

# Materials Selection Policy

## Portland Library

**Purpose:** This policy sets broad guidelines for the selection of library materials that correspond to the Library's mission to meet the information, educational and recreational needs of community members. It provides guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials that anticipate and meet the needs of the Portland community. It also addresses collection maintenance, and replacement and weeding of materials.

The Library makes every effort to provide the community with a collection that reflects a wide range of views, expressions, opinions and interests. Specific acquisitions may include items that may be unorthodox, unpopular or controversial in nature. The Library's acquisition of such items does not constitute endorsement of their content but rather allows for their free expression.

The Library adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association as expressed in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements.

**Definitions:** Library materials include all items in the library's collections, regardless of format. Access is the availability of materials in a variety of formats for users of all ages and abilities. Collections include various print formats, audio and visual recordings in currently useful formats including digital items such as eBooks and eAudio items.

**Scope:** Public libraries cannot in general support the needs of higher education and research; Portland Library strives to provide popular materials and generally accessible materials for all ages.

**Responsibility for materials selection:** Ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board. The day-to-day work of selection and evaluation is the responsibility of designated members of the Library staff. Patrons and staff may make suggestions for purchase of materials. The selection of materials is characterized by open-mindedness and responsiveness to the changing needs of the citizens of Portland. A Request to Purchase an item will be considered by the director and the response will be in accord with this policy. Denial of a request to purchase can also be reconsidered, through a Request for reconsideration. (Attached: Statement of Concern about Library Resources)

**Criteria for materials selection:** Each type of material shall be considered in terms of its own merit and the audience for whom it is intended. It shall be the goal of the library to be inclusive, not exclusive, in developing collections. No single standard can be applied

in all cases. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship or value to humanity; others shall be selected to satisfy the informational, recreational or educational interests of the community. Reviews in professionally recognized resources are a primary source for materials selection. Recommendations by recognized authorities and the advice of competent people in specific subject areas may also be used.

The Library shall keep its collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing essential materials. Works that are worn, outdated, inaccurate, of little historical or local significance, or no longer in demand shall be removed on a systematic and continuous basis. An item in a format that is not generally accessible will not be included in the collection unless there is a recognized need to make the item available.

Textbooks are not generally purchased

To be selected in accord with criteria for selection, Digital materials must not be restricted by copyright laws or prohibited by licensing agreements or subject to decreased usage due to the evolution stage or maintenance of the format.

Criteria for selection includes the following general considerations:

- Public demand, interest or need
- Anticipated potential for long-term interest or need.
- Attention of reputable critics and reviewers
- Timeliness of material
- Availability and affordability
- Compatibility of format for Library use
- Value as resource material
- Suitability of subject or style for intended audience
- Local origination or particular relevance to the Portland community

**Gifts** –The Library may accept donated items that are in usable attractive condition and in accord with the same criteria for selection as purchased items.

**Reconsideration:**

Reconsideration process: Any community member residing in the Library’s service area who has a concern about the presence (or absence) of a work may do so by completing the Statement of Concern about Library Resources form and delivering it to the Library Director. The appropriate staff and Director will review and discuss whether the item would adhere to the selection policy criteria. The Director will then respond to the concern.

If the patron wishes, the Library Director and the Library Board shall review the concern and respond in a timely manner. While an item owned by Portland Library is under reconsideration, it shall remain available in the collection. The requester shall be informed of the Board's final decision in writing.

Reconsideration may not result in removal or addition of material, but ensures that those responsible for selection will hear the opinion, interests and concerns of patrons.

Shared Materials: Portland Library is a member of a consortium of 30 plus libraries.

Some EBooks, EAudiobooks and other materials available through Portland Library may have been selected by other libraries. Materials owned by another public library or the consortium and loaned out to Portland Library patrons are not part of the Portland Library's collections and not subject to reconsideration.

This policy is accessible from the Library's current website.

See also policies on Discards; Donations, and Library Bill of Rights

Form attached: Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Approved by the Library Board

September 2, 1999

Reaffirmed July 17, 2002

March 19, 2015

February 16 2023



Town of Portland, Connecticut

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[www.portlandlibraryct.org](http://www.portlandlibraryct.org) ▪ Fax: (860) 342-6778 Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

PORTLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail /Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one

I represent: Myself \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

What is the Format of the material in question: (i.e. book, movie, music CD, audio book, library program, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of item \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

**What concerns you about this material? Please be as specific as possible and note what you feel the effect if the objectionable material would be.**

(Use the other side if needed)

**Did you read, view or listen to the entire work? If not, what parts did you examine?**

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Received by Library Director \_\_\_\_\_