

McMinn County Public Libraries

Collection Development Policy

Purpose

As public libraries of McMinn County, the Calhoun Public Library, E.G. Fisher Public Library, and the Englewood Public Library shall each provide and maintain a balanced and broad collection of materials in appropriate and varied formats for the use and enjoyment of the community as space and financial considerations allow. This policy serves as a guide for staff regarding the selection and management of the collection. It also informs the public of the principles guiding how libraries develop our collection. Finally, it states the libraries' commitment to intellectual freedom and to providing information expressing a variety of viewpoints.

Legal Basis

The legal foundation of the Collection Development is the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States. *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.* All libraries will abide and honor this legal inheritance as interrupted by the United States Supreme Court through its various rulings such as *Jacobellis v. Ohio* (1964), *Island Trees School District v. Pico* (1982), and *United States v. American Library Association* (2003).

Responsibilities

Parents and Legal Guardians have the ultimate responsibility for checking out the materials that best meet the needs, values, and culture of their families.

Library staff have the responsibility to process and catalog materials in the most age-appropriate categories and to shelve those materials accordingly.

The Library Director has the ultimate responsibility for materials selection, whether by purchase, donation, or any other means, within the framework of this Collection Development Policy approved by the McMinn County Library Board. Each Library Director will provide a quarterly list of newly purchased materials to the Board of Directors.

The McMinn County Library Board has the responsibility to annually review the Collection Development Policy and the procedure to reconsider materials.

Guidelines and Criteria for Selecting

Each library selects materials based on professional review sources, recommendations from the public, consensus among recognized subject authorities, and the knowledge and expertise of the library staff. Selection is a discerning and interpretive process, involving a general knowledge of the subject and its important literature, a familiarity with the materials in the collection, and recognition of the needs of the community. Each library strives to select material that will build a well-rounded collection.

Each library tries to provide materials of sound factual data and honest opinion representing all points of view on topics of public interest and importance. Titles are not excluded based on moral, racial, religious, or political prejudice. The following criteria will be considered when making selection decisions:

- accuracy and authoritativeness
- attention of critics and reviewers
- availability of material elsewhere in the community or through interlibrary loan
- cost and availability
- coverage of the subject in existing collection
- format, durability and ease of use
- literary, artistic, historic or scientific merit
- quality and suitability of subject, style, and format for intended audience
- relevancy
- reputation of author, editor, illustrator, publisher, producer, performer or translator
- uniqueness or special features

For all libraries, no funds received are to be used to purchase, nor will the libraries otherwise acquire, material that constitutes “child pornography,” is “pornographic for minors,” or is “obscene.”

Processing and Cataloging

Libraries collect materials in various formats, including physical formats such as print and non-print media and electronic formats. The collection will include materials for all age ranges.

Books and materials that contain sexual themes or content are reviewed by each library independently for age-appropriateness and cataloged accordingly – even if this overrides the age-appropriateness recommended by the publisher. In all cases, all materials should be processed and cataloged into their age-appropriate category.

Gifts/Donations

Gifts/donations to the collection can be in the form of money or actual library materials. Library materials are accepted with the understanding that they will be considered for addition to the collection in accordance with this Collection Development Policy. Items are accepted without donor stipulations or conditions and become the sole property of the library.

Maintaining the Collection

Librarians and other professional staff regularly review collection materials to ensure they align with the library's collection development policy and patrons' needs. Materials that are damaged, duplicated, obsolete, unused, or otherwise rendered unusable are discarded from the collection.

The library's professional staff does assess if material needs to be replaced, can be mended, or preserved as needed. While items are not automatically replaced, the library seeks to maintain a strong collection across multiple subject areas and works to ensure the discarding of material does not result in a loss of valuable content or information.

Reconsideration of Materials

Any resident or cardholder, including a parent or guardian of a minor within the library district, may dispute or challenge the library's age-appropriate designation on materials.

Comments from members of the community about the collection or individual items in the collection frequently provide librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. The library welcomes expression of opinion by patrons but will be governed by this Collection Development Policy in making additions to or deletions from the collection.

Patrons finding certain library material objectionable may request that it be reconsidered by filling out the "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form" available at the public service desks.

Each library will respond to a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form" (the Request Form) in the following manner:

1. The staff member on duty receiving the initial request for reconsideration will supply the patron with a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form" and ask the patron to complete the form.
2. When the Request Form is completed and turned in to a staff member, it will be given to the Library Director.
3. The Library Director will acknowledge the receipt of the Request and specify a date by which the initiator will be given a formal response. The date should be not more than 30 days from the date the Request is received.
4. The Library Director will notify the McMinn County Library Board that a Request has been received.
5. The Library Director will attempt to bring about a resolution of the Request with the initiator within the specified time, after personally reviewing the work which is the subject of the Request.
6. If the person indicates dissatisfaction with the resolution, he/she may appeal to the McMinn County Library Board. The McMinn County Library Board will reconsider the decision based on whether or not the particular title conforms to the Board-approved Collection Development Policy concerning books and materials selection.
7. The McMinn County Library Board will then make a final determination on the Request.
8. The Library Director and the McMinn County Library Board President will convey in writing the Board's decision to the initiator of the Request.
9. The results of any such dispute or challenge will be disclosed in the McMinn County Library Board's minutes. The Board's decision shall be standing for one calendar year and each individual title may only be appealed once per calendar year.

Review and revision of this Collection Development Policy

This Collection Development Policy including any attachments will be reviewed annually by the library staff and the McMinn County Library Board. It may be revised only with the formal approval of the Board.

Approved by the McMinn County Library Board on Thursday, May 22, 2025.

The Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. 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.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948. Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council

McMinn County Library Board

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

Your

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Telephone: _____

Do you represent: Yourself _____ An organization _____ If so, which organization?

The following information pertains to the work you ask to be reconsidered:

Title: _____

Author/Artist: _____

Publisher:

To what in the work do you object? Please be as specific as possible; cite pages, passages, sections.

Did you read/view/listen to the entire work? If not, what portion(s) did you read/view/listen to?

What do you believe is the theme of this work?

Have you read or heard any reviews of this work by critics or reviewers?

From which library did you check out the work? Circle one.

Calhoun Public Library

E.G. Fisher Public Library

Englewood Public Library

What do you want the library to do with this work?

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please feel free to use the back of this form or additional sheets for your responses and comments.

Approved by the McMinn County Library Board on Thursday, May 22, 2025.