

General Statement of Policy

The *Collection Management Policy* provides information for staff and customers on the selection, maintenance, and display of materials offered by the Northwest Regional Library System. The following guidelines are used by staff in order to maintain a collection that meets the needs of the local community, supports the Northwest Regional Library System’s mission, and abides by Bay County Board of County Commissioner policies and state and federal law.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Northwest Regional Library System is to provide a safe and comfortable space where all visitors can find the books they want to read, access current technology, and locate the resources and assistance needed to support lifelong learning and recreational goals.

Guiding Principles and Intellectual Freedom

The Northwest Regional Library System serves a large geographic area, with residents who have diverse backgrounds, beliefs and interests. Library collections reflect that diversity. A title that one person finds accommodating, another person might find offensive. The Northwest Regional Library System endorses the Library Bill of Rights (see Appendix A) and strongly believes that every individual has the right to both seek and receive information from all points of view. Individual items may not suit everyone’s taste, interest, or personal code of ethics. As a public library, Northwest Regional Library System has a responsibility to collect materials representing diverse points of view in order to meet the wide-ranging informational needs of the community.

The Northwest Regional Library System does not promote particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item express or imply an endorsement of the author’s viewpoint. It is the position of the Northwest Regional Library System that the customer, parents, or legal guardians have the responsibility for selecting materials which are appropriate for themselves or their children. Northwest Regional Library System materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, nor will items be sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

Responsibility for Collection Management

Selection and de-selection of materials for the collections of all Northwest Regional Library System locations is the duty of staff, designated by the Library Director, who operate within the framework of this *Collection Management Policy* adopted by the Bay County Board of County Commissioners, the governing body for the Northwest Regional Library System.

Selection Criteria

The Northwest Regional Library System collections provide as wide a selection of materials as possible within the constraints of budgets and space. Customers and staff members are encouraged to submit purchase recommendations which are given priority consideration. Library cardholders may suggest a title for purchase by submitting the form on the Northwest Regional Library System website, <https://www.nwrls.com/suggest-a-title/>.

Criteria to be considered for materials in the collection:

- a) Popular interest (patron requests are given priority consideration)
- b) Author reputation and/or authority in the field; reputation of the publisher
- c) Positive reviews in various popular and professional periodicals
- d) Relationship to the existing collection
- e) Timeliness, currency, and enduring value of content

- f) Contemporary significance, attention from critics, reviewers, and the public
- g) Historical significance
- h) Quantity (having sufficient copies of high-interest materials)
- i) Suitability of format, subject, style, and level for the intended audience
- j) Works of local, state, and regional interest
- k) Availability of material in other Libraries in the community or via interlibrary loan
- l) Availability of more suitable material
- m) Durability of the format
- n) Price and availability for purchase

An item does not need to meet all of these criteria to be selected.

Library Material Displays

Northwest Regional Library System material displays are used to promote the collection, as well as support Library and community programs and services. Staff members create displays using items owned within the Northwest Regional Library System collection. Library staff strives to include a wide spectrum of opinions and viewpoints in displays in order to address the information needs and interests of the entire community.

Northwest Regional Library System displays are planned and implemented by Library staff using the following criteria:

- a) Community needs and interest
- b) Availability of display space
- c) Historical or educational significance
- d) Relation to other library collections, resources, exhibits, and programs
- e) Connection to other community or national programs, holidays, or events

Electronic and Collaborative Collections

The Northwest Regional Library System subscribes to online research resources and shared digital collections. These collections are either fully or partly curated by a third party. Shared collections, including electronic databases, eBooks, and other Internet-based resources, provide access to a broader array of resources than could be acquired by the Northwest Regional Library System alone.

Donations and Gifts

The Northwest Regional Library System welcomes non-returnable donated materials at all locations. Gift items are reviewed using the same criteria as those purchased and must be in good enough condition to make their processing economically feasible. Once donated, gift items become the property of the Northwest Regional Library System and can be added to the collection, sold, donated, or discarded.

Donations that are added to the collection are typically placed in the branch where they were donated, unless a more suitable location is determined. Gift materials are only accepted if there are no stipulations by the donor as to the disposition.

Northwest Regional Library System staff can provide a receipt showing the number and types of materials donated, for tax purposes, but cannot provide the value of donated items.

Monetary contributions for the purpose of purchasing books or other materials are accepted. Donors may specify a general subject category, format, and age group for which materials are to be purchased. All collection items purchased with donated funds are considered using the same criteria as listed in the

Selection Criteria section of this policy. A donation will not be accepted if it requires the purchase of specific titles.

Items purchased with donated funds may be designated as tributes or memorials. The *Tribute and Memorial Gift Form* can be found on the Northwest Regional Library System's website, <https://www.nwrls.com/files/donation%20form-fillable.pdf>.

Art and Artifacts

Occasionally members of the community wish to donate works of art or other artifacts. Guidelines for these types of donations are covered under the *Art and Artifact Acceptance Policy*.

