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## **Collections Management Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Collections Management 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 collections.

Portland Public Library (PPL) is a general-purpose library system that serves the Portland, Maine region by providing access to diverse collections 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.

### **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). 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 ensure 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.

### **Collections Management 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**

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.

### **Selection Criteria**

When selecting and maintaining materials, library staff will use reputable professional resources, metrics, judgment, 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 to be met for selection.

## **Collections Evaluation and Withdrawals**

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

- 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

## **Gifts and Donations**

PPL does not typically add gifts or donations to the collections, except at the discretion of library staff. For an item to be added, it must meet the same selection criteria as outlined above.

## **Self-Published Titles**

PPL does not typically add self-published materials to the collections except in cases of high local interest. For an item to be added, it must meet the same selection criteria as outlined above.

## **Requests for Addition of Materials**

When a request for the addition of an item to the collections is made, library staff responsible for collecting in that area will review the request and apply the same selection criteria as outlined above. The library cannot add every title requested, but we do take requests seriously. Materials will be added if they meet the needs of the collections and selection criteria, and if the budget allows.

If a request for the addition of an item to the collections is denied and a complaint 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 Director of Adult Services for adult materials).

- If the requester is not satisfied with the response given by the Area Director, they may then fill out a “Request for Addition 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 requester, in writing, of the committee’s decision within 1 month of receipt of the request form. The decision of the committee is final.
- Material requests will only be considered for items that are currently published or released.
- The library will review requests only from individuals who reside in the communities we serve. PPL will not consider requests for addition of materials from groups.
- Requesters may only make one request for one item at a time.
- An item will be considered for addition only once in a twelve-month period.

### **Requests for Reconsideration of Materials**

If a complaint about an item in the collections 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 Director of Adult Services for adult materials).
- If the requester 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 requester, in writing, of the committee’s decision within 1 month of receipt of the request form. The decision of the committee is final.
- No materials shall be removed from public use during the reconsideration process.
- The library will review requests only from individuals who reside in the communities we serve. PPL will not consider requests for reconsideration of materials from groups.

- Requesters may only make one request for one item at a time.
- An item will be considered for removal only once in a twelve-month period.

## **Reviews and Endorsements**

Portland Public Library and its representatives will not accept requests to professionally review, edit, or endorse any works.