

Category: Public Service
Policy Number: 6-4
Policy Name: Collection Development

Purpose:

To provide a statement of philosophy and establish the general guidelines for the selection of material for library collections, setting out objectives that reflect the mission of the Waterloo Public Library.

In keeping with Waterloo Public Library's purpose to satisfy the multiple literacy needs of the community, the Library provides public access to print and digital collections that respond to and anticipate the information, cultural, learning and leisure needs of its customers.

The Library's objectives in the selection of material will include acquiring items that represent a variety of perspectives and that respond to all ages and levels of comprehension. Library materials will be provided in a variety of formats to ensure accessibility.

Responsibility for Selection:

Selection of library material is the responsibility of the CEO, who designates this authority to professional staff.

Intellectual Freedom:

Waterloo Public Library endorses the *Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries*, and the Ontario Library Association's *Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual* (see Appendices).

General Selection Criteria:

All acquisitions are considered in terms of the following criteria:

- Present and potential relevance to community interests and needs
- Suitability of subject, presentation and format for the intended audience
- The relation to existing library collections and other materials on the subject
- Reputation and/or significance of the author/creator/publisher
- Public and critical reception
- Popular demand by the community
- Suitability of format for library use
- Availability of suitable material
- Availability of materials through other libraries
- Canadian and/or local content
- Budgetary considerations

Controversial Material:

The Library recognizes that some material may be controversial and that a given item may offend some people. Selection of materials will be made without bias toward subject matter, ideology, point of view or frankness of language. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval by any sector of the community.

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The Library does not advocate particular beliefs and the presence of any item in the collection does not represent an endorsement of its contents.

Objections to Library Material:

The Library recognizes the right of individuals or groups to make their complaints known to Library staff. Any objection not satisfactorily resolved by the Library Collections Managers should be addressed in writing to the CEO, preferably using the *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials* Form.

Children’s Access to Library Materials:

Children and teens have access to all materials in the Library, including the Internet. Responsibility for monitoring the choice of library materials by minors rests with their parents or legal guardians. No item will be excluded from the collection because it may come into the possession of a minor.

Special Collections:

WPL acknowledges a particular interest in local history with a goal to maintain a comprehensive collection focusing on the city (town or village) of Waterloo.

Interlibrary Loan (ILLO):

WPL is committed to resource-sharing with other libraries, both locally, across the province and across Canada and provides Interlibrary Loan service for this purpose. Staff will make referrals for ILLO in situations where this is the most appropriate means of providing suitable material to meet the customer’s need.

Suggestions for Purchase:

Recommendations from the public for the purchase of materials are welcome and will be referred to the appropriate selector to be considered in light of this *Collection Development Policy*.

Donations:

Gifts of books and other material are accepted with the understanding that they become the property of the Library and will be evaluated with the same criteria as purchased materials. Tax receipts are not issued for donations of materials.

Collection Maintenance:

Maintaining a collection that is relevant, useful and accessible requires the withdrawal of items that are worn, outdated or seldom used. When withdrawal of an item is considered, the selection criteria are re-applied. The replacement of withdrawn materials will be made in light of overall collection development goals and will depend on the current demand for the material, the availability of more current works on the subject and the coverage of the subject in the collection.

Document Record:

October 2003	Initial Release
September 2014	Reviewed
June 2019	Reviewed

Appendix A:

Canadian Federation of Library Associations Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations recognizes and values the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html>) as the guarantor of the fundamental freedoms in Canada of conscience and religion; of thought, belief, opinion, and expression; of peaceful assembly; and of association.

The Canadian Federation of Library Association supports and promotes the universal principles of intellectual freedom as defined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (<https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>), which include the interlocking freedoms to hold opinions and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

In accordance with these principles, the Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms that all persons in Canada have a fundamental right, subject only to the Constitution and the law, to have access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, and to express their thoughts publicly. Only the courts may abridge free expression rights in Canada.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms further that libraries have a core responsibility to support, defend and promote the universal principles of intellectual freedom and privacy.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations holds that libraries are a key institution in Canada for rendering expressive content accessible and affordable to all. Libraries are essential gateways for all persons living in Canada to advance themselves through literacy, lifelong learning, social engagement, and cultural enrichment.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some individuals and groups consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, in accordance with their mandates and professional values and standards, libraries provide, defend and promote equitable access to the widest possible variety of expressive content and resist calls for censorship and the adoption of systems that deny or restrict access to resources.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and foster free expression and the right to safe and welcoming places and conditions. To this end, libraries make available their public spaces and services to individuals and groups without discrimination.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and defend privacy in the individual's pursuit of expressive content. To this end, libraries protect the identities and activities of library users except when required by the courts to cede them.

Furthermore, in accordance with established library policies, procedures and due process, libraries resist efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Library employees, volunteers and employers as well as library governing entities have a core responsibility to uphold the principles of intellectual freedom in the performance of their respective library roles.

Approval History ~ June 27, 1974 Amended November 17, 1983; November 18, 1985; and September 27, 2015

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Appendix B:

Ontario Library Association – Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual

In affirming its commitment to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the freedom to read and freedom of the press, as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Library Association declares its acceptance of the following propositions:

1. That the provision of library service to the public is based upon the right of the citizen, under the protection of the law, to judge individually on questions of politics, religion and morality.
2. That intellectual freedom requires freedom to examine other ideas and other interpretations of life than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general, and including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional or unpopular.
3. That freedom of expression includes freedom for a creator to depict what is ugly, shocking and unedifying in life.
4. That free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that the freedom to read, listen and view is fundamental to such free traffic.
5. That it is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and to implement it consistently in the selection of books, periodicals, films, recordings, other materials, and in the provision of access to electronic sources of information, including access to the internet.
6. That it is therefore part of the library's service to its public to resist any attempt by any individual or group within the community it serves to abrogate or curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view and listen by demanding the removal of, or restrictions to library information sources in any format.
7. That it is equally part of the library's responsibility to its public to ensure that its selection of material is not unduly influenced by the personal opinions of the selectors, but determined by the application of generally accepted standards of accuracy, style and presentation.

Approved, OLA Board of Directors, December 2003 ; Reaffirmed, OLA Board of Directors, December 2005