Evaluation of Collections

In order to maintain a quality selection of materials, the collection must be continuously evaluated in terms of use, age, condition, timeliness, and subject area coverage. Regular review of the collection helps staff identify materials that should be removed and helps identify gaps in the collection where additional or updated materials should be added. The specific purposes of the Northwest Regional Library System's collection maintenance plan are:

- a) to remove outdated, obsolete, and inaccurate information
- b) to maintain organized and balanced collections that reflect community interests/needs and support the Library's mission of service
- c) to present a neat, well-managed collection by removing worn and damaged materials
- d) to make efficient use of space so the public can quickly find current, authoritative information
- e) to reduce unnecessary duplication
- f) to ensure quality and integrity rather than mere quantity
- g) to gain familiarity with the collection to facilitate future selection decisions

Criteria for De-selection

"Weeding" is the practice of removing items from the collection due to lack of use, poor condition, or because the information contained within is outdated or superseded by more current material. Weeding is necessary to maintain a relevant collection and to make room for new materials.

Following these basic guidelines, materials that are likely to be withdrawn include:

- a) books that are outdated or contain incorrect information
- b) damaged or worn materials that can be readily replaced with new editions or more current, equivalent material
- c) superseded editions not considered to be classics
- d) duplicate materials of low demand that are not needed in another location
- e) materials that have not circulated in three years

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Comments from members of the community about the collection frequently provide librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. The Northwest Regional Library System staff welcomes expressions of opinion by patrons, but will be governed by this *Collection Management Policy* when adding or removing items from the collection or to a display.

Patrons with questions or concerns are encouraged to discuss them with a staff member. Patrons who wish staff to reconsider the decision to add (or not add) an item to the collection, or to a display, will be asked to complete and sign a *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials* form which may be obtained from any Northwest Regional Library System location. Upon receipt of the form, the Director will appoint an ad hoc review committee consisting of Northwest Regional Library System staff. A

member of the Library Advisory Committee is also asked to serve on the review committee. Review committee members will make written recommendations to the Director who will use these recommendations to determine the disposition of the material. If the reviewers disagree, the group will meet to discuss the item and will take a vote to determine the outcome. The Director will communicate the decision and the reasons for it, in writing, to the person who initiated the request for reconsideration at the earliest possible date.

Each *Reconsideration of Library Materials* form can be used for only one title. If multiple titles are requested for reconsideration, each will be considered in the order received. All titles will remain in the collection during the review process. Titles will only be reviewed once in a three-year period. If a title is challenged more than once within that period, the decision from the earlier review will stand.

If the person who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision, an appeal to the Library Advisory Committee (LAC) may be requested in writing to the Library Director. The LAC reserves the right to limit the length of the presentation and public comment during an appeal hearing. The LAC will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures. On the basis of this determination, the LAC may vote to uphold or override the decision of the Director. The decision of the LAC is final.

If a title is withdrawn in response to a request for its reconsideration, this determination will not result in adverse action towards those who selected or approved adding the item to the collection.

Special Collections

Genealogy and Local History Collections

Several Northwest Regional Library System locations house genealogical and local history materials, including the *Jane Patton Genealogy and Local History Room* at the Bay County Public Library and the *Alfred I. DuPont Florida History – Genealogy Center* at the Corinne Costin Gibson Memorial/Port St. Joe Library. The primary purpose of these collections is to preserve materials that document local history and to make these materials available to researchers and the general public. These items are for reference use only and may not be borrowed.

Due to their archival purpose, items in these collections are added and removed based on criteria which is different than the criteria for the regular circulating collection. Materials will not be removed due to age and are seldom removed due to lack of use. Items in poor condition are repaired and preserved for use. Space is fixed and limited for these collections so materials are added only if they fit within the scope of the collection, add depth to the collection, and otherwise adhere to this policy. Items which duplicate what is already available in the collection are not added. Gifts of books, memorabilia, photographs or other materials are accepted if they meet selection criteria and there is a need for the items in either collection. Anyone considering a donation is encouraged to contact the Library.

The Library reserves the right to dispose of materials in accordance with the *Donations and Gifts* section of this policy.

Bay County Law Library

Created in 1969 by Laws of Florida, Chapter 69-835, the Bay County Law Library's charge is to provide a central, adequate Law Library for the use of county officials, judges, officers of the several courts of Bay County, and the citizens of Bay County. The Law Library is operated and governed by the Bay County Law Library Board. The Law Library collection is housed at the Bay County Public Library. The

Law Librarian makes decisions regarding the selection and removal of materials in the Law Library collection.

Local Authors

Authors and/or illustrators who reside in Bay, Gulf, and Liberty Counties are invited to donate a single copy of their work to their local Library branch to be considered for inclusion on the Local Author Shelf. These titles are not catalogued, but will be available for the public to check out. If the local Library has a designated Local Author Shelf the item will be housed there, otherwise the book will be shelved with the Bay County Public Library Local Author collection.

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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.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.