

# Collection Management Policy

## **COL 1 – Purpose**

The collection management policy establishes the public's expectation for library collections and resources. It explains the principles upon which selection is made and clarifies criteria that selectors use in their choice of materials and formats. In addition, it serves as a guide and reference for use by the Library Board and patrons in understanding the choices that are made in building the collection and the way materials are handled.

## **COL 2 – Philosophy**

The Library's patrons have differing reading levels, interests, and format preferences.

The selection process takes into account that the Library users represent different points of view, some of which may be controversial. The collection will try to represent these views by offering, whenever possible, a balanced and informed perspective on issues.

The Library allocates its budget for collections and electronic resources based on usage data, including circulation figures, turns on particular items, database usage and attention to the Library's strategic plan.

## **COL 3 - Materials Selection Overview**

When selecting new materials, staff will consult reviewing sources to determine which authors, titles, and subjects might be most appropriate for the collection.

Patron requests are an important factor in selecting materials. Patrons are encouraged to make recommendations to staff for additions to the collection. The Library will provide various means for this, including verbal discussions with patrons as regards general requests and forms that can be given out by staff for specific items.

Generally, one copy of a new item will be purchased unless there is a perceived demand for more. In order to keep up with high demands, the Library will monitor the number of holds on an item, which may trigger the purchase of additional copies.

In general, when selecting material, staff will consider the following:

- Patron requests;
- Potential user appeal and interest;
- Local or regional connections;
- Reading level;
- Format suitability and durability;

- Price;
- The reputation of the author judged by previous works or as an authority on a particular subject;
- Reviews in standard industry sources that describe the content and theme of the item and the accuracy of the information presented; and
- The extent to which a work honestly and accurately depicts new, challenging, or extreme points of view or deals with subjects that are topical and newsworthy.

The Library will attempt to obtain those items which are unavailable for purchase, or which are too expensive or unlikely to appeal to a general audience to merit obtaining a copy, by borrowing them from another library.

### **COL 6 – Responsibility for the Collection**

The final authority for the Library collection rests with the Library Board. Implementation of the policy is assigned to the Library Director, who delegates most selection activity to other personnel. All staff members and the general public are encouraged to participate in the selection of materials by recommending items for consideration.

### **COL 3 – Youth Collection (0-18)**

The Youth Services collection provides materials developed for children ages 0-18. These include board books, easy reader picture books, chapter books for beginner readers, graphic novels, and both fiction and nonfiction materials that can be read by older children and young adults. The collection also includes audiovisual materials, such as movies, audiobooks, and music.

The selection of materials is based on reviews, award winning materials such as Newbery and Caldecott winners, patron suggestions, and popular materials of high interest. Criteria for selection include the reputation and credibility of the authors, performers, directors or other creators, the quality of the illustrations in picture books, and the presentation of diverse or controversial points of view.

The Youth Services staff may purchase multiple copies of popular books and audiovisual titles, easy reader picture books, and award-winning books and videos as needed.

### **COL 4 - Adult Fiction**

The Adult Fiction collection emphasizes the latest in popular fiction in a variety of genres. Classic fiction is also collected, maintained and purchased.

Because of the importance of keeping materials of current interest as well as current titles, the adult fiction collection emphasizes collecting best sellers in various genres as well as the maintenance of copies of classic fiction.

This is an “on demand” collection and multiple copies of new bestsellers may be purchased to accommodate the number of holds that are placed on them.

### **COL 5 - Adult Nonfiction**

The nonfiction collection emphasizes materials that will help people stay informed about current events and issues; help students who need information for school projects; enable those engaged in life-long learning to research subjects that they wish to pursue; and assist those who need information for their work, at home, or for hobbies.

The nonfiction collection attempts to provide some coverage in all fields of knowledge, including controversial or challenging subjects of interest to the community. The Library purchases materials of general interest and cannot specialize in any subject area or purchase materials at a research level. Staff will try to identify those subjects that might be appropriate for patrons engaged in lifelong learning and collect titles appropriate to these subjects.

Factors that are considered when selecting items include currency and accuracy of materials; reputation and credibility of authors; patron demand or perceived popularity; presentation of controversial or challenging points of view; and cost.

