

EASTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

Mission Statement of the Library

To advance literacy, foster creativity, and enhance lives by connecting people with the world of ideas and information, while remaining responsive to the community.

Purpose

This policy is intended to provide guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of Library and other educational materials, heretofore referred to as Library materials, both physical and electronic. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. This policy also defines the scope and standards of the various collections, and provides guidance for deselection of materials. As the community changes, the Library will need to reassess and adapt its collections to reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern. Therefore, the collection development policy will be evaluated and revised as necessary to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

Responsibility of selecting library materials

The Library Board delegates the oversight and management of the collection, within the guidelines of this policy, to the Library Director and staff that are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library materials. Responsibility for the selection, maintenance, replacement, and weeding of materials rests with the designated professional staff under the overall direction of the Director. The Library's Consortium-level collections may be governed by an additional set of collection criteria. All staff members and the general public are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration.

Philosophy/Scope of Collection

Libraries play an important role as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents, and it is our job to collect materials and provide programming that reflects our communities but also represents diverse viewpoints. Intellectual freedom is the cornerstone of a democracy and it is essential that multiple views be represented. The Library Board of Trustees has adopted and declared that it will adhere to and support: *The Library Bill of Rights*; *The Freedom to Read Statement*; *The Freedom to View Statement*; *The Restricted Access to Library Materials Statement*; and *The Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors Statement* adopted by the American Library Association. The Library upholds the right of the individual to secure information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. The Library's acquisition of such items does not constitute endorsement of their content but rather allows for their free expression. Responsibility for the

reading/viewing/listening material of children and adolescents rests with their parent or legal guardian. The Library does not stand in loco parentis. No Library material, display, or program shall be removed, or programs be cancelled, because of origin, background, or viewpoints expressed in such material, display, or program or because of the origin, background, or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display, or program. No Library materials shall be excluded based on expressions of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical/intellectual abilities, or social views. Materials available in the Library present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make informed choices.

The primary responsibility of the Easton Public Library is to serve the citizens of Easton by providing free and easy access to a broad range of materials, both physical and digital, to meet their needs for informational, educational, cultural, and recreational resources. Some materials may be acquired primarily on the basis of their artistic merit, scholarship, and/or value to humanity. Other materials are selected to aid individuals, groups, and organizations in attaining practical solutions to daily problems. All materials are selected to enrich the quality of life for all community members, and to represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole. Budget and space limitations, as well as need, limit the collection to materials of high interest to Library patrons. All Library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in Section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

Key Definition

The Library's collection is the assemblage of books and other materials, in a variety of formats (print, electronic media, downloadable audio books, etc.), owned or licensed and maintained by the Library and made available to the public at no cost.

Selection Criteria

The selection of Library materials is based on a comprehensive knowledge of the nature and special characteristics of the Easton community. All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection.

- Popular interest
- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Currency of information
- Accuracy
- Local emphasis
- Readability or ability to sustain interest
- Treatment of subject appropriate to age of intended audience
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer, or illustrator
- Creative, literary, and/or technical quality
- Value as resource material
- Anticipated potential for long-term interest
- Critical reviews in a variety of journals

- Format and ease of use
- Circulation as monitored through the automated circulation system
- Relationship to existing materials in collection
- Relationship to materials in other area libraries
- Cost and availability

Textbooks will generally not be considered for the collection unless they are the best or only available source of information in their subject area and serve the general public and adult learning community. The Library does not purchase multiple copies of textbooks for use by students, a responsibility of the Board of Education.

Self-published books by local or Connecticut authors will be considered for the Library collection if they are donated, meet the Library's standards of quality, and are determined to be of suitable interest to the public.

Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this policy, shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

Duplication of Material

Multiple copies of materials are purchased in response to user demand evidenced by number of holds, anticipated popularity, repeated requests, and monitoring of the collection.

Suggestions for Purchase

The Library encourages input from the Easton community concerning the collection. A suggestion for purchase procedure enables Easton citizens to request that a particular item or subject be purchased by the Library. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and not automatically added to the collection. It is the Library's intent that suggestions for purchase be used to help the Library in developing collections which serve the interest and needs of the community.

Gifts/Donations

Items that are donated to the Library will be evaluated for possible addition to the collection, using the criteria listed above. In the case of targeted monetary donations, Library staff will determine which items will be purchased with the donated funds, keeping in mind the wishes of the donor. For other types of donations, please refer to the Policy on Donations to the Library.

