

Collection Development Policy

Our Mission

The mission of the Pittsylvania County Public Library System is to provide equal opportunity access to materials and information in appropriate formats to meet the educational, cultural, and recreational needs of our diverse community. In order to fulfill this mission, the library employs a knowledgeable staff committed to excellent service.

Section One: Introduction

Since the library can acquire only those materials that its limited finances will permit, a selection process that is sensitive to the needs of the community must take place. It is the intent of this document to clarify for the community and the library staff the criteria our selectors use.

Community Profile

The Pittsylvania County Public Library System serves a population of 62,194 county residents (2015 census estimate). [Residents of contiguous localities such as the city of Danville may also have a library card at no charge, and those cardholders also are served by the system.] The county is largely rural and surrounds the Danville metropolitan area on three sides. Towns in the county include Chatham, Gretna, and Hurt. The economy of the county has shifted in recent years from one that was based in agriculture (primarily tobacco) and textiles. Manufacturing now accounts for approximately one-fifth of the jobs. The population is 76.3 percent white, 21.6 percent African-American and 2.5% Hispanic. 20.6% of the population is 65 years old or older. At 971 square miles, Pittsylvania County is the largest in Virginia. Only 14 percent of the population over 25 has a bachelor's degree.

Section Two: Selection

The responsibility for selecting materials legally rests with the library's Board of Trustees. The Board delegates the responsibility for selection to the Library Director. The Library Director may also delegate this responsibility to the Staff. The Director and/or the Head of Collection Development have the authority to approve or disapprove selection recommendations from staff and the public. The Director also makes the final decisions on the withdrawal of circulating materials, the rebinding of materials, and the addition of gifts to the cataloged collection. These responsibilities may be delegated to staff members at the discretion of the Director.

Selection Guidelines

Criteria

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The selection of materials always involves the experience and knowledge of staff selectors, their familiarity with the community's needs and interests, and the library's materials budget. Literary merit; enduring value; accuracy; authoritativeness; social significance; importance of the subject matter to the collection; timeliness; popular demand; cost; scarcity of material on the subject and availability of material elsewhere; quality and suitability of the format are all important factors. Selectors should strive to build a well-rounded collection which includes a wide variety of viewpoints and opinions and which will meet patrons' needs.

Tools

Tools that are used in collection development include professional journals; trade journals; subject bibliographies; publishers' catalogs and promotional materials; reviews from reputable sources; lists of recommended titles; and purchase suggestions from patrons. Standard review sources include *Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, *New York Times Book Review*, *VOYA*, local and regional newspapers, *Booklist*, and *Kirkus*. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review is not sufficient reason to reject a title for which there is much demand.

Scope

The scope of the Pittsylvania County Public Library collection refers to the formats offered, the treatments, and the level of difficulty. Materials selected for the library collection are intended to meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of the residents of Pittsylvania County. The scope of the collection is intended to offer a choice of format, treatment, and level of difficulty so that most individual library needs can be met and service given to individuals of all ages, within current budget parameters and constraints. The library encourages the use of interlibrary cooperation to better serve the needs of its clientele by expanding available resources. This includes, but is not limited to, a collaborative agreement for sharing materials with the Blue Ridge Regional Library in Martinsville.

Format

Currently, the Pittsylvania County Public Library System's collection contains books, digital materials, audiobooks, DVDS, and reference materials.

Materials are purchased in the most appropriate format for library use. Much of the Library's collection is offered in the traditional print format; however valuable information is increasingly available in audiovisual and electronic formats. New formats are considered for the collection when industry reports, national survey results, and local requests indicate that a significant portion of the community has

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the necessary technology to make use of the new format. The following factors must be taken into consideration when deciding whether to add a new format to the collection: availability of items in the format; cost per item; and the Library's ability to acquire, process, and circulate the items in the specific format. Older formats are discontinued when customer needs and technological advances result in obsolescence.

The library does not purchase workbooks and other consumable books. The library will only acquire textbooks if such materials would serve the general public.

Gift books

Gifts of books and other library materials are gratefully accepted by the library with the understanding that they will be considered for addition to the collection in accordance with the collection development policy. Gifts to the collection can be in the form of money or actual materials. Gift plates and letters of acknowledgement are appropriate stipulations by a donor, but other requirements should be evaluated carefully before the gift is accepted. All gifts become part of the general collection and should not require special circulation procedures. The library reserves the right to sell or otherwise dispose of gift materials not added to the collection.

The library will accept hardcover and/or paperback books and audiovisual materials if they are in good condition, if the item would have otherwise been purchased by the library, or if there have been multiple requests for an item. Local history items are welcome. The donor will receive a written acknowledgement if requested. Library staff will not appraise the items or indicate a value in the acknowledgement. Donated materials are not returned to the donor.

