

Collection Development Policy

The Akron-Summit County Public Library (ASCPL) strives to include materials to cover the widest range of subjects and viewpoints consistent with the interests and needs of the community within budgetary and space constraints. The collection reflects diverse political, religious, and socioeconomic views and contains representative materials for a variety of abilities, races, ethnicities, sexualities, and gender identities. The inclusion of an item in the collection in no way represents an endorsement by ASCPL of any idea, policy or theory contained in that item.

While the Library Board of Trustees has the responsibility to establish policies for the selection of materials, the responsibility for materials selection ultimately rests with the Executive Director. The direct selection of materials is delegated to the Collection Development Department and other professional staff who are determined to be qualified due to their education, experience, job classification and training.

Principles of Materials Selection

The Library collection serves as a central reference and referral source for the community with a broad range of circulating and non-circulating materials for adults, children, and teens. Digital resources are available at all Library locations and via remote access when possible.

Materials are selected in a variety of formats to address the needs of current and potential users regardless of ability, age, educational level, gender, nationality, political affiliation, race, religion, sexuality, or socioeconomic status. In acquiring materials, the overall value of each item, as a whole, determines whether it is added to the collection.

The Library shall apply one or more of the following selection criteria when evaluating materials:

1. Value - literary, educational, informational, or recreational

2. Authority - accuracy, objectivity, and effectiveness of expression
3. Accessibility - ease of use by unique segments of the community (e.g., adult new readers, children and teens, customers with disabilities)
4. Relative importance of subject matter to the collection
5. Timeliness and social significance
6. Importance of the author or creator in the field
7. Relationship to other works in the same field
8. Comparative scarcity of material on the subject
9. Community use or demand
10. Cost and availability, either by purchasing or by borrowing from another library
11. Suitability of format for library purposes
12. Attention of critics, reviewers, media, and the public

When considering digital materials, some collections and databases are provided through the State of Ohio. Additionally, some digital collections purchased by the Library are provided "as is" from the vendor. For these types of resources, ASCPL professionals do not select individual titles. The value of the resource, as a whole, is a prime consideration for its addition to the collection.

The inclusion of independently or self-published materials is based on the merits of the work and must meet the criteria for selection set forth in this policy. Works by local authors, defined as current or former residents of Summit County, and works that have regional interest may receive special consideration.

The Library's collection is inclusive and represents multiple viewpoints of issues as far as availability of materials, budget and space allow. Selection of materials use the criteria stated in this policy. The gender, nationality, political views, race, religion or sexuality of an author or creator; offensive language; depictions or descriptions of violence or sexually explicit activity; controversial content of an item; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community

does not cause an item automatically to be included or excluded from the collection.

There may be materials that a customer may find objectionable. Conversely, material that a customer feels is important may not be in the collection. In either event, the Library has procedures to request the inclusion or request the reconsideration of materials.

Use of the Collection By Persons Under the Age of 18

The responsibility for monitoring an individual child's listening, reading, and viewing habits rests with their parent or guardian. Selection of materials for the entire library collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials that their parents or guardians consider inappropriate.

Internet Statement

Although the Library provides customers with access to the Internet, it is the responsibility of the customer to use good judgment when considering which resources to use. Internet content is not evaluated as part of the Collection Development Policy.

Donations

The Akron-Summit County Public Library accepts donations of materials with the explicit understanding that the item may be retained or disposed of at the discretion of the Library. No monetary appraisal is made of donated materials. The Library will give the donor a written acknowledgment recording the quantity of items. Materials that are not added to the Library's collection will be forwarded to the appropriate Friends of the Library organization where they may be sold, donated to another organization, or discarded.

Donations of large collections which fall into subject categories or areas not previously developed by the Library will receive careful study. Considerations for

acceptance include the cost implications, maintenance, growth of the specific collection and relevance to the overall mission of the Library.

Donations of materials sponsored by commercial or special interest groups will be carefully evaluated to ensure that they conform to the selection criteria set forth in this policy.

When the Library receives a monetary donation for the purchase of materials, the Collection Development staff will select appropriate titles using the Principles of Material Selection listed in this document.

Collection Maintenance

It is the routine practice of the Library to evaluate materials for withdrawal based on a variety of criteria including age, condition, accuracy, and demand. The responsibility for weeding is shared among branch, division, Mobile Services and Collection Development staff.

Withdrawn materials may be considered for replacement. Others may be updated with more timely materials on the subject. The same principles used for original selection will be applied to replacements.

Resource Sharing

The Library affirms its commitment to interlibrary cooperation. In some cases, the most satisfactory service to a library customer is retrieval of materials via an interlibrary loan, or by referral to another library or community agency. In all cases, the staff of the Library shall offer available resource sharing options in order to meet the informational needs of the customer.

Procedure for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Respecting the right of each person to have the freedom to read, view and listen is central to what public libraries provide for the community. It should be a

rare occurrence that material would be removed based on an objection to its content.

Library customers who live in the ASCPL service area as defined by the State Library of Ohio, may use the following procedure to request the removal of material they find objectionable. A separate Request for Reconsideration Form must be submitted for each library title. There is a limit of two Reconsideration Requests per ASCPL customer (or organization they represent) per year.

The customer should first express their concerns to the manager of the ASCPL location where they encountered the material. That manager may be able to convey reasons it is included in the collection. If the customer is dissatisfied with the explanation, the next step is for the customer to discuss it with the Collection Development Coordinator. At this point, the customer may ask for a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form and return the completed form to:

Collection Development Coordinator
Akron-Summit County Public Library
60 S. High Street
Akron, Ohio 44326-0001

Upon receipt of the completed form, the Executive Director will convene an ad hoc Library Materials Reconsideration Committee. The committee will include the Collection Development Coordinator and other appropriate Library personnel with subject or age level expertise. Members of the committee will receive a copy of the form as completed by the customer and a copy of the title under reconsideration. The committee will

- Read, view, or listen to the material in question in its entirety
- Review the selection process and criteria for selection, including customer requests, if any
- Research reviews and recommended lists to determine recommendations by experts and critics

- Consider the customer's stated objection(s) to the material
- Meet to discuss the material in question
- Within 30 days of the submission of the form, report in writing to the Executive Director its recommendation for retention, removal, or relocation of the material and the reasons for the recommendation.

While an item is under reconsideration, it will remain on the shelves. The Executive Director will consider the committee's report and inform the customer, in writing, of the Executive Director's decision about the material.

If the customer is not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, the customer may submit, within fourteen days after the decision is sent, a written appeal to the Board of Trustees of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. The appeal should be in the form of a letter addressed to:

President, Board of Trustees
Akron-Summit County Public Library
60 South High Street
Akron, Ohio 44326-0001
Attention: Request for Reconsideration

The Board will review the Executive Director's decision to determine whether it is consistent with the Collection Development Policy. The Board will reverse the decision of the Executive Director only if it finds that the decision was clearly inconsistent with the Collection Development Policy.

The Executive Director will inform the customer, in writing, of the results of the Board's review. Decisions by the Board to deny an appeal are final and there will be no further reconsideration of the material for five years.

Adopted October 31, 2024
ASCPL Board of Trustees