



4.0 Collection Development Policy

4.1 Introduction

The St. Joseph County Public Library Materials Selection policy exists to serve as a guide in the selection of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. Library staff create collections for the community of contemporary interest and enduring value, featuring print, non-print and digital material. The Library acquires, organizes and maintains these materials in order to provide access and improve the lives of our residents.

4.2 Objectives and Criteria of the Materials Selection Policy

It is the responsibility of the St. Joseph County Public Library to provide, within its financial ability, a diverse, equitable, and inclusive collection of materials which embraces broad areas of knowledge and interest - including materials of contemporary significance and of permanent value.

The Library recognizes an obligation to make available materials for enlightenment and recreation, even though such materials may not have enduring interest or value. Major guidelines governing selection of Library materials are:

- Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A), Freedom to Read (Appendix C) and Diversity in Collection Development (Appendix E) of the American Library Association;
- The needs and demands of people and community organizations, both expressed and anticipated;
- The merit of the work (material is judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not by selected or random passages);
- The obligation to reflect within the collection differing points of view on controversial subjects; Items that may be controversial or offensive to some users may be selected if they contribute to the range of viewpoints in the collection. The existing collection, budget and services.

SJCPL recognizes the purpose and resources of colleges, universities, special libraries and information centers in the St. Joseph County area and does not needlessly duplicate functions and materials. The Library does not purchase multiple copies for school use, nor does it supply locally adopted textbooks. Interlibrary loan service provides access to materials available from other libraries in the state when they are not available in our library.

4.2.1 Local Author Collection Policy

The St. Joseph County Public Library welcomes current residents of St. Joseph County to donate a copy of their new work to add to our Local Author Collection at the Main Library. Please fill out the Local Author Donation form located on the library's website.

Items related to local and family history will be shelved in the Local and Family History Department.

4.2.2 Local and Family History

Local & Family History (LFH) strives to acquire, preserve, promote, and provide access to print, microfilm, archival, and digital collections that document the history, communities, and people of St. Joseph County in support of the educational and research activities of our local and remote constituents. LFH considers donations of archival materials and professionally printed and bound books that have a local connection but is unable to accept three-dimensional objects, computer files, binders or loose notes.

4.3 Responsibilities for Materials Selection

The Executive Director has the authority to interpret and guide the application of the selection policy. The Director assigns librarians qualified by training or experience to the Collection Development Department to apply this policy in building and maintaining collections. Professional librarians in this department use their experience and knowledge of books, resources, publishers, patron requests, and professional reviews in the process of selecting materials. The Library subscribes to digital services in which third-party vendors, not Library staff, determine the specific titles or materials made available through the service. In these circumstances, the Library is unable to reconsider digital materials that an individual objects to, but may inform the third-party vendor of user concerns.

4.3.1 Patron Requests

Cardholders may request the Library add materials using the Suggest Material form on the SJCPL website or in person at any customer service desk. Requests will be considered based on age of work, relevance to the collection, cost and availability. Requested items may be acquired through interlibrary loan.

4.4 Labeling of Library Materials

Controversial library materials will not be marked or identified by Library personnel to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no item is controlled except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft following the Labeling and Rating Systems (Appendix F) of the American Library Association.

4.5 Use of Library Materials by Minors

The Library Bill of Rights and Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors (Appendix G) of the American Library Association states that the rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of age, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, socioeconomic or education level, or social or political views.

The responsibility for reading, listening to, viewing and using library materials and equipment by minors rests with parents or legal guardians.

4.6 Youth Selection Policy

In selecting library materials for children and teens, the Library's policy is to provide a diverse, equitable, and inclusive collection that meets the informational, recreational, and cultural needs of children from birth through high school.

4.7 Maintaining the Collections

The library will remove from its collections any materials which no longer serve a need based on currency, physical condition and demand. Items will be replaced or removed as appropriate. The library uses Evaluating Library Collections (Appendix H) from the American Library Association.

Replacement of a missing, lost and damaged item is based on availability, permanent value, and importance of the item, user demand and timeliness

Donated items will be managed in the same manner as purchased library materials (see section 6.2).

4.8 Reconsideration of Library Materials

The St. Joseph County Public Library recognizes that there may be concerns about specific titles and types of material selected for the St. Joseph County Public Library's print, non-print and digital collections. The Library will conduct a review following guidelines in Challenged Resources (Appendix I) from the American Library Association.

An Individual who desires to request an item for reconsideration must reside within the St. Joseph County Public Library district and complete the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form located on the Library website. A form must be completed for each title or series and may be submitted by mail, email or in person at any Library location.

The Request for Reconsideration form will be sent to the Collection Development Manager, who will notify the Executive Director and Administrative Team that a formal request has been made. A review committee consisting of three librarians will be appointed by the Executive Director and will meet within 10 business days to review the material and consider critical reviews. The committee will determine whether the material conforms to the Collection Development Policy based on the work as a whole. After review, the committee will submit its recommendation to the Executive Director for approval. All requests for reconsideration will be reported to the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom.

The Collection Development Manager will notify the individual of the decision in writing. The individual may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees. Requests for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director within 30 days of the date on the reconsideration notification. Such appeals will be heard at a regular meeting of the Board. The patron submitting the appeal will be given notice of the date and time and of that meeting. They must be present at that meeting and will have three minutes to speak to the Board. The

reconsideration review committee will then briefly present its reasons for retaining the book. The Board will determine what action to take. The patron will be informed of the Board's decision by letter.

The decision on each title reviewed for reconsideration will remain in effect for 5 years.

ALA policies and statements referenced:

- [Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Freedom to Read](#)
- [Diverse Collections](#)
- [Access to Library Resources for Minors](#)
- [Rating Systems](#)
- [Evaluating Library Collections](#)
- [Challenged Resources](#)