



# Collections Management Policy

Effective Date: 06/02/2025	Approval Date 06/02/2025
Supersedes P&P: Collection Management Policy	Previous version dated: 11/22/2023
Final approval by:  MARJORIE HARRISON, LIBRARY DIRECTOR	

## Purpose

To document established procedures and standard practices used for building and maintaining the collection of physical and digital resources at Anchorage Public Library.

## Policy

**Intellectual Freedom:** The Library recognizes that American democracy depends on an informed and engaged citizenry which can only be realized when a full range of ideas is accessible to people as embodied in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution which protects the free expression of ideas.

The Library's collection, protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and Article 1, Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Alaska, is a marketplace of ideas that reflects all experiences and points of view. The presence of an item in the Library does not indicate an endorsement of its content by the Library. Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and access is not restricted beyond what is required to protect materials from theft or damage.

The standards stated in this policy apply equally to the materials for children. The Library believes that individuals may reject for themselves and their children—and only for their children—materials which they find unsuitable. Caregivers who wish to limit or restrict the use of the Library by their children should personally oversee their selections.

**Selection Responsibility:** Ultimate authority for materials selection rests with the Library Director. The Collection Management Services Coordinator recommends policy and implements procedures for the development and management of the Library's collections. Collection management includes assessment of community needs; establishment of policy and budget to support those needs; the selection,

acquisition, maintenance, and promotion of materials; and evaluation of the collection and its effectiveness.

A team of librarians, under the direction of the Collection Management Services Coordinator, assists with collection management as Selectors. Selectors use professional judgment and expertise based on an understanding of user needs and knowledge of authors and publishers or producers. This policy provides guidelines to assist Selectors in choosing from the vast array of available materials.

**Selection Criteria:** There is no single standard which can be applied in all acquisition decisions. Some materials are judged in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or value. Others are selected to satisfy the recreational or informational needs of the community. Materials are judged on overall effect rather than specific illustrations, words, passages, or scenes which may be considered offensive by some.

Librarians select materials identified from sources including professional and commercial reviews, listservs and web sites, book lists and bibliographies, local culture and events, and public and staff recommendations.

All acquisitions are evaluated against the criteria listed below; materials need not meet all the criteria to be selected.

- A. General Criteria for the Evaluation of Library Materials:
  - a. Appropriateness and effectiveness of format to content
  - b. Attention of critics, reviewers, media, and public
  - c. Authority of author or creator
  - d. Availability and price
  - e. Contemporary significance or permanent value
  - f. Full spectrum coverage on controversial subjects
  - g. Popularity and local demand
  - h. Present and potential relevance to community needs
  - i. Prizes, awards, or honors received
  - j. Representation of cultural heritage
  - k. Reputation and/or significance of the author, illustrator, editor, publisher, or producer
  - l. Skills, competence, and purpose of author, producer, performer, etc.
  - m. Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
  
- B. Specific Criteria for the Evaluation of Works of Information and Opinion:
  - a. Authority of author
  - b. Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
  - c. Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
  - d. Contribution to subject balance of the entire collection and relationship to existing collection
  - e. Objectivity and integrity

- C. Specific Criteria for the Evaluation of Works of Imagination:
  - a. Artistic expression, presentation, and experimentation
  - b. Illustration of genre, trend, or culture
  - c. Sustained interest
  - d. Vitality and originality

**Self-Published Materials:** The Library may purchase self-published materials if they meet the criteria mentioned above and exhibit quality standards of editing and production.

**Suggest-A-Purchase:** The Library welcomes suggestions from the community for possible purchase of materials. All suggestions are given serious consideration. Suggestions are considered by the same criteria as all other materials purchased for the Library.

**World Languages:** The Library collects recreational and informational materials in languages other than English for adults and youth to meet the needs of the community. Materials in a variety of languages are collected based on community demographics and availability of materials.

**Digital Resources:** Digital resources, including e-Books, e-Audiobooks, streaming media, downloadable material, and databases are subject to the same general selection criteria as other materials. However, some digital materials are only available through subscription services and the Library does not control the content of subscription services.

