

## Collection Development Policy

The Washington County Public Library Collection Development Policy provides a framework for the growth and development of collections in support of the Library's mission to "strengthen and enrich our community by connecting people to the world of information, ideas and imagination in order to support their work, education, personal growth and enjoyment."

Washington County Public Library adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom, adopted by the American Library Association, as expressed in the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read](#) and [Freedom to View](#) Statements. It is the Library's goal to provide Washington County with library materials that reflect a wide range of views, expressions, opinions and interests. Specific acquisitions may include items that may be unorthodox or unpopular with the majority or controversial in nature. The Library's acquisition of these items does not constitute endorsement of their content but rather makes available its expression.

The Library provides free access to materials in a number of formats (print, media and electronic) to all customers. Library users make their own choices as to what they will use based on individual interests and concerns. Washington County Public Library supports the right of each family to decide which items are appropriate for use by their children. Responsibility for a child's use of library materials lies with his or her parent or guardian. Library staff should avoid and prevent exclusion of diverse constituents from service opportunities and seek to create opportunities for constituents, matching their needs with culturally competent services or adapting services to better meet the culturally unique needs of constituents. Furthermore, they need to foster policies and procedures that help ensure access to collections that reflect varying cultural beliefs.

### The Collection

Washington County Public Library's print and digital collection of books and other media provides a wide range of literary, cultural, educational, informational and recreational materials for people of all ages. Collections include popular and in-demand materials as well as special formats, such as large print books, foreign language materials, test and study guides, financial, tax and business information, company and telephone directories, school and career information, consumer, health and medical information. In addition, the Local Materials Collection preserves and documents the history of Washington and surrounding counties and provides a broad scope of information about local news, events and businesses.

The variety of formats collected include:

- Print: books, documents, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and maps.
- Audiovisual Media: videos on DVD and tape, books on CD and tape, music on compact disc.
- Electronic Media: databases, software, electronic books, downloadable audio books, videos and music. The library also provides access to the Internet. Selected Internet sites are cataloged and linked to the Library's website.

### Diversity

"Cultural Diversity" or "Multiculturalism" refers to the harmonious co-existence and interaction of different cultures, where "culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature; lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs." Cultural diversity or multiculturalism is the foundation of our collective strength in our local communities and in our global society.

Libraries of all kinds play an important role in education, social engagement and global understanding. Library services, in reflecting the needs of the population they serve, impact greatly upon people's lives.

- As learning centers, libraries promote and provide access to learning materials, language programs and other relevant materials in appropriate formats for lifelong learning. By providing this access the whole society has the opportunity to support educational needs in general, and learn about each other's communities, understand each other's linguistic needs, learn each other's languages and gain knowledge of the wealth of experiences of different cultures.
- As cultural centers, libraries preserve, promote, highlight and give voice to different cultures, including their heritage, traditions, literature, art and music. This access provides people from all cultures the possibility to experience and learn about diverse forms of cultural expression.

### **Responsibility for Selection**

Responsibility for the initial selection of library resources rests with the Library's professional staff, based on the criteria cited above. Designated staff are responsible for specific areas of the collection, under the overall direction of the Collection Development Coordinator. The responsibility for selection ultimately rests with the Library Director operating within the framework of policies determined by the Board of the Washington County Public Library.

### **Criteria for Selection**

General criteria for selecting library materials are listed below. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable.

- public demand, interest or need,
- contemporary significance, popular interest or permanent value
- attention of critics and reviewers
- prominence, authority and/or competence of author, creator or publisher
- timeliness of material
- relation to existing collections
- statement of challenging, original, or alternative point of view
- authenticity of historical, regional or social setting
- accessibility for multiple users of electronic formats

### **Suggestions for Additions to the Collection**

To assure the acquisition of resources desired by Library users, customer suggestions are always considered for their addition to the collection. Customers can request that specific items be purchased by filling out a WCPL Recommendation for Purchase form online or at any Washington County Public Library location.

### **Intellectual freedom**

Washington County Public Library respects the freedom of information for its users and adheres to the principles expressed in the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* and *Freedom to Read and Freedom to View* statements. The Library's goal is to offer a diversity of ideas and opinions including those which may be unorthodox or controversial. The Library opposes any attempts by individuals or groups to censor items in its collection. Responsibility for the reading choices of minors rests with their parents or

legal guardians. Selection of adult material will not be restricted by the possibility that these items may come into the possession of children nor does the Library use any system of coding, rating or labeling to identify or segregate materials for purposes of censorship. Challenges regarding Library material are handled in accordance with the Library's *Requests for Reconsideration*.

