

# 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 may also be used to inform the public and staff about the principles upon which selections are made. The policy will assist in budgeting decisions and responsible use of funds and define the purposes for the collection.

### **Definitions:**

*Selection* refers to the decision to add, retain, or withdraw materials in the library's collections.

*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.

### **Limitations:**

Portland Library is a smaller public library and its collection development is limited by budget and space.

Through resource sharing agreements and interlibrary loan the collection is available to a potentially very broad population. Public libraries cannot in general support the needs of higher education and research.

The Library will make reasonable efforts to obtain popular material. An item may not be acquired due to factors such as publisher's agreements and/ or budgetary constraints or redundancy in the collection.

### **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 statement of concern. See attached.

## **Criteria for materials selection**

The library supports intellectual freedom and as such has adopted the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*. Policies on discards and donations have also been adopted.

Each type of material shall be considered in terms of its own merit and the audience for whom it is intended. No single standard can be applied in all cases. It shall be the goal of the library to be inclusive, not exclusive, in developing collections. 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 significance or no longer in demand shall be removed on a systematic and continuous basis. A medium that is not generally in current use will not be included in the collection.

## **Gifts – see Donations policy**

### **Reconsideration**

The Library neither approves nor disapproves the views expressed in materials included in the collection. The Library cannot exclude all materials that could conceivably result in mental or physical injury to some individual, since theoretically any material could be harmful to someone if improperly used.

Responsibility for the use of materials by children and adolescents shall rest with their parents or legal guardians. While a person may reject materials for himself or herself and for his or her children, he or she shall not exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others.

Any customer residing in the Library's service area who objects to the presence (or absence) of a work may do so by completing the *Statement of Concern about Library Resources* form. The staff and Director will discuss the selection of the item to ensure that the selection is in accord with the materials selection policy. The Director will respond to the concern. If the Director's response is not acceptable, the Library Director and the Library Board shall review the concern and respond in a timely manner. While an item is under review it shall remain in the collection. The customer shall be informed of the Board's decision regarding the item of concern.

Digital and other materials are held by a consortium and may have been selected by other libraries. Only materials selected by Portland Library shall be subject to reconsideration by Portland Library.

See also policies on:

Discards  
Donations  
Library Bill of Rights

Approved by the Library Board  
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Town of Portland, Connecticut

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**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 \_\_\_\_\_