Subject: MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

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The Riverside Public Library Materials Selection policy is adopted by the Board of Library Trustees to establish policies governing the scope and content of the Library's collection and responsibility for selection and withdrawal of materials from the collection.

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY:

The Riverside Public Library (RPL) serves diverse individuals and groups thus uses an inclusive approach to materials selection to provide a diverse collection of materials to meet the needs of the multiplicity of views held in the community. It asserts that American democracy functions only if the full range of human ideas is accessible to the public. While some ideas may not be held by the majority, the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution protects the free expression of those ideas. The public library is a marketplace of ideas that are contained in varied and divergent materials. It does not sacrifice the interests of one group to satisfy the interests and beliefs of others. The Library, by selecting individual materials, does not promote, support or endorse any particular viewpoint, but rather aims to support the *Freedom to Read* statement of the American Library Association. The collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respects both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.

RPL maintains that the use of library materials is an individual and private matter and that the public library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas. While all persons are free to select or reject materials for themselves, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to read or inquire. Parents or legal guardians have the primary responsibility to guide and direct the reading of their own minor children. Selection of adult materials will not be limited by the possibility that minors may encounter them. Materials held in the Riverside Public Library will be available to all members of the public regardless of age or any other factor.

While the Riverside City Charter (Section 808) (d) authorizes the Board of Library Trustees "to purchase and acquire books, journals, maps, publications and other supplies peculiar to the needs of the Library", this is subject to the limitations of the budget for such purposes. The expenditure and disbursement of funds for such purchases shall be made and approved as elsewhere in this Charter provided. The Board delegates to the Library Director responsibility for selection.

Each year, a tremendous number of materials resources in print and digital format are published. The following general criteria are used to evaluate the appropriateness of materials added to the Riverside Public Library collection:

a. Accuracy of information
b. Quality of treatment

c. Merit, awards, or critical acclaim
d. Timeliness or permanent value
e. Popular interest or demand
f. Extent to which the subject matter is already represented in the Library collection
g. Readability or literary style
h. Social significance
i. Reputation of the author or publisher
j. Cost
k. Physical durability, attractiveness, and other format characteristics
l. Existence of authoritative, published reviews

When selecting materials for inclusion in the collection, the Library also considers the availability of materials and resources in other libraries.

Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole. Individual items which in and of themselves may be controversial or offensive to some may be appropriately selected if their inclusion in the collection will contribute to the balance and effectiveness of the collection as a whole. Material dealing with controversial views or subjects is judged on the basis of the entire work and not on isolated passages or sections. Matters such as the race or nationality, or the political, social, or religious views of the author are not factors affecting the evaluation of material. The selection of a variety of materials guarantees the right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences.

Riverside Public Library regularly evaluates the collection as a whole and may withdraw items when necessary. The decision to withdraw materials is based on a number of factors, including publication date, frequency of circulation, community interest, physical condition, and accuracy, but not limited to, and relevance of information. Items housed in the Local History archives are an exception. Fiction that was once popular but no longer in demand and non-fiction books applicable may be withdrawn from the collection.

Members of the public who wish to have an item reconsidered for inclusion or exclusion from the collection are invited to submit their comments in writing to the Library Director using the Customer Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials or Materials for Consideration. The Board of Library Trustees will hear the public's concern if staff response is deemed unsatisfactory.

In support of the above principles, the Board of Library Trustees adopts the *Library Bill of Rights,* the *Freedom to Read* statement, and the *Freedom to View* statement.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees at their meeting of February 14, 2022.
Policy update approved by the Board of Library Trustees at their meeting of May 12, 2025.