



## **Collection Development Policy**

Approved 2/11/19 by ECRL Board of Directors

Revised and approved 11/14/22

The purpose of this policy is to inform the public and to guide East Central Regional Library staff about the principles upon which selections are made. It provides staff the goals and guidelines to assist in choosing from a vast array of available materials and then relies upon staff judgement to responsibly execute its intent. Its primary objective is to ensure that public monies are spent wisely so that the library can provide relevant materials in sufficient supply to meet public demand and make the library a dependable resource.

All materials will be accessible to the public, limited only by necessary circulation rules. No rule will be established which would allow preferential use of library materials for any group or class of patron or which limits the use of materials by any group or class of patron, except as required by law.

Free and convenient access to the world of ideas, to information, and to the creative experience is of vital importance to every citizen today.

### **Collection Development Goals**

- To provide a diverse, broad range of cultural materials to promote an enlightened citizenship and to enrich personal lives
- To provide popular materials to support community recreation
- To provide up-to-date informational materials to support the community need for lifelong learning and continuing education
- To foster a lifelong interest in reading and discovery
- To provide support for educational, civic, and cultural activities of groups and organizations
- To collect items contributing to the knowledge of local history and/or of permanent value
- To anticipate future needs of the community and to provide thoughtful interpretations of the past

### **Responsibility for Selection**

Ultimate responsibility for selection of materials and securing and allocating funds for materials rests with the Executive Director, who operates within the framework of budgets, policies, goals, and objectives determined by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director will delegate authority to interpret and apply the policies in daily operation to the Resource Librarian and/or to staff members responsible for selection of materials.

In applying professional judgement to selection, library staff will follow these best practices:

- Handle all requests equitably;
- Understand and respond to changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes;
- Recognize that materials of varying complexity and format are necessary to serve all members of the community;
- Balance individual and community needs;
- Seek continuous improvement through ongoing measurement.

## **Method of Selection**

East Central Regional Library purchases materials from a wide variety of sources. Acquisitions and selection decisions are made in a manner most efficient and cost effective for East Central Regional Library. Vendors, publishers and authors may submit written or electronic information for consideration.

East Central Regional Library does not select through unsolicited materials preview; unsolicited telephone orders, or other processes that require return of materials not selected or meetings with sales representatives. Materials sent to or given to East Central Regional Library for purchase consideration will be treated as donations and will not be acknowledged or returned.

## **General Criteria for Selection & Collection Priorities**

To develop and maintain an excellent collection, materials are evaluated according to one or more of the following criteria. An item may be included or excluded on any one or more of the following criteria:

- Currency
- Authority
- Suitability of form for library use
  - The Library collection offers materials in a variety of formats, which may include materials in physical or digital format. Criteria for new formats and removal of old formats is at the discretion of the Library based on a variety of factors such as usage, cost, space, availability, accessibility, and technology longevity.
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
  - Materials are purchased for the independent learner rather than textbooks or other curriculum materials designed for the more formal student.
  - General treatments are chosen over those that are specialized, scholarly or primarily for professional use.
- Cost, in relation to the wise use of available resources
- Relation to existing collection and to other material on the subject
  - The Library will make available a representative selection of materials on subjects; it will not seek to acquire all the materials on any given subject. Instead the Library will attempt to provide those materials through interlibrary loan as needed.
- Favorable information in published critical reviews or bibliographies
- Requests by East Central Regional Library patrons
  - The Library welcomes requests that specific library materials be purchased for the collection from community members. Requests will be considered for purchase using

the established selection procedures and the Collection Development Policy. Policy and budget may limit the ability of East Central Regional Library to provide all requested materials. A reliable review for each title is desirable before a decision is made to purchase the material for the Library collection. Whenever possible, Interlibrary Loan will be offered for items East Central Regional Library does not purchase.

- Present and potential relevance to community needs and/or local interest

## **Cataloging & Placement of Library Materials**

East Central Regional Library participates in a library community that agrees on standards for cataloging and classification that enable greater resource sharing and accessibility.

The majority of items in the collection will not be assigned to a specific library location. The Integrated Library System in use at East Central Regional Library allows staff to float the majority of the collection. A floating item's location will automatically be changed to the library where the item is checked in. A small number of items may be assigned and not float at the discretion of the Resource Librarian. Unless otherwise specified, materials purchased with local or grant funds designated for a specific East Central Regional Library location will be assigned to that location for at least one calendar year.

