

Waltham Public Library **Collection Development Policy**

Building a balanced collection of carefully selected materials is an essential first step toward meeting the [mission and goals of the Waltham Public library](#).

Responsibility for Collection Development

The collection development policy is the responsibility of the Trustees, who have delegated to the Library Director the task of implementing the policy. In practice library materials are selected by the Director and the staff after consulting standard review and reference sources such as *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, the *New York Times Book Review*, and H.W. Wilson's *Public Library Core Collection*.

The library's overriding concern is to build the finest collection of materials possible considering the various needs of the community. Therefore, to be applicable for inclusion in the collection, all library materials must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Current usefulness or permanent value.
2. Authority and competence in presentation.
3. Widespread public, media and critical attention.
4. Importance as an historical record.
5. Relevance to the existing collection.
6. Relative importance in comparison with other works on the subject.

All citizens are encouraged to make suggestions on collection development and requests for specific materials which will be given careful consideration in light of overall collection needs and budget constraints.

Censorship

Basic to this Materials Selection Policy are the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read](#) statement adopted by the American Library Association and endorsed by the Waltham Public Library Board of Trustees. From the Library Bill of Rights "libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment."

Collection Development for Children

The principles affirmed in this selection policy are applicable to the selection of materials for children. The library cooperates with the school libraries so that the services and collections of the two agencies complement each other. The major function of the school library is to furnish curriculum related materials. The public library seeks to provide a more comprehensive collection. Responsibility for what children read rests with parents and guardians. Selection of materials is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate.

Scope of the Collection

The emphasis in selection will be on meeting the needs of the "educated lay person" rather than on acquiring technical works intended for the specialist. Textbooks will not generally be purchased, although exceptions may be made if the book offers an excellent overview of the field.

As a member of the Minuteman Library Network and the Metrowest Regional Library System, the library has access to the collections and resources of the 42 Minuteman member libraries, as well as the Boston Public Library. We do not needlessly duplicate services and materials. When requests are received for material outside the scope of Waltham's collection, every effort will be made to borrow the material or to refer the patrons to the appropriate neighboring library's collection.

Requests for Reconsideration of Materials

Occasionally an individual or group may feel strongly about a particular item's inclusion or exclusion from the collection. Formal requests from Waltham residents with active library cards for acquisition or removal of specific items should be submitted in writing to the Library Director, who will refer it with recommendation to the Board of Trustees. A form for this purpose is available at the Reference Desk or by clicking [here](http://www.waltham.lib.ma.us/files/reconsideration.pdf) (<http://www.waltham.lib.ma.us/files/reconsideration.pdf>) All requests for

reconsideration shall be submitted (without patron information) to the American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom.

Maintaining the Collection

The same criteria will be used in weeding or discarding materials from the collection as are used in building the collection. In order to maintain the collection in its most attractive and useful condition, the Library removes materials that are outdated or in a condition no longer suitable for circulation. Materials no longer useful to the library may be given to appropriate charitable organizations or sold for the benefit of the library.

Self-published Materials

In terms of self-published materials for our collection, a few things are taken into consideration. Generally speaking, self-published materials are not reviewed by professional sources, which makes it difficult to ascertain whether or not they are the right fit for our community. We hand select all of our materials, so we rely heavily on reviews. That does not mean we never purchase self-published materials or that we do not recognize their value. For example, if a current Waltham resident has self-published a book, we usually attempt to add that book to our collection.

Please understand that maintaining a current and popular collection is a very high priority for us. There is no guarantee that any book would not be removed from the collection over time. In addition to our standard criteria for material selection, following factors will be taken into account when considering adding self-published books to our collection:

- Does the book have positive reviews in professional journals e.g. Library Journal, School Library Journal, Kirkus, Publisher's Weekly, Booklist, and/or Horn Book?
- Are full bibliographic records available in MARC?
- Does the book have an International Standard Book Number (ISBN)?
- Does the book contain unique local or regional content?
- Is the book bound and suitable for circulation?
- Has the book been edited and proofed by a professional editor and proofreader?
- Is the book available through major distributors, e.g. Baker & Taylor?
- Is this a local author/illustrator from the metro Boston area?

We are unable to:

- Acquire self-published books in electronic form;
- Accept more than one copy of any title;
- Accept review copies;
- Meet with individual authors;
- Notify authors if a book is not selected; if a book is selected, we will strive to add it to the catalog within two months.

Donated materials that are not selected for our Collection will be considered a donation to the library's book sale.

Donations and Gifts: Please see our [Donation Policy \(hyperlink\)](#)

Adopted by the Library Trustees June 13, 2019