

TOPSFIELD TOWN LIBRARY

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The collection development policy serves to guide the development of a balanced and diverse library collection that meets the cultural and informational needs of the Topsfield community. The Topsfield Town Library endorses the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements, as appended.

The Library is part of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC), a regional group of public libraries with shared collections. The Topsfield Town Library is not responsible for what other libraries own nor in duplicating other collections.

"Collection" and "materials" include books, magazines, audiovisual (audiobooks, DVDs, etc.), Library of Things, electronic resources, and other formats that may be used for reference, information, or entertainment for adults, young adults, and children.

Responsibility

While the ultimate responsibility for the collection development policy rests with the Board of Library Trustees, the Library Director and designated senior staff are responsible for decisions regarding the ongoing selection and maintenance of the materials in the collection. Parents, guardians, or caretakers are exclusively responsible for deciding what their child may read, view, or hear. Members of the library staff will not act *in loco parentis* in permitting or denying access to any library materials to a patron based on age.

Criteria

Decisions regarding the materials selected for the collection are based on the judgment, research, and expertise of the Library Director and senior staff, following the standards and best practices of professional librarianship. When selecting items for the collection, the following criteria are considered:

- Ensures that key areas of the collection are kept up-to date including, but not limited to, core subject areas, classical works, topically current works, reference works, and works related to Topsfield/Essex County
- Ensures that the library's collection includes works that are popular among patrons and/or follow trends in the greater Topsfield area
- Authority of the author
- Literary quality
- Availability and cost
- Formats available
- Available space
- Availability in the MVLC consortium

These criteria are applied to materials that may include popular works, contemporary works, works of permanent value, works that fit in well with the existing collection, and works required to keep reference

or other nonfiction-related information current. The tools used for selection criteria include, but are not limited to, professional library publications, patron recommendations/suggestions, and other supplementary sources.

In no case is any material excluded on the basis of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or political or religious views. The library will attempt to provide, whenever possible, reasoned, accurate, well-written materials on different sides of controversial issues. These shall not be proscribed or removed from library shelves because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. The best efforts will be made to reject items that perpetuate misinformation.

Children's and Young Adult Selection Criteria

The criteria used for the adult collection applies to the children's and young adult collections. The collection is carefully selected for children of all ages. The Topsfield Town Library does not duplicate the resources nor follow all changes in the local schools' curriculum; however, the library does try to provide complementary and supplemental materials for students seeking to complete their assignments outside of school hours.

Maintenance

An integral part of collection development is maintaining the collection on a regular basis. Decisions regarding the duplication of materials, replacement and repair of materials, and the withdrawing of items from the collection (often referred to as weeding or deaccessioning) are made by the department heads and supervised by the Library Director. Maintenance criteria include accuracy of information, community interests and needs, financial factors, physical conditions of the materials, and space requirements. Deaccessioned materials may be rerouted to the Friends of the Topsfield Library, the Little Free Library, or other organizations.

Gifts

The library accepts donations of materials compatible with the collection. Gifts will be evaluated according to the same criteria used for purchased materials. The Director or a senior library staff member may advise a donor if the offered material seems unsuited to the collection or could still benefit the library as part of the Friends of the Library book sale. Memorial gifts will be acknowledged by the addition of a nameplate identifying the donor or person in whose honor the gift was made. Such gifts become the property of the library; donors may not restrict the use of a gift or stipulate the gift's location in the collection or method of exhibition. Donors may not specify an option to reclaim donated materials.

Objections

Any Topsfield patron who has a concern regarding the content of the material in the library's collection should submit their concern in writing to the Library Director, who will promptly review and respond to it. Should the patron have any questions relating to the Director's response, they will be referred to the Board of Library Trustees. Any action taken by the Trustees will follow the guidelines presented in this collection development policy. The material in question will remain available while the concern is under review.

Summary of Changes

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees on December 13, 2022; title changed to “Collection Development Policy” from “Materials Selection Policy;” edited for clarity and addition of new services offered by the library.