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 without needlessly duplicating the resources of other libraries. The ILL process interacts with the collection development process in two ways:

- Titles not owned by the library that a user wants to obtain through ILL are considered for purchase if the book was published later than January of the previous calendar year.
- Titles which were published earlier than January of the preceding calendar year are sought from those libraries with which Pittsylvania County Public Library has a cooperative agreement for ILL.
- If the title is not available from one of those libraries, it is sent to the ILL department to be obtained through the ILL process.

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All titles requested for ILL at least three times in a year are given high selection priority. Extra consideration for purchase is given to requests for titles published within the last six months, because it is unlikely that these will be available from other libraries.

ILL is not to be used for any title that is on order or owned by the library unless the copy is determined to be missing.

Multiple copies

While the library does not have the budgetary resources to buy multiple copies of every title it owns, it does buy multiple copies of titles that have high patron demand. In subject areas such as resumés, for example, where patron demand is extremely high, the library prefers to buy one copy of several different titles, thus achieving more variety and depth in the collection.

Standing orders

Titles on standing order are important enough to the collection that receiving them automatically without evaluating individual volumes is better than missing them. The majority of these books are popular authors. Large print format titles are also on standing order. The standing order and automatic continuation titles are re-evaluated annually by the Head of Collection Development. Titles may be cancelled, new titles and authors may be added, or the number of copies may be adjusted to accommodate patron interest and demand.

Bindery

Re-binding should be reserved for titles which cannot be replaced or would be too costly to replace. These are typically genealogy and local history titles.

Weeding

In order to maintain an up-to-date, useful collection, worn and obsolete materials are continuously weeded. Materials may also be withdrawn if they are little used or superseded by a new edition or better work on the same subject. Depth and breadth of varying degrees are desirable in various areas of the collection. The Collection Development Policy serves as a guide for weeding and maintaining the collection as well as for the selection of materials.

Titles are withdrawn from the library's collection through systematic weeding or because of loss or physical damage. Materials which are withdrawn because of loss or damage may be reported to the appropriate staff member or the Head of Collection Development who decides whether the item should be replaced using the same criteria as for selection. Other factors applicable when deciding on replacements include the number of copies of a title the library owns, the

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availability of newer materials on the subject, the importance of the work in its subject area, its listing in standard bibliographies, and its cost. Audiovisual materials which are withdrawn will be replaced in most cases with new, popular titles, as these collections are designed to meet current interest.

Systematic evaluation and weeding of the collection is required in order to keep the collection responsive to patrons' needs, to insure its vitality and usefulness to the community, and to make room for newer materials. For this reason, subject areas should be reassessed for relevancy and currency every two years, at a minimum, although certain areas may require more frequent review.

Weeding identifies damaged items, materials which are no longer used, out-of-date materials, extra copies which are not being used, and materials which are inappropriate for the collection. Weeding also helps a selector evaluate the collection by identifying areas or titles where additional materials are needed, older editions which need to be updated, and subjects, titles, or authors that are no longer of interest to the community. Titles can be checked against standard bibliographies in the subject to see if the items have historical or literary value. Holdings which are readily accessible in other libraries may also be considered when making weeding decisions. Withdrawn materials which are in good condition will be put up for sale. Materials withdrawn from the reference collection which retain informational value may be transferred to the circulating collection.

Reconsideration of Materials

A singular obligation of the public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view on controversial or debatable subjects. The Pittsylvania County Public Library does not promulgate particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item express or imply an endorsement of the author's viewpoint. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, nor will items be sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

Comments from members of the community about the collection or individual items in the collection frequently provide librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. The Library welcomes expression of opinion by patrons, but will be governed by this collection development policy in making additions to or deleting items from the collection.

Patrons who request the reconsideration of library materials will be asked to put their request in writing by completing and signing the form entitled "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material." [See Appendix] Patrons must have a Pittsylvania County library card and be at least eighteen years of age.

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Upon receipt of a formal, written request, the Director will appoint a committee from the staff and/or the board which will include the selector and at least two other persons. The committee will make a written recommendation to the Director who will then make a decision regarding the disposition of the material. The Director will communicate this decision and the reasons for it in writing to the person who initiated the request for reconsideration at the earliest possible date. During the review process, the book will not be removed from the collection.

In the event that the person who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision of the Director, he/she may appeal for a hearing before the Board of Trustees by making a written request. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of presentation and number of speakers at the hearing. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the Pittsylvania County Public Library. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision of the Director.

Selection Criteria for Specific Portions of the Collection

Criteria for the selection of adult and young adult nonfiction books for circulation:

- Qualification of the author in the subject field.
- Scope and authority of the subject matter.
- Quality of the writing (i.e., style, readability).
- Appeal to the general-interest reader.
- Date of publication.
- Reputation of the publisher.
- Organization of the contents (use of indexes, bibliographies)
- Illustrations
- Relationship to the existing collection
- Physical format (binding, typography, design)
- Price

Criteria for the selection of adult and young adult fiction books:

- Popularity of the author (patron requests)
- Appeal to the general-interest reader
- Relationship to the collection
- Quality of the writing
- Characterization (constructive, realistic portrait)
- Literary merit
- Reputation of the publisher
- Price

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Other guidelines for selecting fiction:

1. Best-selling fiction: Books that appear on the best-seller lists of the New York Times and Publishers Weekly may be selected without the benefit of a positive review. Genre fiction: The most important criterion for the selection of mystery, science fiction, western, and romance titles is the popularity of the author.
2. Works by first-time authors: The library feels an obligation to purchase the works of promising new authors. Using the standard review tools, selectors will attempt to purchase the best new fiction published each year.

