age range, if available. This statement is required by Missouri Regulation 15 CSR 30-200.015.

Children are not limited to the juvenile or teen/young adult collections, although these collections are kept together to facilitate use. Responsibility for a child's reading must rest with the parent or guardian, not with the Library.

Statement of Specific Policies in Selected Areas

Adult Materials (Recommended age: 18+)

1. *Fiction: The fiction collection provides books in the English language for the wide range of interests, tastes and reading levels, including classics in the field, titles representing periods of writing and those meeting popular demand for light reading. No book should be eliminated because of coarse language, violence, or frank discussion of sexual episodes when these are pertinent to the plot, characterization or social milieu of the book. While some may find this offensive, it is the Library's responsibility to protect the rights of mature readers. Books found to be pornographic, as defined by Missouri Revised Statutes 573:010, should be excluded from the collection.*

Fiction will be selected primarily from professional reviews. Other factors to be considered are anticipated public demand, the reputation of the author and patron requests. The exception to this is genre fiction. When reviews cannot be found, materials may be selected on the basis of author or series popularity.

2. *Religion: The Library attempts to maintain a diverse collection representing all the major religions and their sacred scriptures. Authoritative material which introduces and explains the basic concepts and practices of the various religions and beliefs is also included. The Library does not add materials of a strictly proselytizing nature. The collection encompasses inspirational literature and popular studies on new ideas and movements which are taking place in religion today*
3. *Health and Medicine: The Library generally purchases standard and popular materials in health, nutrition, hygiene, diseases and medicine that are primarily of interest to persons outside the medical profession.*

Authoritative, scientific and popular materials about sex are provided for the general reader at various age and reading levels. Books catering to morbid, esoteric or sensational interests do not come within the scope of this collection.

4. *Law: The Library purchases standard and popular materials which deal with the philosophy of law and particular types of law such as real estate, taxation, marriage and divorce for the lay reader.*

Laws and regulations, for the United States, Missouri, Cape Girardeau County and City are included in the collection or made available online. Similar material for other counties and states are not included in depth.

- 5. Politics: In addition to a balanced collection on modern American and international politics and government, the basic documents of all political systems that have influenced, and do influence, people should be available to the public. It includes the Cape Girardeau city quarterly and annual reports.*
- 6. Genealogy: General genealogical reference tools including software and on-line resources, books of genealogical search procedures, materials of regional, state, and local value or of riverways and trails of Missouri are purchased. Individual family histories are rarely purchased unless they are of outstanding national or local importance. Gift or grant monies may be used for such purposes. The Library will attempt to secure additional genealogical materials, including microfilm, through interLibrary loan whenever possible.*
- 7. Foreign/World Languages: The Library purchases informational, educational, recreational, and cultural materials in other languages in a limited number. Various formats will be included in the collection.*
- 8. ESL: The English as a Second Language collection is targeted at foreign language speakers and students who are learning English. The collection includes dictionaries, pronunciation CDs, citizenship and TOEFL study guides, DVD sets and English high interest/easy reading fiction and nonfiction.*
- 9. Reference: The Library purchases materials that provide facts and information in demand or of potential use by those to be served by the Library; materials that do not duplicate items already held unless the new item is more timely, easier to use and/or more comprehensive; and materials that complement existing collections. Materials which can be updated must be current and the academic and/or technical level should be within the range of users and staff.*

Juvenile Materials (Recommended age: 0-11)

The Children's Collection attempts to provide fiction and non-fiction materials to meet the educational, informational, cultural and recreational interests and needs of children from birth.

Books of interest to students of children's literature, parents, and people working with children are also purchased on a limited basis. These include historical perspectives, evaluations of children's literature, information on children's authors and illustrators, and bibliographies of materials for children. No attempt is made to supply school textbooks or substitutes for individual school Library collections or areas of service.

Materials will be selected for varying levels of maturity representing a wide range of points of view and a wide scope of interest. An effort should be made to purchase starred reviews

(marking books of exceptional merit) in the various review sources. Materials will be subject to the same guidelines for purchase as adult materials.

Teen/Young Adult Materials (Recommended age: 12-18)

Titles of interest to persons in junior and senior high school are purchased and shelved in the Teen areas. This collection includes fiction and nonfiction. An effort should be made to purchase starred reviews (marking books of exceptional merit) in the various review sources. Materials will be subject to the same guidelines for purchase as adult materials.

