



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

The Bergenfield Public Library creates an enjoyable environment for the intellectually curious to explore, learn, and grow together. We deliver diverse collections, innovative programs, and expert support through welcoming physical and digital spaces.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Library will acquire, make available, and encourage the use of resources to assist individuals in their pursuit of educational objectives, intellectual and emotional growth, and enjoyment of leisure time, and practical solutions to daily problems.

The Library aims for a broad representation of viewpoints and looks for materials that will supplement, expand upon or support the existing collection. Some materials may be selected solely because they contribute to the diversity of viewpoints represented in the collection. Individual items, which in and of themselves may be controversial or offensive to some patrons or staff, may be selected if their inclusion will contribute to the range of viewpoints in the collection as a whole. A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers.

Materials are not excluded, removed, or suppressed because of the language used or views presented. Inclusion of items in the Library does not constitute endorsement of its content by the Library, nor does it guarantee the accuracy of information contained in the materials. Materials will not be restricted, sequestered, altered, or labeled by the Library because of controversy about the author or the subject matter of the material. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor children, the freedom of others to access information will not be restricted even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others.

Parents and legal guardians are responsible for the use of the library's collection by children. It is only the parent or legal guardian who may restrict their children from access to library materials. The selection of library materials will not be limited by the possibility that items may be viewed by minors.

New Jersey's Freedom to Read Act prohibits censorship of library materials and provides certain protections to library workers in collection development and maintenance. It supports the right of individuals to free inquiry and the right to form their own opinions. It acknowledges the training and education that librarians receive to develop and curate collections.

The governing body of a public library, in consultation with staff members of a public library, including a librarian employed by a public library, shall have discretion in selecting, purchasing, or acquiring library material for inclusion in the public library. Nothing in this policy or the law shall be construed to require a governing body of a public library to purchase, or otherwise acquire, library material for a public library.

This policy recognizes and acknowledges that:



- Public libraries serve as centers for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas;
- Prohibiting censorship of library materials promotes free expression and free access to idea by residents;
- Library materials shall not be removed from a public library because of the origin, background, or views of the library materials or those contributing to its creation.
- Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, [and] enlightenment of all people and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole;
- Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop collections that provide residents with access to the widest array of library material available to the public; and,
- The Library has a procedure for a librarian to review library materials on an ongoing basis.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The primary goal of collection development is to provide the best possible collection with the financial resources available. Library materials are chosen based on selection criteria such as predicated demand and interest, reputation of the publisher and author, historical significance, and cost. The item's contribution to the diversity or depth of a collection, such as providing differing viewpoints is also considered.

The Bergenfield Public Library's collection includes materials in a variety of formats to serve a wide range of ages, reading, listening and viewing skills and educational backgrounds. While most materials are acquired in English, the Library also acquires materials in other languages, principal among them is Spanish and Tagalog. Emphasis is placed on acquiring materials of wide-ranging interest that reflect a variety of perspective, including those materials that aid in promoting early literacy, lifelong learning, reading for pleasure and popular cultural entertainment.

Materials are selected by trained staff and take into consideration:

- **Relevance:** How the materials align with the library's mission and the needs of its users.
- **Quality:** Consider literary merit, technical quality, and the author's and publisher's authority.
- **Audience Appropriateness:** Ensure materials are suitable for the intended age group and reading level.
- **Format:** Consider the format of materials (print, digital, etc.) and their accessibility.
- **Cost:** Balance quality and cost when making purchasing decisions.
- **Timeliness:** Ensure the content is current and whether there are more recent materials available on the same subject.
- **Availability:** Consider whether similar materials are available elsewhere – are the materials available through interlibrary loan?
- **Community Needs:** Materials should address the current and anticipated community needs.
- **Space Constraints:** May impact the scope and depth of the collection.

Additional criteria for digital resources include:

- **Ease of Use**
- **Licensing and System requirements** (hardware, software, networking, storage)
- **Assessment of content quality and cost** as compared to other available formats
- **Accessibility**



PATRON RECOMMENDATIONS

The public is encouraged to suggest items, topics or authors they would like to see included in the collection. Requests will be considered using professional selection standards and may be satisfied through purchasing, reciprocal borrowing, electronic resources or other means.

Self-published books will not be purchased at patron request unless they have been reviewed in standard sources. Patrons may donate copies of authors' self-published books. These will be evaluated in accord with the Library's gift policy and are not guaranteed inclusion in the collection.

Patron suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as all other materials and are not automatically added to the collection.

GIFTS/DONATIONS

The library may accept gifts and donations with the explicit understanding that the library, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to display, store, sell, or otherwise dispose of all gifts and contributions of tangible property. Those materials which do not meet the library's objectives and materials selection criteria may be refused. Materials that are donated become the property of the Bergenfield Public Library and as such cannot be returned to the donor.

The library will not provide an appraisal of the dollar value of any material donation. The library will provide a receipt stating the quantity and type of items donated.

EXCLUDED MATERIALS

The library does not collect scholarly or highly specialized materials typically found in large college or university libraries. Textbooks are not and will not be a part of usual purchases.

DISPOSITION OF MATERIALS OF MATERIALS

A strong collection requires ongoing evaluation and maintenance. A librarian must review library material within a public library on an ongoing basis. Criteria for ongoing review must include, but is not limited to, the:

- library material's relevance;
- condition of the library material;
- availability of duplicates;
- availability of more recent material; and,
- continued demand for the library material.

Materials will regularly be weeded from the collection based on the following criteria:

- Physical condition
- Number of copies available
- Accuracy and currency of information
- Enduring value



- Local interest
- Availability elsewhere
- Space limitations

Discarded materials may be sold, donated, or recycled as the Library determines.

PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of the policy is to provide standards for the curation of library material; establish criteria for removal of existing library material or library material selected for inclusion in the public library; and provide protection against attempts to censor library material.

DEFINITIONS

Censorship. Means to block, suppress, or remove library material based on disagreement with a viewpoint, idea, or concept, or solely because an individual finds certain content offensive, but does not include limiting or restricting access to any library material deemed developmentally inappropriate for certain age groups.

Diverse and inclusive material. Means material that reflects any protected class as enumerated in the “Law Against Discrimination,” P.L. 1945, c 169 (c.10:5-1 et seq); material produced by an author who is a member of a protected class as enumerated in the “Law Against Discrimination,” P.L. 1945, c 169 (c.10:5-1 et seq); and material that contains the author’s points of view concerning contemporary problems and issues, whether international, national, or local.

Governing body. Means a board of trustees, director or other chief administrative officer, a county library commission, or board of county commissioners of a public library

Individual with a vested interest. Any resident who is served by the public library or residents in a county or municipality where the library is situated.

Library material. Means any material, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books; magazines; reference books; supplementary titles; multimedia and digital material; software and instructional material, belonging to, on loan to, or otherwise in the custody of a public library.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The ultimate responsibility for the direction, purpose and scope of the Collection Management policy rests with the Library Board. The authority and the responsibility for the selection of library materials is delegated to the Library Director by the Library Board and, under his/her direction, to the professional staff who are qualified for this activity by reason of education, training, and experience.

Library Board – Establishes, reviews and updates policy. May serve as governing body.

Library Director – Coordinates implementation of policy, trains staff, approves purchases, serves as first responder for patron complaints. May serve as governing body.



Request for Reconsideration Review Committee – Reviews challenged materials, deliberates, and makes recommendation(s) to the governing body.

Collection Development Staff – Selects materials for the library collection that help to achieve the library's mission and follows the collection development policy. Manages the withdrawal of materials from the collection according to library's criteria (see Procedures).

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