

# General Materials Selection Policy

*The public library exists primarily to provide access to information on all subjects, from all points of view, to all people who live in the geographic area served by the library regardless of race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, income, age or any other arbitrary classification.* [Office for Intellectual Freedom. American Library Association. *Intellectual Freedom Manual*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: ALA, 2006:8.]

## Need for a Materials Selection Policy

Public libraries have to follow some form of selection guidelines because facilities and budgets restrict the amount of materials they can acquire. A written plan helps librarians select, organize, and maintain library materials in a consistent manner over time within the context of their own circumstances. In addition, the purpose of the policy is to guide the selection of materials of contemporary significance, of permanent value, and with relevance, to make the Library a dependable resource for most people most of the time.

## Definitions

“Selection” refers to the decision that must be made either to add a specific item or to retain material already in the collection. It is a process to meet patron needs and does not necessarily reflect the opinions or values of the selection team. It is not an endorsement by the Library for the content or viewpoint presented.

The words “book,” “library materials,” and other synonyms as they appear in this policy have the widest possible meanings; all forms of recorded communication, from the traditional printed forms to the latest development in nonprint media, are therefore included in this definition.

The word “collection” refers to a group of books or other library material having a common characteristic or located in one place.

“The library” refers specifically to the Kingston, TN Public Library.

## The materials selection process:

- Reflects the influences of the community served
- Provides a basis for acquiring material and information
- Defines the library’s mission and goals for the collection
- Sets coherent boundaries for the collection
- Provides a systematic management of the library’s collection
- Provides a systematic method for utilizing the budget
- Sets a system wide standard for the organization of materials
- Serves as a training tool for library staff
- Promotes the sharing of materials among locations

## **General Selection Criteria at the Kingston Public Library may include:**

Availability within the system  
Currency or timeliness  
Enduring value  
Appeal for the local audience  
Subject relevance or popular topics  
Demand or anticipated demand  
Authority of the piece or critical review  
Local significance  
Format  
Collection gaps  
Potential for promoting reading and use of the library

## **General Collection Maintenance**

The goal of the library is to provide a planned and well-balanced collection for the community. The materials are continually and thoughtfully reevaluated to determine if they still meet the library's selection guidelines and the expectation of the community served.

General considerations used to identify materials to be weeded include but are not limited to the following:

Old, out of date, damaged or no longer popular  
Erroneous due to passage of time, incomplete information, or dated point of view  
Duplication  
Superseded editions  
Lack or loss of interest  
Relevance to population served  
Circulation Statistics

## **Use of the Library's Collection**

Materials are not removed or avoided because of expression, language, viewpoint or mature content. Kingston Library supports the right of individuals to choose what they will or will not use from the library's collection. Parents or parental guardians make these choices for their minor children. While individuals may choose for themselves or their children, they may not choose for others.

Patrons not finding desired material in the Library's collection may request that it be borrowed on interlibrary loan or that it be purchased using the *Interlibrary Loan/Patron Book Request* form (KPLF-3). Patrons who find certain library material objectionable to their personal values or those of a segment of the community which they represent or claim to represent may request that it be reconsidered by using the *Request for Reconsideration of Library Material* form (KPLF-5). Both forms should be available at the library front desk.