

Norwich Public Library
Collection Development Policy
January 29, 2020

Introduction

Norwich Public Library, located in Norwich, Vermont, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization funded by a variety of sources: a town appropriation, an annual fund campaign, grants, investments, and miscellaneous library fees. This policy has been created to serve as a guide and a resource to Library staff and trustees, patrons, and the public at large.

1. Library Mission

The Norwich Public Library serves as a community center for the town providing traditional and innovative resources for all patrons and offering library experiences that support education, imagination, and community engagement.

2. Policy Objectives

The Library serves the people of Norwich and surrounding communities regardless of age, background, or circumstance. No material will be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political, and/or social views of the author. The Library supports “the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction” as laid out in the American Library Association statements on intellectual freedom. Additionally, it is the Library’s belief that libraries should challenge censorship in all forms in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

3. Description of the Collection

The Library maintains a collection of over 34,000 volumes, including books, magazines, DVDs, audiobooks, and a collection of digital resources. The Library develops the collection based upon knowledge of the community, empirical data about the use of the collection, and input from staff and patrons. Selection of materials does not mean endorsement of the contents or views expressed in those materials

4. Responsibility for selection

Ultimate responsibility for the Library’s collection rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Directors. All staff members participate in the selection of library materials.

5. Selection Criteria

a. *Philosophy:*

Patron use is the most powerful influence on the Library's collection. Circulation, customer purchase requests, and holds levels are all closely monitored, triggering the purchase of new items and additional copies of high demand items. The other driving force is the Library's strategic plan.

Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature and reflect the diversity of the community. The reading and viewing activity of children is ultimately the responsibility of parents, who guide and oversee their own children's development. The Library does not intrude on that relationship.

b. *Criteria:* Staff use their training, knowledge and expertise along with the following general criteria to select materials for the collection:

- Relevance to interests and needs of the community
- Extent of publicity, critical review, and current or anticipated demand
- Current or historical significance of the author or subject
- Local significance of the author or subject
- Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, publisher or producer, with preference generally given to titles vetted in the editing and publishing industry
- Suitability of format to Library circulation and use
- Date of publication
- Price, availability, and Library materials budget

c. *Multiple copies:* The Library will purchase multiple copies of high-demand materials when warranted based on the number of holds.

d. *Textbooks:* The Library does not buy textbooks.

e. *Books and other traditional media:* The Library purchases resources in the most appropriate format for patron use.

f. *Online resources:* The Library makes available state-provided databases and subscribes to online resources it determines are useful to the community.

g. *New formats* will be considered for the circulating collection when, by industry report, national survey results, and evidence from local requests, a significant portion of the community population has the necessary technology to make use

of the format. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete a format from the Library's collection.

- h. *Special collections*: The Library creates collections of objects for circulation as deemed of interest to the community. Examples include, but are not limited to: toys, games, exercise equipment, cooking utensils.

6. Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) is not a substitute for collection development, but is meant to expand the range of materials available to library users. All ILL requests for recent material are considered for purchase. In addition, all titles that have been requested through ILL at least three times in a year are given priority for selection.

7. Collection Management

- a. *Community suggestions*: Patrons may request items the Library does not own. Each request is reviewed for inclusion in the collection or for loan through Interlibrary Loan. Staff determine the best method for delivery of materials using the selection criteria.
- b. *Gifts*: The Library accepts donations of new and used materials that will be integrated into the collection at its discretion. Final decision for disposition of donated materials rests with the Library Director. The Library cannot provide appraisals of donations for tax purposes, however a standard donation form authorized by the Library detailing a physical description only, of the donation(s) will be provided on request, for tax purposes. New items that are purchased for the library with approval for the collection may have a customized memorial or honorary book plate inserted at the donor's request.
- c. *Challenges*: Library patrons may request reconsideration and removal of items in the collection by submitting a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form. The Library Director reviews the request and replies within thirty days of receipt. The item in question will not be removed from the shelf during the reconsideration process. A decision may be appealed in writing to the library Board of Trustees.
- d. *Maintenance and deselection*: Withdrawal of materials from the collection is determined by staff and occurs if materials are found to have inaccurate information, show more than usual signs of wear, are damaged beyond repair, have been superseded by newer editions, or are no longer relevant to the collection, regardless of format. Relevance is determined by community use and professional judgement by staff.

Conclusion

The Library is dedicated to service to the community, and this includes feedback on collections. If, after reading this policy, any individual or group has questions or would like to discuss the matter further, they are encouraged to contact the Library Director. Please see the links listed below for references consulted in the creation of this policy.

References

American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/freedomreadstatement>

American Library Association Library Bill of Rights

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/>

American Library Association Labeling and Rating of Library Materials

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/labelingrating>

American Library Association Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/accessdigital>

American Library Association Free Access to Libraries for Minors

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/accessdigital>

American Library Association Resources for Intellectual Freedom

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/resources>