

Waterbury Public Library Policy: Materials Selection

Last revised: March 11, 2024

Intellectual freedom: Enlightened and informed citizenship is fostered and basic principles of liberty are reinforced by policies that protect intellectual freedom. The Waterbury Public Library provides a wide array of ideas and information to enable patrons to make decisions and choices for themselves. The Library provides equal access to materials and services for all, regardless of age, background, or belief and regardless of materials' possible use, format, or content. To these ends we hereby adopt and incorporate by reference the [LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS](#) and [THE FREEDOM TO READ](#) and [THE FREEDOM TO VIEW](#) statements adopted by the American Library Association.

Responsibility and criteria for selection: Library material selection responsibility is vested in the Library Director and Youth Librarian. Any book and/or material so selected shall be deemed to be selected by the Commission. The Library Director and Youth Librarian are responsible for determining the most appropriate placement/location of materials within the library (e.g. stories or picture books written or designed for young children placed in sections easily accessible to small children, etc.).

The Library Director and Youth Librarian uses professional judgment and expertise, enhanced by an understanding of the needs of residents of all ages within our community, to select materials. Reviews, standard lists of basic works, and recommendations from professional journals are used in the selection process.

Materials added to the library collection should meet high standards of quality. Factors to be considered include accuracy and authoritativeness, effective expression, significance of subject, current usefulness, interest, permanent value and cost. Relevance to the reading public and to the existing collection will also be considered. Library cardholders may also make recommendations, and these recommendations will be handled equitably and receive careful consideration in terms of overall objectives and the existing book collections.

Each item should be appraised as a creative unified whole, with consideration for the purpose of the item. Works which do not meet all of the standards, but which are of great interest, may be purchased to meet a strong, even if temporary, need.

When selecting library materials, the Library Director and Youth Librarian will consider the standards mentioned above, the overall needs of the community, and the library's budget. The Library will rely on interlibrary loan to borrow those materials which are beyond the scope of its collection.

Gifts: Gifts and donations *may* be accepted with the understanding that gifts of materials may be disposed of at the discretion of the Library Director if they cannot be used. The Library Director has the discretion to accept or refuse donations of materials by community members, in accordance with the above-mentioned considerations.

Memorial gifts are encouraged. Persons wishing to give memorial gifts should consult with the Library Director before making a choice.

Weeding, withdrawal, disposal: The collections will be weeded by library staff on a regular basis to eliminate outdated or inappropriate materials and to make room for new works. Each withdrawal or replacement should be judged individually using standard library tools, considering the work's physical condition, the existing collection as a whole, and the existence of the resource at other libraries. An effort will be made to retain a core collection of standard works and materials of historic interest. The Library Director has sole discretion for discarding withdrawn materials.

Procedure for review of selections: The Waterbury Public Library seeks to serve the needs of community members whose views are widely divergent. Therefore, the Library contains materials representing widely divergent views. All public libraries contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable. Materials in the Library that meet the selection and placement/location policy will not be removed or relocated because of pressure from individuals or groups. This includes the selection/placement of materials that young people may obtain to which their parents or guardians object. Children have free access to all materials and can only be restricted by their parents. However, residents have the right to petition their government (in this case the Library Commission), and therefore, the following procedures will be followed by a person or persons who object to the inclusion or placement of materials in the Library:

- 1) The library cardholder who wishes to protest the inclusion or placement of materials in the library must submit a written **Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources** form.
- 2) The complainant will give the completed form to the Library Director, who will immediately forward it to the Library Commissioners together with the Director's recommendation.
- 3) The complaint will be addressed at the next regularly scheduled Commissioners' meeting.
- 4) The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting and offer any clarifying or explanatory comments.
- 5) The Commission may discuss and make a decision on the complaint at this meeting or may defer a decision until a subsequent regular meeting.
- 5) After the Commission has made a decision, it shall be provided in writing to the complainant within seven days.
- 7) The decision shall include the rationale for the outcome.
- 8) A book that has been through the Reconsideration process will not be accepted for Reconsideration again for six months after the completion of the process.