



## **South Milwaukee Library**

1907 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
South Milwaukee, WI 53172  
P (414)768-8195  
W [smlibrary.org](http://smlibrary.org)

### **Collection Development Policy**

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees, 3/1/2022

Revised, 11/25/2024, 3/24/2025

The Board of Trustees of the South Milwaukee Public Library has adopted the following Collection Development Policy to guide librarians and to inform the public of the principles upon which collection development and management decisions are based. Collection development is the ongoing process of assessing the materials available for purchase or licensing and making decisions on their inclusion and retention.

The selection of materials and development of services are focused on foundational tools including the Library's Mission, Strategic Plans, and other community resources.

#### **Mission**

To enhance the quality of life in South Milwaukee in a welcoming and innovative environment that provides information and ideas for lifelong learning and literacy.

#### **Objectives**

To collect, organize, and make easily available the materials housed within the South Milwaukee Public Library. The library staff is guided by a sense of responsibility to the community in order to meet the above stated goals. Library staff members selecting library materials and resources are expected to keep the overall objectives in mind when applying their professional knowledge and experience in making selection decisions.

#### **Responsibility for Selection**

The professional staff of the South Milwaukee Public Library (the selectors) is responsible for the selection of library materials and resources chosen to fulfill the above objectives. Other staff members and the public may recommend materials for consideration. Final responsibility rests with the Director who operates within the framework of this policy as approved by the Library Board of Trustees. The Director delegates to professional staff members the authority to interpret the policy in day-to-day decisions regarding the development of the Library collection and the subsequent selection of library materials and resources.



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The exception is digital materials, which are provided through a state or system-wide buying pool to which South Milwaukee Public Library contributes funds. Digital materials include audiobooks, video, electronic books, electronic magazines, and other materials that are selected through the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium or the Milwaukee County Federated Library System. The South Milwaukee Public Library has no control over the selection of those materials except to suggest titles for purchase.

### **Guidelines for Selection**

- The selection of any material or resource does not constitute an endorsement.
- Selection decisions are guided by the merits of the work, collection needs, and interests of a diverse community.
- Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that material may be accessible to children. The Library does not restrict access to any material by age, and leaves the responsibility for children's use of its materials to each child's parent or legal guardian.
- The Library acknowledges a particular interest in local, county, and state history and government. The Library will add to its collection works produced by authors, printers, or publishers with local connections that meet the purpose and objectives of this policy.
- The Library selects material of varying complexity and format because it serves a public embracing a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, interests, sensory preferences, and reading skills. When staff review and select materials for purchase, they consider the special needs of the community.
- The Library recognizes that materials and resources may be controversial.

### **Criteria for Selection**

- The selectors must consider each type of material in terms of its own merits and the audience for whom it is intended. No single standard can apply to all acquisition decisions. Some material may be selected primarily for artistic merit, scholarship or value to humanity, while others may be chosen to satisfy the recreational and entertainment needs for the community.
- Some library materials are subject to widespread and/or heavy local demand. These high-demand items may or may not meet the general and specific criteria contained in this policy. Selectors give serious consideration to the volume and nature of requests by members of the public. In addition, as the social and intellectual climate of the community changes, materials not originally recommended for purchase may become of interest. Such materials will be reevaluated as the need arises.



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- To build a collection of merit and significance, selectors acquire materials according to objective guidelines of the ordering librarian using the general criteria and content criteria listed below. They evaluate acquisitions, whether purchased or donated to the library, primarily by examining reviews in one or more professional library review media and checking against the criteria listed below.
- The Library uses a website and social media in order to meet the information needs of patrons and to promote services offered by the library. Professional librarians use the general criteria outlined in this policy when linking to external content.
- The Library is a member of the Milwaukee County Federated Library System and, as such, provides access to materials from other libraries for our patrons.