Collection Maintenance

Maintenance of the collection includes discarding, replacement, rebinding, and repair. If an item is lost or damaged, it may not necessarily be replaced depending upon the number of duplicate copies or similar materials in the collection, existence of adequate coverage of the subject field, and demand for the specific author, title, or subject. It is sometimes preferable to

purchase current materials rather than replace older ones. The staff serves as arbiter in such instances.

Deselection of Materials (Weeding)

This policy outlines a procedure for a librarian to review library and educational material within a public library using professionally accepted standards: material relevance, physical condition, availability of duplicates, availability of age-appropriate or grade-level material, and the continued demand of material. Weeding is a term used by libraries to describe the removal of materials from their collections. To that end, *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries* is used to identify materials to be considered for deselection. CREW stands for Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding. Criteria for deselection include but are not limited to the following:

- No longer current or in demand
- Historical inaccuracy
- Duplicate copies
- Available through consortia or interlibrary loans
- Unsuitable condition
- Contains stereotypical images
- Contains gender and/or racial biases
- Contains outdated styles or fads

Weeded materials in good condition may be sold, donated, or disposed of however the Library deems appropriate. Generally, standard titles of permanent value and materials of local significance are spared weeding even if they may meet the criteria for doing so.

Digital Collections/Databases

Some of the Library's digital content is provided via third-party vendors. These vendors, not Library staff, use their own criteria to determine the specific titles and resources available through these services. The Library recognizes that it does not have the same control over electronic databases as it has over its in-house print materials. The Library also participates in a shared collection of electronic books and other materials. Materials selection for this resource is cooperative and serves the needs of the residents of over 60 Connecticut towns.

Born digital items are those materials created in a digital format. They are distinct from analog items that are subsequently digitized, such as paper manuscripts or photographs. In order to accept born digital items, the Library addresses:

- Copyright and licensing
- Redaction of personally identifiable information
- Any restrictions on use or circulation
- Maintenance and evolution of accepted formats

Public Access to Internet

The Easton Public Library provides access to a vast array of information available through the Internet. Electronic information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the Library will be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all Library users. The Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed and cannot be held responsible for the content, accuracy, or quality of the information retrieved.

Through its website, the Library directs users to informational resources online that complement, enhance, and in some cases, parallel resources housed in the Library collection. Links are made to Internet sites based on informational needs of the Easton community, areas of emphasis in the collection, and local areas of interest. Although a particular emphasis is made on selecting sites created by governmental, educational, and nonprofit entities, links are also made to sites created by for-profit organizations when they meet selection criteria and informational needs. Criteria for selecting sites include authority, coverage, accuracy, relevance, quality of information, organization, and timeliness. Links to sites will be removed when they are outdated or no longer relevant to the needs of the community.

Controversial Materials

The Library recognizes that some materials may not be considered appropriate by all patrons. Selections will not be made based upon anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the overall Library patron community.

Responsibility for the reading, listening, and viewing habits of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. The Library maintains several age-appropriate collections for children and teens. Materials may be reassigned among these sub-collections based on the age-appropriateness of the content. Selection of adult material will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The removal, exclusion, or censoring of any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive is prohibited.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be removed from the open shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.

The decision by an author, publisher, or other content creator to withdraw their work from the market and stop selling or publishing it will not be considered sufficient reason alone for the Library to withdraw it from the collection.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship

The Library recognizes not all users will greet all materials with the same degree of enthusiasm and regard. Therefore, some materials selected for the collection may seem controversial and even distasteful to some Library users. It is the right of the individual not to read, view, or hear materials that the individual considers objectionable. It is never the right of any Library user or users to deny access to Library materials to others. The freedom to choose from a broad range of informational and artistic materials will not be abridged. When evaluating Library materials, the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements from the American Library Association are used as guiding documents.

Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The Easton Public Library Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of hearing from the public regarding material selection. The Library administration and staff seriously consider suggestions made by Easton residents and taxpayers. The completion of the Request for Reconsideration form does not guarantee either accession to the collection or removal from the collection but does ensure the attention of Library staff to user opinion, interests, and concerns. The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider materials, displays, or programs to residents of Easton, CT. Please see our Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and form for further information on this process.

Location

This policy is housed on the Easton Public Library website:

<https://www.eastonlibrary.org>.

A copy is maintained in a binder at the Circulation Desk, accessible to the public.

This policy is in accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323.

The Library neither approves nor disapproves of the views expressed in materials included in the collection.

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on October 14, 2025.