Outreach Materials

The entire circulating collection is available for use in outreach programs such as nursing homes, homebound service and designated cooperative agencies. Materials for the visually impaired are purchased by the Library and materials for the blind are provided by the Wolfner Library, Jefferson City, Missouri.

Periodicals and Newspapers: The Library endeavors to provide the most representative periodicals on a wide range of subjects of reference value and recreational interest. Particular emphasis is given to titles included in periodical indexes. In general, all content areas are open for selection and materials will be subject to the same guidelines for purchase as adult and youth materials.

The Library maintains current subscriptions to major national newspapers and newspapers of local origin. The Southeast Missourian and Bulletin-Journal back files are retained on microfilm.

Non-Book Materials

The Library staff considers that non-book materials represent an alternative format. In general, the same selection policies will apply.

1. *DVDs: The Library selects titles in video formats, intended for people from preschool ages through older adults. Responsibility for a child's or teen's video selections rest with the parent or guardian, not with the Library.*

The Library will not collect video materials which are designed for classroom use. Additionally, the Library will not collect films having as their purpose advertising or solicitation of funds. Areas for collecting will include:

- a. *Documentaries; creative interpretations of reality*
- b. *Local and regional interest; films about this area or made by film makers within this area*
- c. *Dramatizations of classic literature*
- d. *How-to and informational productions; in areas popular with Library patrons*
- e. *Popular TV classics; performances considered for their enduring contribution to the history of television production and popularity*
- f. *Film study; films considered classics or landmarks in film making*
- g. *Foreign films; those considered classics or those which have received critical acclaim*
- h. *Sports, recreation, travel*

- i. *Entertainment films with special consideration given to those with a literary connection or that have been recognized for their exceptional merit*
 - j. *Family films both for entertainment and on a wide range of non-fiction topics*
2. *Compact Discs (music): The circulating collection is intended for people from pre-school age through older adults and includes selections from such areas as: alternative, classical, country, dance, easy listening, folk, holiday, jazz, new age, pop, reggae, rap, religious, rhythm and blues, rock, and soundtrack.*
3. *Video Games: Games are selected on the basis of currency, informational quality, and target audience. The collection maintains information in the most relative format, most appropriate for the information and the community's needs. Gifts/donations will be evaluated on the same criteria as selection. Informed decisions are based on reviews found in professional journals, gamerankings.com and the selectors discretion.*
4. *Audiobooks: The circulating collection is intended for people from juvenile through older adults and includes both fiction and non-fiction titles. Materials will be subject to the same guidelines for purchase as adult materials.*
5. *Microforms: Microforms are purchased for two areas of the collection: The Southeast Missourian newspaper and genealogical census records.*
6. *Downloadable E & Audiobooks: A majority of the Library's downloadable e-books and audiobooks are available through a consortium membership. As the budget allows, additional copies and titles are purchased for use only by the Library's cardholders. Items in the collection include popular adult fiction, nonfiction, teen and a limited number of children's titles. The aforementioned materials selection criteria apply to downloadable titles. Library users are also directed to free public domain e-books. The Library purchases titles in e-formats, intended for people from preschool ages through adults. Responsibility for a child's or teen's e-content selections rests with the parent or guardian, not with the Library.*

Gifts and Memorials

The Library will encourage and accept gifts with the understanding that gifts of materials will be added to the collection only if they meet the same standards required of purchased materials. Gift materials not meeting those standards, those that are out-of-date, unneeded duplicates of items already owned, or those in a format unsuitable for Library use, may be given to other organizations, sold, exchanged or recycled.

Gift items will be integrated into the regular Library collections in normal sequence, available to all Library patrons, and otherwise handled as any other material belonging to the Library.

Upon request, gift items that are added, will be marked with an appropriate bookplate. A letter for tax purposes may be given to the donor if requested at the time the donation is made, acknowledging receipt of the gift only.

Memorial gift items will be marked with an appropriate bookplate, with a letter of acknowledgment sent to the family.

Whenever a gift is no longer needed, it will be disposed of in the same manner as material purchased.

Requests for Withdrawal or Addition of Material

When any patron objects to the presence or absence of any Library materials, the complaint will be given a hearing. All complaints to staff members will be referred to a supervisor who will discuss the matter with the complainant. See the Request for Reconsideration policy for more information on how to file an official complaint.

This Library Materials Selection Policy is approved as the official policy of the Cape Girardeau Public Library by the Board of Trustees this 25th day of April, 2013. Amended 02/03/2022; Amended 06/06/2023.