

**Collection Development Policy**  
**Dorchester County Public Library**  
**March 2019**

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**I. Mission Statement of the Library**

The Dorchester County Public Library will promote a lifelong pursuit and appreciation of

literacy, information, and technology. The library will ensure equality and fair access to all materials in support of intellectual freedom. Provision of a wide range of resources in various formats and perspectives will be maintained and updated on a regular basis. It is a priority for the library to provide resources and programs that will encourage patrons to be lifelong learners and civic members of the service community.

## **II. Purpose of the Collection Development Policy**

The policy is designed to provide guidelines for the selection, acquisition, removal, and replacement of library materials. The principles included, along with the American Library Association's *Bill of Rights*, create a framework for this policy with regard to the Dorchester County Public Library system. Collection development is the ongoing process of maintaining the library's collection in terms of community needs and interests, items of local historical importance, and current resources of quality informational and entertainment value. It is vital that the library maintain a collection that promotes intellectual freedom, supports and enhances community interests, meets the needs of patrons, and provides equal access to information.

## **III. Library Service Community**

The Dorchester County Public Library consists of two branches, with the Central branch in Cambridge, Maryland, and the secondary branch in Hurlock, Maryland. Dorchester County is a rural service community with a fairly transient population. The county resides on the lower end of the socio-economic scale, but is slowly making progress with new business and tourism endeavors, often highlighting the cultural history of the area. Five out of seven elementary

schools are Title I schools (as of 2018). The Library plays a crucial role in the encouragement and promotion and provision of literacy and information resources to the community.

#### **IV. Current Library Collections**

The Library provides materials in a variety of formats so that all patrons may access library resources and information.

- Print: books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, flyers, maps, and documents
- Digital Resources: databases, software, electronic books, downloadable audio books, videos, and music
- Audiovisual Media: videos on DVD and Blu-Ray, music on compact disc, and books on CD
- Other: Braille books for children, microfilm, educational toys, devices for the physically impaired

#### **V. Selection, Acquisitions, Processing, and Consortial Responsibilities**

##### **Selection of Materials**

Library materials are selected by trained librarians and library staff. Selection is a cooperative, ongoing process. Recommendations and materials requests from administration, library staff, patrons, and community members will be considered. The majority of materials selected should be favorably reviewed in one or more current professional review sources, such as, but not limited to, *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*, *Library Journal*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *American Libraries*, and/or *Kirkus Reviews*. Items on bestseller lists (such as from Amazon.com, Barnes

and Noble Booksellers, and the *New York Times*) and recommended/required school reading lists should also be given consideration.

General criteria for selecting materials is provided. Not all criteria must be met in order for an item to be selected.

- Public demand, interest, or need
- Enduring interest or significance
- Competence of author, publisher, or creator
- Timeliness of material
- Relation to existing collection content
- Authenticity and accuracy of information
- Accessibility of format
- Purpose and intended audience
- Representation of new and diverse viewpoints
- Cost/Use ratio with regard to existing collection
- Scholarly reviews
- Current and anticipated appeal

### **Acquisitions**

Materials will be finalized and ordered by the Lead Acquisitions Librarian with regard to budget, current collections and resources, and the other aforementioned selection criteria. The librarian may utilize a digital book ordering service such as Follett's *Titlewave*, Baker and Taylor's *Titlesource*, Penworthy Books, Bound-to-Stay-Bound Books, or other resources as necessary.

Electronic resources and services will be reviewed and acquired in consultation with the electronic resources group of the Eastern Shore Library Consortium.

### **Processing Materials**

Purchased library materials will be processed as “shelf-ready” items by the vendor if included at reasonable cost. Processing of materials will otherwise be completed by select library staff.

Items will be cataloged by the Head Cataloger and supporting copy cataloging staff, as needed.

### **Consortial Considerations**

The Dorchester County Public Library is a member of the Eastern Shore Library Consortium, which is made up of eight member counties. Reciprocal borrowing of circulating materials occurs between all eight counties. The number of consortial patrons on a “wait-list” for popular titles, especially those within county, should also be considered with regard to the amount purchased of a singular, in-demand title. Acquisition of in-demand titles in various formats should also be considered whenever possible (large print, digital, audio-visual, etc.).

## **VI. Gifts**

When organizations and individual parties express interest in donating books, reference resources, and other related materials to the library, trained library staff should review potential donations using the aforementioned selection criteria, as well as the following considerations:

- Materials should be in new, or barely used, condition.

- Reference materials and other nonfiction resources should be no more than three to five years old.
- Science, medical, computer, and other resources in rapidly changing subject areas should be no more than three years old.
- Fiction books, more than 10 years old, will not be accepted, with the exception of classics in excellent condition.
- Nonfiction books should not emphasize stereotypes and/or oversimplification of complex issues.
- Magazines should be no more than three years old.
- Textbooks, workbooks, Reader's Digest anthologies, encyclopedias, pamphlets, and catalogs will not be accepted.
- Monetary gifts are always welcome to support and enhance library collections and programs.