Duplicate copies of nonfiction items are purchased only if there is heavy demand.

### **COL 6 - Audio-Visual Collection**

The Library’s audiovisual collection includes materials for all ages in a variety of formats. This includes movies, documentaries, instructional videos, and audiobooks. The collection is provided via physical media and downloadable content that can be played on personal computers and portable devices.

The video collection includes contemporary and classic feature-length films; popular television series; documentary and “how-to” films; and videos on current events or controversial subjects.

The audiobook collection contains both fiction and nonfiction. Staff will focus on best-selling fiction and nonfiction titles that correspond to similar print titles, as well as classics.

### **COL 7 – Local History Collection**

The Local History collection houses materials about the history of Lewistown, Fergus County, Central Montana, and Montana. A complete run of the Lewistown New Argus on microfilm is

also available in the Local History space. This collection includes digitized items that are accessible on-site. A portion of the collection is uploaded to the Montana History Portal for public viewing from anywhere.

### **COL 8 - Local Authors**

The Lewistown Public Library is pleased to have the works of many local authors in the collection and wishes to recognize the literary efforts of local authors by including their works in the collection when possible. However, these works must meet the Library's selection criteria and standards as detailed above. Writers interested in having their work included in the Library's collection should make an appointment with a librarian responsible for selecting materials.

### **COL 9 - Electronic Resources**

The Library recognizes that more resources are becoming available online and that these formats provide both currency and ease of access that normally cannot be matched by print sources.

The Library has access to resources available through the state-wide database licensing known as MontanaLibrary2Go. Downloadable content purchased for the use of the Library patrons through this consortium includes selections made by librarians throughout Montana.

The Library may also add additional digital resources as funding allows.

### **COL 10 – Gift Books**

Gifts of books and audiovisual materials may be accepted by the Library with the understanding that donated items will not necessarily be added to the collection. Staff will select donated items for inclusion using the same criteria as used when purchasing materials. The Friends of the Library will be given all other donated materials and will accept donations in accordance with their own policies and procedures.

### **COL 11 – Collection Maintenance (Weeding)**

As collection selectors add new materials, they must also discard old materials. Weeding the collection is essential to ensure that patrons have access to the most current information available, that materials in poor physical condition are removed from the shelves, that only materials that are in demand or are deemed to have lasting value are kept in the collection, and to make room for new materials or formats that should be added to the collection.

Following are some factors that should be taken into consideration when deciding to withdraw materials from the collection:

1. **Physical Condition:** Books should be checked for their physical appearance and wear. If an item is withdrawn because it is in poor physical condition, it may be necessary to

replace it if it has proven to be popular, if the information is still current, a newer edition of the item is available, or there are no other copies of the item on the shelf. When replacing a withdrawn item, a decision will need to be made if the format that is being withdrawn is still the best format in which to purchase the title.

2. **Circulation:** Staff will take into account the item turns, or the number of times an item has circulated within a fixed period of time. This includes in-building uses. If it is found that an item has circulated infrequently, it may be withdrawn.
3. **Currency and Accuracy of Information:** This is particularly important for nonfiction materials in subject areas such as medicine, business, computers, and finance. Selectors in these and similar areas should be aware of the timeliness of the materials, and whether or not, there have been more recent developments in a particular field that would make the materials in the collection outdated. The criterion is less important for fiction items.
4. **Duplicate Copies:** Some titles will initially be purchased in multiples to satisfy patron demand. This is particularly true of best sellers or books of local interest. Over time, however, this popularity will probably wane, and a realistic decision should be made regarding the number of copies needed once popularity has passed. In most cases, only one copy of a nonfiction title should be kept on the shelf unless there is high circulation. The number of copies of a fiction title should be determined by the circulation of the title, and the popularity of the author.
5. **Local Interest:** Though the Library rarely collects in depth on particular subjects or genres, it should try to maintain copies of titles by Montana authors and since these may not circulate as often as other, more popular materials, allowances should be made for maintaining these in the collection.

#### **COL 12 – Disposal of Withdrawn Materials**

Materials that are withdrawn from the collection may be routed to the Friends of the Library, or made available to other libraries or agencies, or offered for sale as appropriate. Materials in poor condition may be recycled or otherwise discarded.