

Madison County Public Library Collection Development Policy (2025)

Purpose

The Madison County Public Library's collection development policy is intended to guide staff, within budgetary and space limitations, in the selection and evaluation of materials which anticipate and meet the needs and interests of the local community. It also informs the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

Selection Philosophy

The Madison County Public Library will select materials which:

- Give access to a variety of opinions and ideas
- Represent and reflect all aspects of our community
- Aid citizens in making informed choices necessary in a democratic society
- Fulfill the information, education, cultural, civic, and recreational needs of the community

In selecting, the library also adopts the American Library Association principles listed below:

- The Library Bill of Rights ([Library Bill of Rights | Advocacy, Legislation & Issues](#))
- Freedom to Read ([The Freedom to Read Statement | Advocacy, Legislation & Issues](#))
- Freedom to View ([Freedom to View Statement | Advocacy, Legislation & Issues](#))

The library upholds the right of the individual to secure information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or objectionable to some.

Responsibility for Selection

Under the supervision of the Executive Director and Assistant Director of Collection Services, the Collection Services Manager is responsible for selecting and acquiring materials within the annual budget.

Selection Criteria and Tools

Selection presumes liberty of thought and intellectual freedom, as well as a wide range of viewpoints. Materials are selected based upon their value as a whole. All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection.

- Contribution to the diversity and scope of the collection
- Contemporary significance
- Relevance to the needs and interests of the community
- Popular appeal
- Physical format
- Quality of production
- Receipt or nomination for awards
- Reputation or significance of one of the creators of the work
- Available space
- Published evaluations or reviews

- Impact on budget
- Accessibility of material
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Relevance of format and content to the intended audience
- Effectiveness and suitability of format in communicating the content

The following tools may be used to aid in selection:

- Professionally recognized review journals
- Customer and staff suggestions
- Bestseller lists
- Publisher catalogs
- Relevant bibliographies and subject specialists
- Book vendors

The selection or presence of an item in the collection does not indicate the library's endorsement of its content.

Suggestions for Purchase

The library welcomes recommendations for materials to be added to the collection. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically added to the collection. It is the library's intent that suggestions for purchase be used to help in developing collections which serve the interests and needs of the community.

All material suggestions must be placed using the library's online suggestion form, found on the library's website.

Recently published items are given purchasing priority. If a request is not added to the collection, every effort will be made to borrow the item through interlibrary loan.

Gifts and Donations

Gifts of books and other materials are welcomed. All such gifts are accepted with the understanding they may or may not be added to any library collection. Donations are final and become the property of the Madison County Public Library.

Staff members review donated materials for potential addition to the library's collections. The library reserves the right to keep, discard, sell, or make other appropriate disposal of any books or materials that are donated as determined by its mission and needs. Materials may be given to the Friends of the Library for resale.

Donated items not generally accepted for the collection include:

- Material in poor condition (has stains, water damage, smell, writing, etc.)
- Formats not currently being collected by the library
- Textbooks
- Magazines & newspapers as well as magazine gift subscriptions

The library cannot appraise the value of donations. Donors seeking information on tax deductible donations should consult with a tax professional. Upon request, a receipt can be given for the donation.

Cataloging and Organization of Materials

To support parents and caregivers in selecting materials that align with their child's reading level and development, the library incorporates publisher-recommended age and reading level information into our catalog records and home locations. The library does not restrict access to any section or location based on age, grade, or reading level.

Collection Maintenance

In addition to acquiring new materials, the library will systematically and regularly evaluate existing collections for subsequent withdrawal of worn, obsolete, or infrequently used materials. This process of collection analysis incorporates the use of output measures, circulation reports, and other statistical information for continuous collection evaluation.

Materials that no longer meet the stated objectives of the library will be withdrawn from the system. Withdrawn materials may be resold, donated, or discarded.

Requests for Reconsideration

The library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject for themselves books or other materials of which they do not approve they cannot restrict the freedoms of others.

Materials are evaluated as complete works and not on the basis of a particular passage or passages. A work will not be excluded from the library's collection solely because it represents a particular aspect of life, because of frankness of expression, or because it is controversial.

The library ensures free access to its holdings for all who use the library. Parents and/or guardians are responsible for a minor's reading, listening, or viewing choices.

Madison County Public Library customers and those residing in Madison County who wish to recommend the removal or reclassification of a particular item in the collection may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form. The request will be reviewed by the Director, Management Team and relevant selectors (Collection Specialist and Youth Services Manager). Within five days of receiving a completed Request for Reconsideration Form, the director will communicate with the customer initiating the request in writing to establish a timeline for the process.

Any Request for Reconsideration will be evaluated based on the item's intended use, its placement within the collection, as well as its relation to the library's selection philosophy and criteria. The customer initiating the request will be notified of the result in writing once a decision is made.

In the event that the customer who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision, they may appeal for a hearing before the Board of Trustees by making a written request to the Board President. If a hearing is granted, the individual will be notified when they may address the Board. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of presentation and number of speakers at the hearing. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures. On the basis of this

determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision of the director. The Board's decision is final.