### **Placement of Donated Materials**

- Not all gift materials are added to library collections. Unused items are not returned to the donor(s).
- Gifts added to the collection are placed where trained library staff deem most fitting.
- Unusable gifts may be given to the Friends of the Library, placed for sale in the ongoing "lobby" book sale, given to another community organization, or disposed of as determined by trained library staff.
- The Library cannot place a monetary value on gifts, for taxes or any other purpose, but

can procure a receipt for number of items donated.

## **VII. Collection Maintenance and Evaluation**

### **Deselection**

The maintenance and deselection of items from the collection is just as important to providing an effective collection as acquiring new materials. The previous selection criteria can be used to help with the deselection (or “weeding”) of materials from the collection. “Weeding” is a process by which materials found no longer useful or in readable condition are removed from the library collection. Weeding and maintenance should be ongoing to best ensure a current and relevant library collection. Types of materials eligible for weeding, or deselection, from the library are:

- Circulation statistics of an item, dependent on subject area, collection, and item type
- Items with extensive damage or signs of age detrimental to the reading experience
- Sources which contain material that is no longer accurate or relevant. (Often applies to materials in science, technology, etc.)
  
- Availability of other titles related to subject/topic in question
- Format accessibility and availability of material elsewhere (i.e. in other libraries or digitally accessible)
- Resources that have revised, updated editions (record books, price guides, travel, some medical)

- Duplicate copies of a title with decreased demand
- Outdated or damaged audiovisual materials and equipment
- Local and state history/culture materials should be kept, maintained, and/or preserved, whenever possible

### **Discarded Materials Procedure**

- Deselected items should be properly removed from the shelf inventory and library catalog.
- All property markings must be crossed out or covered before dispersion.
- Items may be donated to other non-profit organizations or added to the ongoing Friends of the Library book sale
- Outdated, inaccurate items should be recycled
- Severely damaged items should be discarded

### **Replacements and Repairs**

Lost or damaged items will be replaced when budgets allow and reader demand is high. An item may be replaced with the following considerations:

- Availability of new/revised editions of titles and classic titles
- Timely and accurate materials on a topic or subject area
- Frequency of use
- Items are *not* automatically replaced because of loss, wear, or damage

Items may be repaired if the library has the means to do so and if repair of the item will extend the “life” of the item. Other considerations when faced with a possible repair:

- Overall condition and usability of item
- Availability of duplicate copies of title and/or other titles on subject area
- Efficiency and effectiveness of needed repair(s)
- Cost and effectiveness of repair versus cost of replacement

### **VIII. Intellectual Freedom**

According to the American Library Association (ALA): “Intellectual freedom is 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.”

The Library supports the freedoms of speech and press, as protected by the U.S. Constitution. To this end, the Library strives to create and provide a balanced collection that represents the wants and needs of a diverse community. Inclusion of an item in the collection does not mean that the ideas or views expressed within are supported or endorsed by the Library.

Patrons are welcome to select or reject any materials in the collection, but *not* to restrict the freedom of others to choose materials. Decisions regarding the appropriateness of children’s materials lies with the responsible parent or guardian of each child. Materials selected for adults are not limited by possible exposure to children or teenagers.

The Library is committed to providing free and open access to its collections, and to connecting patrons with a wide variety of ideas, information, and materials in a friendly, nonjudgmental manner.

## **IX. Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve

should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

*Adopted June 19, 1939. Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980; inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.*

## **X. Reconsideration of Materials**

The Library welcomes differences of opinion concerning materials selected or not selected for the collection. A patron concerned about the content, tone, or placement of an item in the collection should first address a library staff member. Patrons who wish to continue their request for reconsideration of an item may complete and submit a Request for Reconsideration form, complete with name, signature, address, and reason(s) for concern. The patron must be a resident of Dorchester County, Maryland, and hold a valid library card from the Dorchester County Public Library. Material in question and purchased according to the Library’s selection criteria will not automatically be removed from the collection.

Reconsideration forms will be forwarded to the Library Director and Selection Review Committee. The review committee will consist of the Library Director, the Assistant Director, library supervisors, collection development personnel, and acquisitions staff. The decision by the review committee will be sent via letter by the Library Director or Assistant Director. Decisions made by the review committee may be appealed in writing to the Dorchester County Public Library Board of Trustees, care of the Library Director. The Library Board of Trustees

will consider the appeal at their next regularly scheduled meeting to which both the patron and representatives from the Selection Review Committee will be invited to share their perspectives and concerns. The decision of the Library Board of Trustees will be final.

## **XI. Copyright Law**

Dorchester County Public Library strive to uphold and maintain copyright laws. Staff should also be cognizant of the *Fair Use Doctrine*, which, according to ALA, states:

“The Fair Use Doctrine provides for limited use of copyrighted materials for educational and research purposes without permission from the owners. It is not a blanket exemption. Instead, each proposed use must be analyzed under a four-part test.

‘Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use’ (Section 107) offers a set of factors to consider when using copyrighted work for teaching or research. Specifically, the factors include:

1. the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
2. the nature of the copyrighted work;
3. the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
4. the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.”

## **XII. Policy Revision**

This statement of policy will be revisited [and revised as needed] on an annual basis, or as circumstances require, throughout the year. Revisions will be set forth by library supervisors and

must be approved by the Library Director and the Board of Library Trustees.