## **Displays of Library Materials**

In efforts to raise awareness or highlight various materials, from time to time, materials owned by the library may be placed on display. Topics for displays are planned, organized and implemented by staff at each branch location, under the supervision of the Assistant Director.

Staff will select display topics, materials and accompanying resources in accordance with the following criteria:

- community needs and interests;
- format and style are suitable for intended audience;
- historical or educational significance;
- appropriateness to seasonal events or holidays;
- relation to current events;
- connection to other community or national programs, exhibitions or events;
- relation to library collections, resources, exhibits and programs.

East Central Regional Library will strive to include a wide spectrum of opinions and viewpoints in Library-initiated displays of materials, as well as offer displays that appeal to a range of ages, interests and information needs. Placing materials on display does not constitute an endorsement by East Central Regional Library of the content of the display or any of the views expressed in the materials on display.

Many library branches have limited space for display. While efforts will be made to place displays near the section where its materials typically are placed, displays may occasionally be placed in more central areas and/or may contain materials for multiple age groups.

## **Relationships to Other Libraries, Library Systems, & Library Services Affecting Collection Development**

The Library recognizes resources of other libraries in the area and shall not needlessly duplicate materials. East Central Regional Library selection staff will also consider state and national holdings of materials when making retention decisions. No library is able to purchase all materials needed by its patrons; therefore, materials not owned by the Library will be requested from other libraries through statewide and national library sources. The Library will seek to broaden these sources through agreements with other libraries and groups of libraries.

### **Gifts**

The Library recognizes that gifts are an important source of library materials, and as such, East Central Regional Library welcomes gifts of library materials or money to buy such materials. All gift materials must meet the Collection Development Policy criteria guidelines for inclusion in the Library collection.

No gifts may be accepted which impose preconditions, such as special collection status, or special circulation rules. All materials added to the East Central Regional Library collection are the property of East Central Regional Library and, therefore, subject to the same conditions as all other library materials. Once a donation is given to the Library it will not be returned. The Library reserves the right to use and dispose of gift materials and funds as seems appropriate for current needs, which may include but is not limited to, inclusion in the Library collection, offering for sale, or disposal.

### **Collection Management**

Collection Management is the systematic evaluation of the collection designed to facilitate the repair or withdrawal of damaged, unused, or obsolete materials from the collection. East Central Regional Library staff members perform continuing analysis of the use of the collection, the needs and interests of the community, request lists, the availability of similar materials, cost and physical condition of specific volumes. These factors will be considered in determining the number of copies of each title East Central Regional Library should have and when an item should be replaced, repaired, or withdrawn. Selection staff will review all last copy removals to determine local, regional or national value. A title may be retained if it is deemed valuable on one of these levels.

As a guide, items are identified for withdrawal when they are:

- Factually inaccurate or obsolete
- Damaged or worn beyond repair
- No longer in demand as evidenced by circulation history
- Superseded by a new edition or a better title on the topic
- Of no discernible literary or topical merit
- Irrelevant to the needs of the community served
- Available elsewhere through reciprocal borrowing or interlibrary loan

## **Unowned Materials**

The Library will not permanently house material owned by others. It may use those materials for short-term display or under the terms of a specific contract in order to gain access to material which would benefit the general public.

## **Intellectual Freedom**

East Central Regional Library incorporates as part of this policy the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement. The aforementioned documents are appendixes attached to the policy.

East Central Regional Library has the responsibility to serve all the residents of its community. It hereby adopts the philosophy that a public library will not curtail what an individual may or may not read, see, or hear. The Library strives to make available a representative selection of materials on subjects of interest to its patrons, including materials on various sides of controversial questions to enable patrons to make up their own minds about controversial subjects.

East Central Regional Library does not endorse particular beliefs or views; nor is the selection of any given material equivalent to sanction of the author's views.

East Central Regional Library is aware that one or more persons may take issue with the selection of any specific item in the collection and/or display of library materials, and will consider any expression of opinion by patrons. However, East Central Regional Library does not undertake the task of pleasing all patrons by the elimination of items or displays selected after due deliberation under guidance of the policies expressed herein. Anticipated approval or disapproval by persons or groups will not be considered in the selection process or in the decision to place material on display.

Materials are selected on the basis of the content as a whole and without regard to the personal history of the author, composer, or producer. Each work is considered on its own merit.

Library materials will not be marked or identified by East Central Regional Library to show approval or disapproval of the contents. Materials will not be sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft. Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of minors; monitoring the reading and viewing of children is entirely the responsibility of their parents or legal guardians.

