



Collection Development—Circulation Summary

The purpose of this policy is to explain guidelines and limits on all items available for circulation at the Pottstown Regional Public Library. This policy offers a brief description of the guidelines used in purchasing items for the Library collection, as well as an overview of the guidelines for the maintenance of the collection.

It is the goal of the Pottstown Regional Public Library to provide a high-quality collection of books, media, and other materials in a variety of formats for all ages that is responsive to the needs and interests of the community.

Because of the volume of publishing, as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a selection policy with which to meet the needs and interests of the community. In the development of its collection, the library recognizes that it is impossible for a medium-sized public library to provide a balanced, comprehensive collection that is strong enough to meet all community needs. As a member of an automated countywide resource-sharing network (MCLINC) and Access PA, the Pottstown Regional Public Library supplements its resources with materials borrowed through these larger entities.

The library strives to maintain materials that reflect the diversity of the community and represent various points of view. Selection of materials by the library does not constitute an endorsement of the contents or views expressed by those materials. The existence of a particular viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the library's policy of intellectual freedom, not an endorsement of that particular point of view. The Pottstown Regional Public Library holds the belief that access to information, particularly the access of a variety of viewpoints and voices, is a critical component of an individual's right to freedom of thought, speech, and expression.

In the interest of protecting the individual's right to have access to materials, the Pottstown Regional Public Library supports the following documents:

[The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution](#)

[The Library Bill of Rights](#)

[The Freedom to Read Statement](#)

[The Freedom to View Statement](#)

[Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records](#)

[Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors](#)

Library materials are selected on the basis of informational, educational, cultural, and recreational value. These materials are selected in compliance with the mission and goals of the library. The library follows a strict criterion in selecting materials for addition to the collection, including relevance to interests and needs of the community, articulated or predicted demand, cost and budgetary constraints, reviews from professional journals or publications of national

repute, currency of information, authoritativeness and/or reputation and qualifications of the author, illustrator, publisher, or producer; literary, artistic, historical, scientific, or intellectual merit, relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses, suitability of subject and style for the intended audience, availability of other information on the subject, either locally or within the region; suitability, physical durability, attractiveness, and technical merit of the format, historical value or local interest.

Scope of Collection

The Pottstown Regional Public Library considers all types and formats of media to be in the realm of human expression and part of the human record. Because the library functions in a rapidly changing society, it is flexible about changes in communicative material, both in form and style of expression. The library recognizes that content and medium should be suitably matched, and that library patrons have different learning styles and preferences for how they receive information. The library does not reject materials for acquisition solely on the basis of medium. Materials in alternative formats are judged in terms of the criteria for selection of materials.

Resources for Young Adults

Although Young Adult collections include many titles on school reading lists, young adults working on school assignments rely primarily upon adult collections. The Young Adult collection is not intended to meet all the needs of teenagers whose interests are specialized for highly developed. These young people must turn to adult collections. Young adult collections, as far as possible, include works reflecting diverse views on controversial topics in accordance with the library's belief that access to information is a critical component of the right to freedom of thought, speech, and expression.

Resources for Children

The collection for children is chosen with the emphasis on materials that develop reading ability, inform children about the world around them, stimulate the imagination, recognize and support diversity, and entertain. These collections, as far as possible, include works reflecting diverse views on controversial topics in accordance with the library's belief that access to information is a critical component of the right to freedom of thought, speech, and expression.

Access

The Pottstown Regional Public Library does not promote particular beliefs or views. Rather, it provides a resource for various opinions, which apply to important, complex, and controversial questions, including unpopular and unorthodox positions. Language, situations, or subjects that

may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material which, in its entirety, is judged to be of value.

The Board of Directors recognizes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their rights as citizens. The Board believes that reading, listening, and viewing are individual, private matters. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor children, the freedom of others to read or inquire cannot be restricted. The Library does not stand *in loco parentis*. Parents and guardians, not the Library, have the responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor children. Selection of adult collection materials should not be inhibited by the possibility that the items may be seen or utilized by minors.

The library collection will be organized and maintained to facilitate access. The library does not mark or identify materials to show approval or disapproval of contents. The library also does not mark materials to restrict their use by ages, or sequester them except to protect valuable items from injury or theft. The library does not rely on private advisory codes or rating services in developing collections, nor does the library remove such ratings if they are an integral part of the item or its packaging.

As stated in our Patron Privacy Policy, “The Pottstown Regional Public Library does not disclose or distribute users’ names, addresses, phone numbers, borrower records, computer use records, or other personal information to anyone unless required to do so pursuant to a court order, subpoena, or where otherwise required by law. Any personal information collected by Pottstown Regional Public Library will not be sold to any third party vendor. With regard to minors, only the cardholder and the parent/guardian who signed the minor’s library card application, thereby assuming responsibility for the items checked out on it, will be given information pertaining to the minor’s account. “

Complaints and Requests

The Library Board considers all materials selected under this policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. If a patron claims that a particular item is not constitutionally protected, the burden of proof rests with the patron. The Board of Directors recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in the library collection. Whenever a patron objects to the presence or absence of any library material, the complaint will be given a hearing and consideration. All complaints to staff members will be referred to the professional staff who will discuss the matter with the complainant. If not satisfied, the patron will be given a “Patron Complaint/Resource Reconsideration Request” form to complete. This completed form will be given to the Library Director who will then meet with the professional staff to evaluate the material in question and consider the merits of the completed request form. The professional staff will consider whether the material meets the selection criteria outlined in the policy. A decision will be made regarding whether or not to add or withdraw the material within a reasonable amount of time, with written reasons for the decision conveyed to the patron. If the patron is dissatisfied with the staff’s decision or the

written reply, the patron may appeal the decision to the Board at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting. The Board, after receiving public testimony from the patron, other interested parties, and from the Director, will decide whether or not library policies have been followed and whether to add or withdraw the material in question. Materials subject to complaint shall not be removed from use and circulation pending final action. If a court having jurisdiction over the library decides that any material in the collection is unprotected by the Constitution of the United States, such material will be removed immediately. Material under court consideration will remain available to patrons until a final ruling is made.

Reviewed and Approved by the Board of Directors 6/23/2022.