



# Collection Development Policy

**Mission Statement:** Woburn Public Library connects the community to resources, services, and experiences that educate, enrich, and entertain.

## PURPOSE

This policy explains the scope and objectives of the collection, collection maintenance, Intellectual Freedom, and the Request for Reconsideration Process.

## INTRODUCTION

The Woburn Public Library Collection Development Policy supports the overall goals and objectives of the Library as expressed in the mission, vision and strategic initiatives of the organization and serves to guide librarians and inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. Libraries in Massachusetts are required by law to adopt a written policy for the selection of library materials (M.G.L. Ch. 78, Sec. 33).

The Collection Development Policy is grounded in the principles of Intellectual Freedom and equal access for all.

## INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Intellectual Freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Woburn Public Library subscribes to the principles of intellectual freedom allowing individuals to seek and retrieve information from all points of view without restriction. As such, the Library provides free access to all expressions of ideas including unpopular positions. The presence of any item in the Library does not imply the Library's, Trustees', or City's endorsement of its contents.

The Library will uphold Intellectual Freedom as expressed in the American Library Association's Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements, the Library Bill of Rights, and the statements on Labeling Library Materials, Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks, and Free Access to Libraries for Minors.

- [Freedom to Read](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement) <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>
- [Library Bill of Rights](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill) <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>
- [Freedom to View](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement) <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement>
- [Labeling Library Materials](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretation/labeling-systems) <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretation/labeling-systems>

The Library does not make decisions based on protecting patrons from specific content or topics. Each individual is responsible for choosing which Library resources and services are appropriate for themselves and their children. Youth have unrestricted access to the entire collection. Parents

and guardians, not Library staff, are responsible for guiding the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor children. This responsibility does not extend to the children of others.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE COLLECTION**

### **Responsibility for Selection**

The Library Board of Trustees delegates to the Library Director authority and responsibility for selection of library materials and the development and management of the collection. The Library Director may in turn delegate responsibility for selection to professional librarians and other staff members who are qualified via education, experience and training.

### **Selection Criteria**

In keeping with its mission, the Woburn Public Library attempts to acquire a broad range of materials for all ages based on awareness of community interests and concerns, national and international issues and events, publishing trends, new insights, societal trends, and the professional judgement of selectors regarding the material's value to the Library's collection. The location of items within the collection are determined by the intended audience. Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that the materials may be accessible to minors. Material is not excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or political and social views of the author. Inclusion of materials does not imply agreement with or endorsement of content. New formats are always considered for inclusion, all of which must meet the selection criteria set out in this policy.

The objective of materials selection is to collect those books and materials that will inform, entertain, and contribute to the enrichment of mind and spirit.

General criteria for selecting all formats of material include, but are not limited to:

- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Accuracy and reliability
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Favorable reviews and inclusion in reputable resources, such as bibliographies, catalogs and professional trade publications
- High standards of quality in content, format, and ease of use
- Importance as a record of the times
- Local significance or interest
- Locally produced or created content that meets standards and criteria outlined above
- Cost and availability

### **Languages**

The Library's collections will be built to meet the needs and interests of the community in all its diversity including material for all ages in languages other than English. The specific languages and allocated amounts are based on community demographics and patron interests.

## **PATRON SUGGESTIONS**

Woburn Public Library accepts suggestions from the community for possible purchase of materials. All suggestions are given serious consideration and must meet the same criteria as all other materials purchased by the Library.

## **LOCAL AUTHORS**

Authors who live or have lived in Woburn may donate copies of their book to be added to the collection, but the Library does not guarantee inclusion in the collection. All local authors are welcome to donate their book for display on the Local Author Bookshelf. Items donated to the Library become the property of the Library and will not be returned to the donating party.

## **LIBRARY OF THINGS**

Woburn Public Library provides a Library of Things collection of non-traditional library materials that patrons have occasional use for, would like to try out before purchasing, or may not otherwise have access to. Overall selection guidelines apply to this collection as well as specific criteria such as:

- Usability
- Quality of construction
- Recurring maintenance requirements
- Longevity and durability
- Storage space and portability
- Cost
- Safety

## **DIGITAL RESOURCES**

Digital resources are materials provided in electronic formats that are accessible through electronic devices. They are delivered in a variety of ways and extend the reach of the Library 24/7. Digital resources are subject to the same general selection criteria as other materials.

## **GIFTS:**

The Library welcomes gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that it will evaluate them in accordance with the criteria applied to selection of materials. It is the prerogative of the Library to accept or reject any gift. The Director may accept materials which are not added to the collection with the understanding that these items may be sold, donated, or otherwise disposed of by the Director. When the Library receives a cash gift for the purchase of memorial or commemorative books or collections, the selection will be made by the Library Director or a designated staff member in consultation with the donor, if requested, in concordance with the Materials Selection policy and Library acquisition procedures. The name of the donor or the person memorialized or commemorated will be entered on the bookplate.

The Woburn Public Library will not appraise gift books for tax purposes. The Library will, upon request, provide to the donor a written receipt indicating only the number of items and a general description of the material.

## **COLLECTION MAINTENANCE**

The Library withdraws materials from its collection not only to maintain its usefulness, but to make the most effective use of available space. The same criteria will be used in weeding materials from the collection as they are used in their acquisition. The following categories of materials will be considered for deselection:

- worn, damaged, or mutilated items
- duplicate copies of seldom used titles
- materials which contain outdated or inaccurate information
- superseded editions of specific titles
- formats no longer collected
- materials no longer of interest or demand and/or available elsewhere within the Minuteman Network.

## **REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS**

Woburn Public Library recognizes the right of an individual, residing in Woburn, to question materials in the Library's collection and has developed a process to address concerns. Groups or organizations may not submit a Request for Reconsideration of Materials. Limits may be placed on the number of requests individual patrons may submit within a set period.

Patrons wishing to voice an objection to an item in the Library's collection may submit a "Request for Reconsideration Form" to the Library Director, who will consult with the Library Board of Trustees and respond to the concern. Only one item may be requested per form. Anonymous submissions will not be considered, nor will submissions from individuals or stakeholders not residing in Woburn, MA.

The Library Director will reply in writing to the individual within 30 business days of receiving the completed form.

The decision of the Library Director may be appealed once to Library Board of Trustees within 30 days of receiving a response. The Board reserves the right to deny consideration of an appeal if it creates an unreasonable workload, or when the Board determines that a request lacks sufficient merit. The decision of the Board is final.

The item in question, except for a copy the staff uses for the review process, will remain in the collection pending the Library Director's written decision. Reconsideration requests for a specific title can only be submitted once every year. The Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials is attached to the policy.

## **SCHOOLS**

The Woburn Public Library makes every effort to work closely with surrounding schools. The library's collection is designed to complement rather than furnish material for school curriculum. The Woburn Public Library provides informational resources and educational tools, in print, non-print, and digital formats, to support formal learning for students in grades Kindergarten through Twelve.

## **MINUTEMAN LIBRARY NETWORK**

The Woburn Public Library is a member of the Minuteman Library Network and shares resources accordingly, however, it does not necessarily depend on other member libraries to fill requests for materials that are within its scope of purchase. The Minuteman Library Network also has its own collection development policy regarding eBooks and databases.

Updated and Approved by the Board of Trustees October 4<sup>th</sup>,2022. Revised November 18, 2025

*Subject to review this policy every two years or so to ensure it still meets current needs.*