## **Reconsideration of Materials**

Any citizen may request that the Library explain its acquisition of a book or other library material. A complaint will not result in immediate removal of that item. East Central Regional Library will reconsider any material in its collection upon written request from a patron on a Request for Reconsideration form (see Appendix A). The Request for Reconsideration Form may also be used if a requested item is not

selected for the collection. The Library requests that that the citizen read this policy before filling out the form.

Likewise, any citizen in the six-county region may request that the Library explain its decision regarding a topic for display of materials. A complaint will not result in the removal of the display. East Central Regional Library will reconsider its displays upon written request from a patron on the Request for Reconsideration form (see Appendix A)

## Appendix A

### Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials / Resources / Material Displays

The following procedures will be followed to process a "Request for Reconsideration "

1. The patron will initiate a "Request for Reconsideration " with the public service staff at any branch library. The Request for Reconsideration must be filled out in its entirety and any supporting documentation that the patron wishes the library to consider must be included with submission. Forms received from individuals without residency in the library's six-county region will not be considered. Individuals wishing for an exception the residency requirement may petition the Executive Director for an exception providing the individual explains why the individual has a vested interest in the library or community it serves. The Executive Director has the authority to grant an exception to the residency requirement.
2. The formal complaint is forwarded to the Reconsideration Committee Chair. The Reconsideration Committee is a staff committee, appointed annually by the Executive Director. The Chair of the Reconsideration Committee will acknowledge receipt of the request for reconsideration within fifteen (15) business days and provide information on next steps to the complainant.
3. The Reconsideration Committee will meet quarterly to review any Requests for Reconsideration received at least fifteen (15) business days before the scheduled meeting and review supporting documentation. The Resource Librarian will provide the committee with a summary on the material being reconsidered, including the rationale for its initial selection, if known.
4. The Reconsideration Committee, at its sole discretion, may request additional information or conversations with the complainant as they consider the request.
5. The Reconsideration Committee will respond to the complainant within ten (10) business days of their quarterly meeting regarding a decision on the request. All Reconsideration Committee decisions require the final approval of the Executive Director or their designee.
6. If the patron is unsatisfied with the Reconsideration Committee's decision, the patron has fifteen (15) business days to notify the Executive Director in writing of their intention to appeal the decision. A conference to discuss the decision with the patron may then be scheduled with the Executive Director to review the committee's decision. At the conclusion of the conference, the patron will indicate if they wish to continue the appeal process. A Reconsideration Conference Form will be completed for the conference. If a conference is not desired by the complainant, the appeal will automatically move to the next step in the appeal process.
7. The Executive Director will schedule the complainant as a part of the Board agenda at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, unless the complainant wishes for a later appearance. Board appeals must be scheduled no later than ninety (90) days following the Reconsideration Committee's decision.
8. The Board of Directors will provide for up to ten (10) minutes for the complainant to present their concerns at a regularly scheduled meeting. The complainant is encouraged to submit materials in writing for the Board to consider in addition to or in lieu of any oral presentation. Written materials must be received no later than five (5) business days in advance of the meeting in which the appeal is scheduled.
9. The Board will make a final decision on the request no later than its next regularly scheduled meeting after the appeal was heard. Notice about the decision will be sent by the Executive Director, with approval by the Board Chair, within ten (10) business days of the Board's decision.

10. The decision of the Board is final and remains in effect for a period of five (5) years, barring any changes to state or federal statutes that would void the decision.

Request for Reconsideration Forms are available at all libraries.

## Appendix B

### Adopted Intellectual Freedom Documents

1. [Library Bill of Rights](#)
2. [Freedom to Read](#)
3. [Freedom to View](#)

## Appendix C

### Glossary

- The word **materials** as it occurs in this policy has the widest possible meaning; hence it is implicit that every format, language and treatment may be included, except as noted elsewhere.
- **Selection** refers to the decision that must be made either to add a specific item or types of material to the collection or to retain material already in the collection. It is a means of collection development to meet patron needs and does not necessarily reflect the opinions or values of the individual selector or of the individual members of the East Central Regional Library Board of Directors.
- The words **book**, **library materials** and other synonyms as they may appear in this policy have the widest possible meaning; all forms of recorded communication, from the traditional printed forms to the latest development in audiovisual, digital and electronic formats are therefore included in this definition.
- The word **collection** refers to a group of books or other library materials having a common characteristic or located in one place.
- A **floating collection** is a group of items not housed permanently at one specific library, but instead are shelved in the library where they were most recently checked in.