

## **3.0 COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE POLICY**

### **COLLECTION**

The North Branford Public Libraries (“NBPL” or “the Library”) provide and maintain a balanced and broad collection of materials for the interest, information, enlightenment of all residents, and to meet the diverse educational, informational, recreational, and cultural needs of the community.

In support of the Library’s mission to promote literacy, encourage lifelong learning, inspire curiosity, and connect users to ideas, the Library is committed to making material and information accessible in a variety of formats that represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, expressions, opinions, and interests.

NBPL recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents. Materials are selected based on their content as a whole, not on selected excerpts. Race, nationality, or political, social, moral, or religious views of an author will not affect the selection of materials. Inclusion of an item in the Library’s collection does not constitute an endorsement by NBPL of the contents, views, or objectives expressed in that item. All Library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in Section 46a-64 of the General Statutes.

### **PURPOSE**

This policy provides a framework for the development and growth of our collections in support of the Library's mission. The *Collection Development and Maintenance Policy* serves as a guide for the selection, acquisition, maintenance, and retention of materials by establishing roles and responsibilities and to inform the public of the principles upon which a useful and well-rounded collection is built.

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF SELECTION**

Responsibility for implementing the policies determined by the Board is delegated to the Library Director. The responsibility for selection lies with the professional staff of the Library.

Our Library system includes a team of dedicated librarians who utilize their professional training, knowledge, and experience to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library and educational materials.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Librarians consult a number of resources in selecting items for the collection. These resources include, but are not limited to: professional and trade journals; subject bibliographies;

publishers' catalogs and promotional materials; reviews from reputable sources; lists of recommended titles; and patron purchase suggestions.

Generally, the following criteria will be used for materials selection:

- Community needs, interests, and demands
- Relation to the existing collection
- Recommendations of reviews from professional journals, booklists, or publications of national repute
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, illustrator, publisher, or producer
- Literary, artistic, historical, scientific, or intellectual merit and value
- Quality and suitability of format
- Availability elsewhere, including area libraries and format
- Price and availability within the scope of the overall budget
- Relevance to current trends and events
- Currency of information or comprehensiveness
- Enduring value, sustained interest, or demand
- Local, state, or regional historical significance
- Suitability of subject and style to intended audience

The Library selects materials for children and teens with the intent to foster reading, support recreational interests, and provide materials on a wide range of topics to spark natural curiosity and broaden interests. Selection of children's and teen material is subject to the Library's selection criteria as well as review of appropriateness of content and suitability of subject and style for minor audiences. The children's librarians also rely on the recommendations of readers, including children, educators, parents, and caregivers. The children and teen collections at all Library locations will be shelved in age-appropriate sections designated for them.

When selection involves a remote resource, such as a digital collection or database, professional staff will review the content of such resources on a regular basis to assess their continued value.

The following selection criteria will also be considered for electronic formats:

- Ease of use
- Technical quality
- Remote access and any location restrictions
- Vendor reliability, technical support, platform usability, and data privacy practices
- Digital licensing requirements, including access models (e.g., one copy/one user vs. simultaneous use)
- Integration with library systems
- Cost-effectiveness relative to anticipated demand

- Compatibility with a range of devices and assistive technologies

The Library will endeavor to purchase works by local authors published through mainstream publishers. The Library may purchase self-published titles by local authors for the collection if there is a compelling reason to do so (e.g., valuable local content, high local interest).

The Library purchases multiple copies, whenever possible, of titles that have high patron demand and/or broad popular appeal.

## **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP**

As part of its core values, NBPL is committed to providing our community with resources to sustain lifelong learning, study, and growth through free and open access to diverse works and information.

The Library recognizes that each patron's choice of materials for personal use is an individual and private matter. Given the diverse nature of the collection, not all materials are suitable for all patrons, and responsibility for a minor's use of materials and resources rests solely with the parents, caregivers, or legal guardians. Patrons are free to choose items for themselves, but they may not restrict or censor another patron's use of Library materials.

In support of the above principles, the Library endorses the American Library Association's *Freedom to Read Statement*, *Freedom to View Statement*, and the *Library Bill of Rights*, all of which are integral to this policy.

## **CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS**

Selections for the Library are made solely on the merits of the material in relation to the development of a collection that satisfies the diverse needs and interests of our community. Selections will not be made based upon anticipated approval or disapproval. The Library upholds the right of the individual to secure these resources, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to some. The Library's varied collection is available to all; however, it is not expected that all of the collection will appeal to everyone.

NBPL acknowledges that patrons may have concerns about specific materials in the collection. While the Library strives to maintain a collection that represents a wide range of perspectives, individuals may formally request that an item be reconsidered by submitting a completed *Request for Reconsideration* form. Our *Material Review and Reconsideration Policy* provides further information on the process and procedures to ensure concerns are handled in an attentive and consistent manner.

Materials and displays under review will remain in place until a determination can be made. The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider materials, displays, or programs to

residents of North Branford. Please see our *Material Review and Reconsideration Policy* for further information on this process.

## **DIGITAL COLLECTIONS/DATABASES**

Selection of and access to electronic resources are integral to fulfilling the mission of the North Branford Public Libraries. The Library provides a number of web-based resources available via the Library's website, selected using the criteria outlined in this policy. These are considered a part of the Library's collection.

## **COLLECTION MAINTENANCE AND WEEDING**

Professional Library staff regularly review items in the collection to ensure that they continue to meet the educational, informational, recreational, cultural, and diverse needs of Library patrons.

Collection maintenance is an ongoing process guided by professional best practices, including the CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) method, usage data, and librarian expertise. It is the responsibility of professional staff to remove materials that are worn, obsolete, unused or underutilized, outdated, or unnecessarily duplicated from the collection, and to assess the need for replacing materials that are damaged, destroyed, or lost.

Professional staff will determine if it is necessary to replace an item based on overall need, demand, budget, and shelf space.

Materials may be considered for withdrawal based on the following criteria:

- **Condition** - items that are damaged, worn, or beyond reasonable repair
- **Relevance** - outdated or inaccurate information
- **Use** - low circulation over a sustained period
- **Duplication** - excess copies no longer in demand
- **Supersession** - a newer edition or more comprehensive work has been added
- **Format changes** - shifts in format preference or accessibility (e.g., transitioning from physical to digital materials)
- **Space considerations** - maintaining a balanced and accessible collection within available physical space

The Library reserves the right to dispose of withdrawn items in any manner deemed cost-effective by staff, including selling or donating them.

## **GIFTS/DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTION**

The Library welcomes gifts of print (books) and non-print (DVDs, CDs, etc.) materials with the understanding that such gifts must meet the same standards and selection criteria as purchased materials outlined in the *Collection Development and Maintenance Policy*.

The Library accepts monetary donations for the purchase of materials in honor of or in memory of individuals. The Library's selection guidelines apply to any materials purchased with these funds. The Library Director determines the retention, location, and all other considerations related to the use and disposition of any gift.

Gifts are accepted with the understanding that they become the property of the North Branford Public Libraries, and any special terms or conditions requested by any donor must be accepted by the Library Director.

***Approved by the Library Board: September 10, 2025***