



Collection Development Policy

Purpose—A written Collection Development Policy aids Fairfield Public Library (FPL) staff in selecting and acquiring materials to meet the needs of residents in its service area, helps the public to understand how materials are chosen, and assists the Library Board in determining whether the Director is doing an acceptable job of building and maintaining the collection. FPL provides free access to library materials in varied subjects, perspectives, and formats to:

- **Inform** the public of timely issues and timeless ideas
- **Empower** citizens to explore diverse opinions and conduct research
- **Inspire** people to learn, create and discover
- **Entertain** all ages seeking recreation and leisure

Philosophy and Objectives—FPL is committed to providing access to information for residents of its service area inclusive of age, education, background, personal philosophy, religious belief, occupation, economic level, ethnic origin and human condition. FPL has adopted the American Library Association's guidelines for public access to information:

- Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom to Read
- Freedom to View

FPL does not function primarily as an archive, but it does have an archival responsibility to local history materials.

Responsibility—The Library Board adopts a Collection Development Policy, which becomes the guideline for building the collection. The Director is responsible for developing the collection in accordance with policy. S/he arranges for training, delegates some selection duties to staff, and gives final approval before materials are ordered. Patrons and staff are encouraged to recommend titles for consideration.

Criteria for Selection of Materials—FPL seeks to develop an actively used collection for a diverse population within the constraints of budget and shelf space, and to provide varied perspectives on controversial topics. Not all criteria listed below must be met, and no one criterion will be decisive. Materials purchased for the collection are not an endorsement by FPL of the contents or viewpoints presented

FPL's selectors consider whether material is:

- Relevant to community needs and interests
- Positively reviewed by trusted sources
- Authored by a credible and knowledgeable source
- An award winner
- Locally or nationally significant
- A core title, as defined by a current H.W. Wilson reference book
- Well presented for its intended audience
- Suitably formatted and durably bound for repetitive public use
- Able to fill a gap in the existing collection, or in the region
- Priced comparably to similar titles.

Criteria for **excluding** materials from selection:

- Textbooks and curriculum-related works, unless they are considered useful to the general reader as an introduction to a subject and their presentation is superior to other sources
- Scholarly and technical materials that are carried by academic or special libraries
- Items having removable media such as memorabilia, patterns, stickers, or toys unless the book is usable without those items
- Puzzle books or workbooks that encourage filling in blanks
- Materials that are publicized solely through infomercials or personal websites, and authoritative and evaluative information about them is lacking
- Self published/subsidy published materials unless they are reviewed favorably by trusted sources. Exceptions are sometimes made for materials by local authors.
- Subject matter is already adequately covered in the collection
- Material does not meet legal or licensing issues (Example: Proof copies of books)

Interlibrary Loans—Space and budget considerations impose restrictions on collection development. For that reason, FPL actively participates in sending and receiving interlibrary loans. This gives patrons access to other libraries' collections nationwide for a minimal transaction fee.

Gifts and Memorial Donations—The same criteria for materials selection apply to gifts and memorials. Once a donation is accepted by FPL, it becomes the property of FPL unconditionally. Gift materials not added to the collection may be sold in FPL booksales. Gift magazines and subscriptions are subject to the same selection and retention policies as those purchased by FPL. FPL will provide the donor a receipt upon request. However, FPL is not permitted to place a value on donations.

A memorial is created when money or material is donated for library materials, usually to honor an individual or group. FPL welcomes suggestions for purchases, but reserves the

right to make final decisions. Staff will insert a memorial bookplate into each item. Although library memorials are more lasting tributes to loved ones than flowers, they too have a life cycle. To maintain State accreditation, staff must follow professional standards for removing outdated items from the collection.

Number of copies—The number of copies purchased varies with a title's popularity. Demand for individual titles is monitored. Budget permitting, an additional copy is purchased for every fifth "hold request" received from patrons.

Collection maintenance—The collection receives ongoing review to maintain its relevancy and physical condition. Library staff apply the CREW method (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding), and exercise judgment in choosing which materials to retain or withdraw. Items listed on weed reports may be kept for these reasons: Local author, core title, in-house research, balance on controversial topic, historical research, likely to circulate when shelves are decongested, part of a series shelved together as a unit, or cataloging error.

Withdrawn items are generally routed to FPL booksales. This further benefits the library by funding programs and events. Materials that are damaged or otherwise unsuitable for sale are recycled to the extent possible.

FPL does not remove materials from its collection strictly for the purpose of selling them. Any items sold in booksales must first meet the CREW criteria described above.

Requests for Reconsideration—FPL trustees and staff believe in freedom of information for all, and do not practice censorship. This principle applies to all formats included in the collection. Many materials are controversial and any given item may offend some person. Selections are not made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the material and collection needs. Exclusion of materials may occur due to cost, accessibility, limited demand or lack of documentation, but never solely due to frank expression, coarse language, viewpoint, or mature content.

FPL holds borrowing habits to be a purely individual matter. While anyone is personally free to reject books and other materials, s/he may not restrict the free choice of others.

A formal procedure is in place to ensure that complaints and requests for reconsideration are handled in an attentive and consistent manner. FPL trustees will re-evaluate an item when they receive a completed and signed Request for Reconsideration form.

This collection development policy will be periodically evaluated and revised as times and circumstances require.