### **Request for Reconsideration of Materials**

The Library welcomes citizens' expressions of opinion concerning materials purchased. Requests to remove materials will be considered within the context of the policies set forth in this document. Anyone who wishes to request that a specific item be reconsidered for inclusion in the collection of materials is asked to complete and sign the Request for Reconsideration Form, Appendix \_\_\_\_\_, available at any Washington County Public Library location. The form will be forwarded to the appropriate staff –the Collection Development Coordinator for adult materials and the Youth Services Coordinator for children's materials, who will consider the request in a timely fashion, in consultation with the Director. The questioned material will be reviewed, in its entirety, and once a decision has been made regarding the retention or removal of the material, a letter will be sent to the person, explaining the decision. If the person indicates dissatisfaction with the resolution, he/she may appeal to the Library Board. The Board will reconsider the decision based on whether or not the particular title conforms to the Board-approved Collection Development Policy, as outlined in the "Criteria for Selection," above.

### **Collection Maintenance, Replacement and Weeding**

Professional library staff regularly review items in the collection to ensure that they continue to meet customers' needs. Materials that are worn, obsolete, unused, old editions or unnecessarily duplicated are removed. It is the responsibility of professional staff to assess the need for replacing materials that are damaged, destroyed or lost. Items are not automatically replaced. Decisions are based on need, demand and budget.

De-selection of materials from the circulating collections is a vital part of successful maintenance. Continuous evaluation is necessary and materials are regularly removed to maintain a current, accurate and appealing collection and to facilitate its ease of use. De-selected items may be added to the research collection, offered to other libraries or disposed of through book sales, giveaways, exchanges, or recycling.

### **Gifts**

Washington County Public Library accepts gifts of new or gently-used books, magazines, DVDs, and music or books on compact disc. Decisions on whether and how donated items will be added to the Library's collections are based on the same evaluative criteria that are applied to purchased materials. The library accepts donations that supplement and enhance its collections. There is a financial cost incurred by the Library associated with the care, preservation, and processing of these gifts to insure that the gifts may serve that mission and fulfill the intention of the donor. With regard to special collections material, the Library will frequently request from the donor an appropriate financial contribution to endow the care and preservation of the gift.

### **Genealogy**

The Genealogy Collection focuses on United States source and research materials and international how-to guidebooks. The Library collects regional, state, county and local histories, and primary and secondary source materials such as cemetery, mortuary, tax, probate, census and vital records. Media include print, electronic, and microfilm resources.

### **Scope of the Online Collection**

The online collection represents the viewpoints and interests of the entire community the Library serves. The collection includes citation and full-text databases; eBooks and other downloadable and streaming media; and instructional programs.

### **WCPL Website**

The Washington County Public Library website, [www.wcpls.org](http://www.wcpls.org) provides a link to OPAC, the on-line catalog of materials and to other electronic resources. It also offers links to subject-focused websites recommended by professional staff. In linking other websites to its home pages the Library follows the selection criteria cited above. Beyond this, the Library has not participated in the development of these other sites and does not exert any editorial or other control over these sites. Any link from the Library's website to another website is not an endorsement from the Library. The Library does not warrant that its website, the server that makes it available, or any links from its site to other websites are free of viruses or other harmful components. [Internet use policy](#)

### **Reference assistance**

Washington County Public Library staff provides knowledgeable, personalized assistance to help customers find information and select and use library resources.

Library staff treats all requests, and the customers who make them, with respect. Appropriate assistance is provided courteously and impartially to all, regardless of age, background, disability, origin or views.

Staff uses information based on accurate and authoritative print or online sources, or learned from a reliable authority. The source for an answer is cited.

No two reference questions are the same. Simple queries are usually answered quickly and fully. More complex questions may require the customer's participation in the information search, with staff providing professional assistance and instruction. Staff can serve as a research consultant, providing guidance and advice on the search strategy and process. In some instances, staff may need to limit the amount of time and level of response provided to a customer.

For those people seeking recommendations for books or other library materials to suit their particular tastes and interests, staff suggests a selection of specific titles. In addition to relying on their professional knowledge and experience, staff consults print, on-line and other sources.

Formal and informal instruction in the use of information resources is provided.

Customers make their requests by telephone, on-line, fax, letter, or in person at any location of the Washington County Public Library. Responses are provided in the most expedient and convenient way possible for the customer.

Washington County Public Library provides reference services to the residents of Washington County as well as to people from other areas of the state. Requests about the Washington County area received from people who reside outside the Washington County Library System are also accepted. Others are handled as time permits, or the customer is referred to his/her local library.

