

## Collection Development

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*Adopted: August 24,  
2016*

As Sussex County Government is committed to providing the people of our communities with library tools and materials that meet their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs, the Department of Libraries has established policies and procedures for developing and maintaining its collections to fulfill this charge.

The mission of the Department of Libraries is to enrich quality of life for our community of residents, workers and visitors by providing free access to ideas, information and materials and to guide research, education and entertainment in a safe and welcoming environment. Libraries serve as community centers where people come together to discuss, learn, grow, and share.

To that end, libraries provide collections of informational, educational, cultural and recreational materials to the public. Access is free to all. Materials are selected according to content, regardless of the format. The needs of the local community are the chief determinants in the content of the collection; the size of the individual libraries are an important factor in determining the scope of their collections. Reference collections will meet general community needs, not specialized research.

Collection development in the Department of Libraries is founded on the principles espoused in the American Library Association's "Library Bill Of Rights", "The Freedom to Read Statement", the "Freedom to View Statement", and the "Diversity in Collection Development" statement, all of which are available upon request (**Appendix A**).

Responsibility for the selection of library materials lies with the County Librarian or his/her designee who may delegate selection authority to qualified staff. Selectors will use a number of established professional criteria and tools to guide purchases.

Responsibility for the use of library materials by children rests with their parents, guardians or caregivers.

Suggestions from the public for purchase or retention are welcomed and given serious consideration. The "Request for Purchase" form (**Appendix B**) is available upon request. The library may remove some materials as demand for items declines, as they become damaged, worn, obsolete, or no longer useable.

Patrons who object to titles in the collection may register their concern by filing a "Request for Reconsideration Form" (**Appendix C**). This form is available upon request.

## Local Authors' Works

The Department of Libraries value our local authors and welcome the inclusion of their works into our collections. For a work to be added, it needs to meet the following criteria:

- “Local Author” is defined as created by someone who lives in Sussex County, the work has significant Sussex County or Delaware content, and/or the work has high interest for Delaware residents.
- Local author works must meet selection criteria as defined by the Department’s Collection Development Policy.
- Works must be able to stand up to regular library use. They must have a library-rated binding (i.e.: no stapled or spiral bindings), durable covers, and be in a format that the library already collects and circulates.

### Process for Submission

Interested authors that meet the above criteria are directed to approach their local branch library in person, by mail, or by phone. Please have the attached Request to Add Local Author’s Work form (**Appendix D**) prepared, keeping the following conditions in mind:

- A Request to Add Local Author’s Work form is required for each work that is submitted for consideration.
- Local authors can choose to have a single copy of their work housed at their local library; if a specific location is not requested, we will place the title in a library of our choosing. The Department of Libraries will not add multiple copies of a local author’s work unless there is sufficient demand to warrant additional copies.
- Collection funds are limited; so, the libraries are grateful to authors who choose to donate copies of their works. Authors who wish us to purchase their work should ensure that the work is available through one of our major vendors or a local bookstore with whom we have an existing purchase agreement. A current list of approved vendors is available upon request. The Department of must purchase works from these approved vendors and cannot purchase works directly from the author.
- Local authors’ works will either be placed in a Local Author collection or included in the general collection at the discretion of the library.
- The Department of Libraries has limited shelf space; and, we focus on popular materials. If a local author’s work is added but does not circulate, or the work is damaged, the library reserves the right to delete it from the collection. We will not notify authors when their work is deleted.

Unsolicited works received by the Department of Libraries which do not follow the above procedure will be treated as donations and will not be returned to the sender.

## Updating This Policy

To ensure that this policy continues to meet the needs of the community, the Department of Libraries will report annually to the Library Advisory Board on Collection Development procedures and annual collection statistics.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: American Library Association Documents**

- **Library Bill Of Rights**
- **The Freedom To Read Statement**
- **Freedom To View Statement**
- **Diversity In Collection Development**

### **Appendix B: Request For Purchase Form**

### **Appendix C: Request For Reconsideration Form**

### **Appendix D: Request To Add Local Author's Work Form**

## APPENDIX A

### 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 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.*

### The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

*This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library*

*Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.*

*Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.*

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association  
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression  
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.  
The Children's Book Council  
Freedom to Read Foundation  
National Association of College Stores  
National Coalition Against Censorship  
National Council of Teachers of English  
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

## **Freedom to View Statement**

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

*This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.*

*Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council*

## **Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Throughout history, the focus of censorship has fluctuated from generation to generation. Books and other materials have not been selected or have been removed from library collections for many reasons, among which are prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, sexual forms of expression, and other potentially controversial topics.

