



Collection Development Policy

Effective January 20, 2022

Approved by the Portland Public Library Board of Trustees January 2022

Introduction

The Collection Development Policy provides a framework for development and maintenance of collections in support of Portland Public Library's mission. It serves as a resource for long range planning and is designed to be flexible and responsive. The policy is also meant to inform the public of the principles upon which Portland Public Library makes decisions regarding the curation of the collection.

Portland Public Library (PPL) is a general-purpose library system that serves the Portland, Maine region by providing access to a diverse collection of resources. As a regional library it shares its resources in reciprocal service arrangements with other libraries. The library is a publicly chartered non-profit corporation, supported by public and private funds, governed by a voluntary Board of Trustees, and administered by a professional staff.

Our Mission

Portland Public Library fosters learning, discovery, joy, and conversation to enrich our diverse community and advance literacy.

– Approved by the Board of Trustees on January 19, 2022 –

Intellectual Freedom, the Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read

The Board of Trustees believes that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy, and as such has reviewed and endorsed the Library Bill of rights:

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> as well as the Freedom to Read statement:

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> adopted by the American Library Association.

The Board of Trustees recognizes that PPL has a responsibility to protect and promote the patron's right to read, view, or listen to materials and resources protected by the First Amendment, no matter the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector.

The Library provides free access to materials in a variety of formats (print, electronic, and other media). In order to provide informational and educational support to a diverse population, the Board of Trustees directs that the Library be inclusive rather than exclusive in developing its collections. The Library has a responsibility to assure that all users have access to legally obtainable materials. Library users make their own choices as to what they will use based on individual interests and concerns. Selection policies should not unjustly exclude materials on the grounds that they may offend library users or library staff, or that they may be inappropriate for children. Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that they may come into the possession of children. Children are not limited to the children's collection. Responsibility for a child's reading must rest with the parent or guardian, not the library.

Collection Development Diversity Statement

Portland Public Library values and ensures diversity and the variety that is found among its collections. We value a range of coverage in perspectives, authorship, audience, and subject matter. We recognize that the diverse community the library serves needs inclusive collections. Library staff strive to build collections that tell the many stories of our community. We commit to regularly assessing the adequacy of existing collections to ensure they are reflective of the diversity of the community we serve.

Responsibility for Selection

With the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director delegates materials selection and management activities to the trained professional staff of the library. Materials selection and management of the specific collections in each of our libraries is performed in conjunction with subject specialist librarians and by the staff who work at each location and are familiar with their own patron needs. Any material so selected shall be held as if selected by the Board.

Selection Criteria

When selecting and maintaining materials, library staff will use reputable professional resources, metrics, judgement, knowledge, and experience. The following criteria inform selection decisions:

- Public appeal and/or demand
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Format durability and ease of use
- Relevance to the needs and interests of the community
- Cultural significance including literary or artistic merit, potential for lasting value, or vitality and originality of thought
- Role in maintaining a diverse collection representing many points of view
- Limitations of budget and space
- Availability, format, and price

Not all criteria need be met for consideration.

Collection Evaluation and Withdrawals

To provide the best materials to the community, the collection is regularly evaluated. Professional staff use industry standard resources to assist with determining material relevancy as well as the following criteria for withdrawal from the collection:

- Items are worn, stained, or damaged beyond repair
- Items are out of date, contain inaccurate information, or are not historically significant
- New, more current, or more comprehensive resources are available
- Duplication
- Low circulation
- Space considerations

Self-published titles

PPL does not typically add self-published books to the collection except in cases of high local interest. Library staff are not available to professionally review self-published works.

Requests for Reconsideration of Materials

If a complaint about an item in the collection is made, the following procedure will be followed:

- The complaint will be heard by the Area Director responsible for selecting the material in question (Director of Youth services for youth materials or the Director of Adult Services for adult materials).
- If the library user is not satisfied with the response given by the Area Director, they may then fill out a “Request for Reconsideration of Library Material” form available from the Area Director or Library Administration. A 3-member committee consisting of the Executive Director and 2 professional library staff members directly involved in materials selection will consider the request and determine whether the material meets the selection criteria outlined in this policy.
- The Executive Director will inform the library user, in writing, of the committee’s decision within 1 month of the receipt of the request form.
- If the library user wishes to appeal this decision, they may do so to the Board of Trustees at its next scheduled meeting. The Board will render their decision at the next scheduled meeting after that. The decision of the Board is final.
- No materials shall be removed from public use during the reconsideration process.
- The Library will only review requests from residents of the communities we serve.