The Library follows the standards set by the [Code of Ethics of the American Library Association, 1995](#), and complies with the Code of Ethics set forth in Washington County Public Library Policy and Procedure manual.

## Appendix \_\_

# Washington County Public Library RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

### POLICY STATEMENT

The WCPL Collection Development Policy provides a framework for the growth and development of collections in support of the Library's mission to "strengthen and enrich our community by connecting people to the world of information, ideas, and imagination in order to support their work, education, personal growth, and enjoyment. WCPL also upholds the First Amendment. The library holds a strict policy against censorship, and works to ensure every citizen the freedom to information.

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WCPL supports the ALA 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' books, 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 avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens 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.

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 need the help of censors to assist them in this task. 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."

### REGULATIONS

- Suggestions regarding the continued appropriateness of materials in the collection are welcomed by the Library.
- Suggestions will be considered and utilized by the library in the ongoing process of collection development.
- Individuals may take issue with library materials that do not support their tastes and views.
- Staff are available to discuss concerns and identify alternate materials that may be available.
- Reconsideration Request Forms must be filled out completely and submitted to the Director. For a request for reconsideration to be considered, the form must be completed in full.
- Laws governing obscenity, subversive materials, and other questionable matters are subject to interpretation by the courts. Therefore, no challenged materials will be

removed solely for the complaint of obscenity or any other category covered by law until a local court of competent jurisdiction has ruled against the material.

- Challenged materials will remain on the shelves until a decision has been reached by the library collection development committee.
- Patrons making requests for reconsideration must hold a valid library card.
- Staff members will not tell a patron that materials will or will not be moved in the collection or from the shelves.
- Staff will refrain from making personal observations to patrons regarding challenged works.
- The library believes that the parents of a child are the only people who should be allowed to monitor the reading, watching or listening activities of that child. We also believe that it is every parent's duty to monitor his or her child's activity, and that this is not the prerogative of the library. It is for this reason the library assumes no responsibility for the appropriateness of items checked out by a child or an adult.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. Library staff should listen courteously to any complaints regarding library materials.
2. Staff should offer the reconsideration request form, and ask the patron to fill it out completely.
3. Staff should present the form to library administration for review.
4. Challenged materials and the reconsideration form will be reviewed by the Library's Collection Development Committee.
5. A decision will be reached and the patron notified in writing within 30 days.

Appendix \_\_\_\_\_

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Washington County Public Library has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library/educational resources to the Acquisition Librarian and Library Director and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of library resources, please return the completed form to the Library Director, Washington County Public Library.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Library Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent self? \_\_\_\_ Organization? \_\_\_\_\_

Resource on which you are commenting:

\_\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_\_ Textbook \_\_\_\_ Video \_\_\_\_ Display \_\_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_\_ Library Program  
\_\_\_\_ Audio Recording \_\_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_\_ Electronic information/network (please specify)  
\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

What brought this resource to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read/examined the entire resource? \_\_\_\_\_

What concerns you about the resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary)

Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

## Appendix\_\_\_

### WCPL Recommendation for Purchase Form

Use this form to recommend a title for our collections. But first, please:

- Check the online catalog before making your suggestion.
- Please suggest only titles not currently in the catalog.
- Check Books in Print to provide important information about your request.
- Be aware that you may also request a book not held by the Library through Interlibrary Loan.

Fill out as much information as possible.

Title \* \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Editor \* \_\_\_\_\_ ISBN/ISSN \_\_\_\_\_

Person making request \_\_\_\_\_ Library Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Format (Please specify....Book, DVD, AudioBook, etc.) \*

Book - Fiction

AudioBook

Book - Non-Fiction

eBook

DVD

CD

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Audience (Please select one) \*

Adult

Young Adult

Children

Additional Information (if applicable and/or available).

Edition \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Publication \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Price \_\_\_\_\_

Series (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Language (if other than English) \_\_\_\_\_

Source of information (book review, NY Times advertisement, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Please give any additional specific information about your request:

I am requesting this book because \* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The WCPL does not own this item.      \_\_\_\_\_ The item is lost or missing.





Washington County Public Library

Inter Library Loan Request

Date of request \_\_\_\_\_

Patron's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Library ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Info:

How may we contact you? Home/ Work/ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

**Shipping fees of \$2 per item, are the responsibility of the person making request and are due upon receipt of item.**

**All overdue fees are applicable and are the responsibility of person making request.**

Items requested:

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author or Publication \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date needed by \_\_\_\_\_

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For staff use:

Person taking request \_\_\_\_\_

Item verified in OCLC/ lending library \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: Received \_\_\_\_\_ Due \_\_\_\_\_ Returned \_\_\_\_\_

Postage Paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_