Some examples of censorship may include removing or not selecting materials because they are considered by some as racist or sexist; not purchasing conservative religious materials; not selecting materials about or by minorities because it is thought these groups or interests are not represented in a community; or not providing information on or materials from non-mainstream political entities.

Librarians may seek to increase user awareness of materials on various social concerns by many means, including, but not limited to, issuing bibliographies and presenting exhibits and programs. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan. Access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the user, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if they are offensive to the librarian or the user. Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article II of the Library Bill Of Rights: "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." A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers. Collection development responsibilities include selecting materials in the languages in common use in the community the library serves. Collection development and the selection of materials should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures.

There are many complex facets to any issue, and variations of context in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be fair, just, and equitable and to give all library users equal protection in guarding against violation of the library patron's right to read, view, or listen to materials and resources protected by the First Amendment, no matter what the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector. Librarians have an obligation to protect library collections from removal of materials based on personal bias or prejudice, and to select and support the access to materials on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs, interests, and abilities of all persons in the community the library serves. This includes materials that reflect political, economic, religious, social, minority, and sexual issues.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Toleration is meaningless without tolerance for what some may consider detestable. Librarians cannot justly permit their own preferences to limit their degree of tolerance in collection development, because freedom is indivisible.

*Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990.*



## APPENDIX B

### Requests for Purchase

From time to time, a patron will request library material that is not owned by this library system. If the requested items are less than 12 months old and meet our selection criteria, the library will consider the item for purchase.

If the requested items are more than 12 months old, the library will also consider them for purchase, but may instead seek to borrow them from a holding library outside our system, through Inter-library Loan.

Sample Request for Purchase form:

Milton Public Library - <i>Item Request Form</i>						
Patron Name	_____					
Date	_____		Phone #	_____		
Library Card Barcode #	- - - - -					
Title	_____ _____					
Author	_____					
Year Published	ISBN		Price			
Circle Format	<i>Large Print</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Audiobook CD</i>	<i>Music CD</i>	<i>Article</i>	<i>DVD</i>
<b>STAFF USE</b>	In Catalog? <input type="checkbox"/>	Purchase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AY <input type="checkbox"/>	OCLC <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Collection	_____				UD <input type="checkbox"/>

# APPENDIX C

## Request for Reconsideration Form

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Library \_\_\_\_\_

### Item Information

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Artist \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_

Publication Date \_\_\_\_\_ Format \_\_\_\_\_

### Patron Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Are you representing yourself or an organization?  Self  Organization

If you are representing an organization, what is its name? \_\_\_\_\_

**What are your objections to the work? Please be specific.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**What impact do you feel this material might have?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Did you find anything worthwhile in it? If so, what was it?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Are you aware of the critics' judgment of this material?** Yes  No

**Did you finish the entire work?** Yes  No

**If not, what parts did you finish?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*If you have further comments, please feel free to add additional pages.*

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Request for Reconsideration Form (Verso)**

#### **Requests for Reconsideration**

Complaints about material shall be referred to the library manager of the facility which owns the item.

The library manager will seek to resolve the complaint informally. Part of this process may involve sharing information with the concerned patron, such as reviews or holdings in other library systems. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the library director will provide the concerned patron with a Request for Reconsideration Form and a copy of this policy.

The library director will provide a written response within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the completed complaint form. If not satisfied, the concerned patron may appeal the decision to the Sussex County Librarian, whose decision will be final.

## APPENDIX D

### Request to Add Local Author's Work

Author Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Title Of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Publication \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ ISBN: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_ Number  
Of Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Intended Audience \_\_\_\_\_ Requested Library \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Please provide a brief description of the work**

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#### **Links to the work's website, reviews, or media coverage (if available)**

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#### **Available for purchase through (check as many as apply)**

Baker & Taylor  Amazon  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **STAFF USE ONLY**

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Branch Location \_\_\_\_\_ Collection \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewed By \_\_\_\_\_

Approved  Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_