Large print books

The large print collection is primarily a duplication of titles already in the library in standard type. Popular literature and genre fiction are the primary focus, though some nonfiction is also purchased in this format. Standing order plans are currently used for purchasing a significant percentage of the large print collection. Books are purchased for the main library's collection, and then rotated through the branches on a rotation schedule. Because large print books are seldom reprinted, emphasis should be on purchasing the most desirable titles soon after publication. New works need to be purchased to keep up with popular demand and to maintain a balance in the collection. Due to space considerations, the collection should be weeded heavily each year.

Paperbacks

The paperback collection is provided for readers who want to select from among current popular fiction and nonfiction and also older titles of popular authors. Established as a browsing collection, it includes mysteries, general romances, series romances, standard fiction, westerns, and other types of popular reading. With the exception of some series romances, the paperbacks are fully cataloged and accessible through the online catalog.

The paperback collection is built with attention to popularity of the authors, titles, and subjects, and to satisfying demand for a variety of fiction, nonfiction, and genre titles. Most of the materials purchased are selected from Ingram's catalog of mass-market paperbacks. A steady turnover creates an attractive browsing collection.

Paperbacks are retained only as long as they are in good condition and circulating. To keep the collection fresh and current, worn or damaged titles are removed regularly as new titles are added or as the need arises.

The Reference Collection:

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In general, reference materials are selected with the goal of satisfying the majority of information needs within the community. Questions which fall beyond the scope of the collection are referred to other libraries.

Materials are evaluated by using the following criteria:

- Authority of the publisher, editorial staff, and contributors.
- Arrangement of the information (including the use of indexes, bibliographies, and tables of contents).
- Accuracy
- Objectivity
- Timeliness
- Scope
- Relationship to the existing collection
- Illustrations
- Physical format
- Special features
- Price

The Reference Collection must support in-house users and remote users with a variety of resources in both print and electronic formats.

The Periodical Collection

A collection of magazines and newspapers is maintained for browsing purposes and as a supplement to the book collection. The collection of magazines consists of both print and electronic publications. Patrons may provide gift subscriptions, though decisions on their addition are made by the Director or the Head of Collection Development. Requests for periodicals which fall outside the scope of the collection may be filled through the interlibrary loan network. The collection is evaluated on an annual basis.

Selection of periodicals is based on the following criteria:

- Well-balanced collection appealing to the general reader.
- Accessibility of a title's contents through indexes.
- Accuracy and objectivity of the editors and contributors.
- Patron requests
- Preservation of a balanced viewpoint throughout the collection.

Books on compact disc and MP3 format; downloadable audio

The recorded books collection consists of both fiction and nonfiction materials. The fiction area includes contemporary and classic fiction with an emphasis on contemporary works. Generally, only unabridged versions are purchased.

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Catalogs from *Books on Tape and Midwest Tapes*, are the main sources used for selecting material in this format. Standard review journals such as *Library Journal* are also consulted.

DVDs, streaming media, and downloadable media

The video collection contains adult and juvenile titles, informational and feature films in DVD format. The collection exists to serve the general informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community. Branch managers select DVDs within the parameters of their budget for consideration by the Director or Head of Collection Development.

Genealogy and Local History Materials

There is a separate acquisitions policy for the History Research Center and Library which covers these materials.

Electronic Resources

Digital versions of nonfiction, fiction, periodical, reference, video, spoken audio, music, and images are all offered through the Library. The content criteria outlined in each of those sections apply, as appropriate, to their electronic counterparts.

Copyright

The library will comply with existing copyright laws, and will promote copyright compliance among its users and among its staff.

Provision of Access

The library will provide access to the electronic resources through several means:

- Cataloging of each resource when possible.
- Creating and maintaining web pages that provide links to Internet resources
- Provision, maintenance, preparation, and loading of necessary software and hardware
- Appropriate staff and user support and training for product use

Replacements

The library will replace electronic resources and accompanying digital materials using the same criteria for other formats: demand for the resource, cost, and availability from publishers and vendors.

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Review and Revision of the Policy

The establishment of selection priorities and goals is one of the major results of the development of a formal collection development policy. As they are accomplished, these goals will need to be replaced with new goals and priorities in shaping the collection. This policy will be reviewed periodically in conjunction with any short-term priorities and the library's planning documents in order to continue to be responsive to the established mission, community interests, and needs.

Revised and presented to the Board of Trustees for first reading, November 2013; amended and approved November 2016.