



POLICY

SECTION: 12.1.a

SUBJECT: Materials Selection

The goal of materials selection at Richmond Public Library is to provide a range of materials in a variety of print and non-print formats to meet the informational, cultural, educational, and recreational needs and interests of the entire Richmond community. The Library strives to create an attractive, up-to-date, balanced collection representing all fields of knowledge and all sides of issues in a neutral, unbiased manner, as budgets, availability of materials and space permit.

The existence of a particular viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the Library's policy of intellectual freedom, not an endorsement of that particular point of view. The Library encourages free expression and free access to ideas – essential elements in a democratic society – and does not knowingly discriminate in its material selection regarding age, race, beliefs or affiliations of the author or producer. The Library subscribes to the principles of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* and *Freedom to Read*.

Responsibility for the reading of minors rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection of adult material will not be limited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of minors.

Professional librarians make selections, based primarily upon material review and knowledge of a publisher's expertise in specific subject areas. The public and other Library staff are encouraged to recommend titles, which are evaluated according to the Library's selection guidelines. Library Branch Managers are responsible for the overall maintenance and quality of their individual collections. The Library Director is ultimately responsible for the selection of all books and other library materials. The authority for book selection is delegated to him/her by the Library Board, which determines the policies of the Library.

Criteria for Selection

- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Current and projected demand
- Relevance to existing subject coverage in the collections
- Clarity, readability and ease of use
- Timeliness or permanence of material
- Accuracy and authenticity
- Literary merit and inclusion in standard bibliographies and indices
- Current and historical significance
- Authority and reputation of the author, publisher, and/or producer
- Local authorship or production
- Costs
- Technical aspects of audiovisual materials
- Regional availability and accessibility
- Space and maintenance requirements
- Online, network and remote access capabilities

Selection Tools

Librarians depend on reviews issued in library-related publications, as well as in general publications. Two satisfactory reviews are sought for each purchase. Selection tools also include noted award titles and lists, classroom reading lists, and bestseller lists.

Replacements

Materials that have been withdrawn or lost will be replaced with new titles or new editions of classic titles on a continuing basis, based upon budgetary constraints and subject needs. Reading lists and review journals will be used to ascertain the best and most timely publications in a subject field. The Library does not automatically replace items withdrawn because of loss, damage or wear.

Gifts

See separate policy/procedure under specific heading

Reevaluation of Material

See separate policy/procedure under specific heading

Withdrawal of Materials

See separate policy/procedure under specific heading

Adopted: June 15, 2005
Revised: September 2006