### **General Criteria**

- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of the medium to the content
- Importance as a document of the times
- Relation to the existing collection and to other material on the subject
- Reputation and/or significance of the author or illustrator
- Attention of critics, reviewers and the public
- Cost

### **Content Criteria**

- Authority
- Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- Objectivity
- Consideration of the work as a whole
- Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Representation of important movements, genres or trends
- Of lasting value
- Popular entertainment

### **Purchase Requests**

The South Milwaukee Public Library has a process to receive purchase requests from library patrons. Making a suggestion for purchase of a material is not a guarantee that that item will be added to the collection. Each request falls under the same



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standards as criteria for selection, and popularity, cost, and suitability for the collection will be considered.

### **Donations and Gifts**

Donations of materials are gratefully accepted with the understanding that the Library may add them to the collection if they meet established standards for purchased materials, with emphasis on currency, physical condition, and need. All gifts added to the collection must be available for public use. Materials donated to the Library, whether added to the collection or not, become the property of the Library, and will not be returned to the donor. There is no obligation for the Library to retain ownership of the item.

Materials not added to the collection will be given to the Friends of the Library Book Sale or disposed of by other means. The Library cannot place a monetary value on gifts for tax purposes, but receipts are provided upon request.

Monetary gifts are always welcome and may be designated as memorials. When monetary gifts are intended for the purchase of materials, library staff will make the determination of what titles to buy, using the same criteria as for all other purchases.

Gifts of non-library items such as paintings, portraits, or art objects ordinarily will not be accepted. If accepted, the item becomes the property of the Library, and will not be returned to the donor. There is no obligation for the Library to retain ownership of the item.

### **Evaluation and Withdrawal of Materials**

An attractive, up-to-date, currently useful collection is maintained through a continual discarding and replacing process. Materials may be withdrawn from the library collection after careful consideration of these factors:

- Physical condition
- Currency of information
- Lack of use
- Superseded by a new edition or better work on the same subject
- Space needs

Although every effort will be made to replace needed materials which are withdrawn, the Library takes the position that it is better to have no information on a subject than to have materials which are inaccurate or in poor physical condition.



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Materials withdrawn from the collection may be given to the Friends of the Library Book Sale or disposed of by other means. Individual items that are being withdrawn will not be saved for specific individuals.

### **Request for Reconsideration**

The Library will reconsider any material in its collection upon written request of a library patron who is a resident of South Milwaukee. The Library will only review 5 titles per month due to staffing capacity. To request a reconsideration, the patron must fulfill the following steps:

1. The patron will be given a copy of the South Milwaukee Public Library Collection Development Policy, which includes the Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form.
2. If the patron wants to pursue the reconsideration, the completed reconsideration form must be submitted to the Library Director. The Library Director will notify the patron in writing within 1 week, confirming that their request has been received. The Library Director will appoint a committee to review the item being questioned. The committee will make a recommendation to the Library Director within 4 weeks of receiving the initial request.
3. The Library Director will decide whether or not the item should be retained, and the patron will be informed of the decision in writing within 1 week of receiving the staff committee recommendation. The committee's work and Director's decision will be shared with the requestor and at the next Library Board meeting. The item will not be removed until the committee makes its recommendation.
4. The patron may appeal the Library Director's decision by submitting a written request for a hearing before the Library Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting. This request must be submitted within one month of receipt of the Director's decision.



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### South Milwaukee Public Library Request for Reconsideration of Material Form

The Trustees of the South Milwaukee Public Library have established a Collection Development Policy and a procedure for the reconsideration of materials in the library collection. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to the Library Director.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent yourself? \_\_\_\_ Or an organization? \_\_\_\_

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

\_\_\_ Book                      \_\_\_ Movie                      \_\_\_ Magazine

\_\_\_ Audio Recording      \_\_\_ Digital Resource      \_\_\_ Game

\_\_\_ Newspaper              \_\_\_ Other

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

\_\_\_\_\_



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3. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?

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4. What concerns you about the resource?

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5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or viewpoints on this topic?

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6. What action are you requesting the committee consider?

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