**Special Items:** Staff creates, collects, and compiles special items such as packets and kits to fit community goals and educational outcomes.

**Reconsideration of Materials:** Individuals objecting to specific materials in the collection may initiate a request for reconsideration by filling out a Request for Reconsideration form available at all locations and on the Library web site.

A Request for Reconsideration will only be considered if it is from an individual who is a resident of the Municipality of Anchorage or is otherwise eligible to hold an Anchorage Public Library card. Materials challenged within the previous three calendar years are not eligible for reconsideration.

When a Request for Reconsideration is received, the Collection Management Services Coordinator will review the Request form and read, view or listen to the material being challenged. The Collection Management Services Coordinator will also assign two or more librarians who interact with and/or have relevant knowledge of the collection area and/or department from which the challenged materials originates to do the same.

Serving as the Reconsideration Committee, the Collection Management Services Coordinator and the assigned librarians will meet after individually reviewing the challenged material and collectively re-

evaluate it against the Collection Management Policy with consideration to how the material's presence in the collection does or does not follow Library policy and/or suit the Library's mission.

A written response from the Reconsideration Committee indicating the Library's position and any action taken will be sent to the individual making the complaint within 15 business days after the Collection Management Services Coordinator receives the Request for Consideration. If any delay in this process occurs due to the type of material being reviewed and/or the Library's ability to obtain adequate copies of the materials for all members of the Reconsideration Committee to review, the complainant will be notified of the delay and given a date by which the written response will be provided.

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision made by the Reconsideration Committee, they may send a written request to the Library Direction within 15 business days of receiving the committee's decision. The Library Director will review the appeal and will provide a written decision to the complainant within 15 business days, which will be final.

**Donations:** See Donation Policy

**De-Selection/Discarding:** The Library's collection is regularly reviewed by Selector librarians using weeding criteria to determine what items to keep or discard. Criteria considered during this review include, but is not limited to, physical condition, frequency of use, obsolescence, number of copies in the system, shelving space, research value, adequacy of coverage in the subject area, and availability of similar material.

Depending on how digital materials are acquired, which is determined by publishers, some items will expire within a set amount of time while others may have limits on the number of borrows allowed per purchase. When digital titles expire or their borrows are used in full, Selectors responsible for digital materials will consider the same weeding criteria that is applied to physical material and will determine if a digital item should be renewed or repurchased.

**Special Collections:** Anchorage Public Library curates a special Alaska Collection housed at the Z.J. Loussac Library.

**Alaska Collection:** The collection encourages the appreciation and enjoyment of Alaska's history, culture, development, institutions, and natural resources, and is relevant to the study and understanding of the state, including reference and research support.

The materials in the Alaska Collection encompass the Municipality of Anchorage, the state of Alaska, adjacent areas of the Arctic, and Native and Indigenous populations throughout. The collection includes most commercially published works on Alaska written for adults in the English language, Municipality of Anchorage public documents and publications, locally published works that contribute to the mission of the collection, and materials in Alaska Native languages.

Items collected include books, government documents, newspapers, periodicals, media, maps, microform, and electronic resources.

There are some genealogy resources and rare historical materials included in the Alaska Collection; but this part of the collection is not actively added to as other nearby institutions cover this subject more comprehensively.

## Departments/divisions affected

All Library departments.

## References

1. MOA P&P 01-01
2. MOA P&P 24-13 Maintaining Capital Asset Accountability and Financial Reporting, effective December 31, 2020
3. APL Donations Policy
4. Anchorage Public Library, Mission Statement
5. U.S. Const. amend. I
6. Alaska. Const. art. I, § 5 and Alaska. Const. amend I
7. Anchorage Public Library, Request for Reconsideration Form

## Definitions

**Intellectual Freedom:** the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored.

**Selection:** the process of choosing materials to add into the Library collection, with consideration to specific criteria, which is accomplished by professional librarians.

**Reconsideration:** the process of reviewing an item in the collection against which a library patron has submitted a complaint in writing using the Request for Reconsideration process.

**Request for Reconsideration form:** a written document that identifies the specific resource that is of concern and the reasons for reconsidering its inclusion in the library's collection.

**Reconsideration Committee:** a group of professional librarians, assigned by the Collection Management Services Coordinator, who review and respond to Requests for Reconsideration.

**De-selection/Discarding:** the process of removing or "weeding" materials from the Library collection, with consideration to specific criteria, which is accomplished by professional librarians.

**Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC):** generally referred to as simply “the library catalog,” an OPAC is a web-based user interface that allows users to access a library’s collection.

**Library Director:** agency head of the Anchorage Public Library. Any reference to Library Director applies to the director or their designee.

## Responsibilities

### Responsibilities related to selection/de-selection & management of the collection:

#### *Collection Management Services Coordinator:*

- Working under the supervision of the Library Director, manage the physical and digital library collections and all related aspects of collection management.
- Coordinate the librarians who make the selection and/or de-selection of materials.
- Oversee and assist with the processes of the related tasks, including the ordering and weeding of materials.
- Administer the vendor accounts and representative relationships.
- Working with the Budget Coordinator, manage the budget and documentation of the department.
- Coordinate with the Technical Services department for accurate and timely receiving and processing of materials.
- Work with Patron Services for the physical organization and tidiness of shelved materials for discoverability by patrons and staff.
- Respond to patron suggestions for the purchase or reconsideration of materials.

#### *Selection Librarians:*

- Using the selection criteria established by this policy, select materials to be added or removed from the collection.

#### *Technical Services Staff:*

- Receive and process material shipments.
- Work with the relevant entities to maintain the integrity of the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC).
- Maintain relationships with vendors.

#### *Patron Services Staff:*

- Shelve and maintain the physical collection according to established Library guidelines.
- Assist patrons with library materials.

#### *Budget Coordinator:*

- Working with the Collection Management Service Coordinator, manage the budget and documentation of the department.

#### *Library Director*

- Supervise the Collection Management Services Coordinator.

- Help guide the Collection Management Services Coordinator in the overall purpose and mission of the library collection.
- Make decisions as ultimate authority for material selection as needed, especially regarding the Reconsideration process.

**Responsibilities related to Reconsideration of Materials:**

*Collection Management Services Coordinator:*

- Respond to all Requests for Reconsideration submitted to the Library.
- Assign multiple librarians to review relevant material.
- Reply in writing to the complainant within 15 business days with the details of the Library’s position and any action taken (timeframe dependent on the Library’s ability to obtain adequate copies of the materials for all members of the reconsideration committee.)

*Library Director*

- Receive any written appeals of the Library’s Reconsideration of Materials decision.
- Review decision and material.
- Reply to the complainant within 15 business days with a written decision regarding appeal.

**Responsibilities related to donations made for the collection – See Donation Policy**

## Procedure

Manage the Library’s collection, including both physical and digital materials, by utilizing this policy’s standards for selection and de-selection while striving to represent the entire community of Anchorage, and providing educational and informational resources that fulfill the mission of the Anchorage Public Library.

## Annual review date/lead review responsibility

This policy will be reviewed every two years by:

1. Collection Management Services Coordinator
2. Library Leadership Team
3. Library Director

List reviews and/or edits for the previous 10 years.

Review Date	Review Agency	Review/Edit
5/27/2025	Leadership Team	Review/Edit

5/21/2025	Library Advisory Board	Review
5/10/2025	Marjorie Harrison, Library Director	Review
5/8/2025	Emily Paige, CMS Coordinator	Edited
03/06/2025	Majorie Harrison, Library Director	Review
7/23/2024	Library Leadership Team (separate material donation policy created)	Review/Edit
6/3/2024	Emily Paige, CMS Coordinator	Edited
2/16/2024	Library Leadership Team	Review
11/22/2023	Virginia C. McClure, Library Director	Edited
8/19/2020	Library Advisory Board	Review
8/19/2020	Mary Jo Torgenson, Library Director	Edited
9/15/2021	Library Advisory Board (Material Donations Policy)	Review
9/15/2021	Judy Eledge, Library Director (Material Donations Policy)	Edited