

## **SOUTH BURLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

In accordance with 22 V.S.A. § 69, the South Burlington Public Library adopts this collection development policy, which includes a materials selection policy and procedures for the reconsideration and retention of library materials.

### **A. Introduction and Purpose**

The South Burlington Public Library's major goal in collection development is to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community. This policy is intended to provide guidance for the evaluation, selection and deselection of materials and define the scope and standards of the collection. The end result will be a well-balanced collection representing multiple points of view that reflect the community's diverse people and history, including a diversity of race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, religion, and political beliefs and a diversity of authors, creators, and media, within the limits of our budget. This policy will be reviewed regularly and will reflect changes in our community.

The library's collections reflect a commitment to intellectual freedom. Compliance with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Vermont laws prohibiting discrimination in places of public accommodation shall underpin the practices and practical processes of maintaining the library's collections. The Library endorses the American Library (ALA)'s Library Bill of Rights

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> and the Vermont Freedom to Read Statement <https://vermontlibraries.org/vermont-library-freedom-to-read-statement>.

The library remains committed to securing professional services, including legal counsel, as necessary to ensure that its collection development activities comply with the above-identified State and federal laws.

### **B. Materials Selection**

The Library Director and staff have the full authority to select materials for the collection. They recognize the rights of all patrons to have free, secure access to a wide diversity of views and expressions as guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution. The race, religion, nationality, or political views of an author or creator; offensive language; depictions or descriptions of violence or sexually explicit activity; controversial content of an item; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community does not cause an item automatically to be included or excluded from the library's collection.

The Library's collection includes print, DVD, spoken word, and digital collections for users from birth through adulthood. Multiple factors determine what materials are included in

the library's collections: funding, space, staffing, and ongoing maintenance needs. All materials, whether purchased or donated, and regardless of format, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards to be added to the collection.

- Popular interest
- Accuracy of information
- Diversity of opinion
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer, or illustrator
- Positive reviews in professional and critical sources
- Creative, literary, or technical quality
- Treatment of subject across multiple levels of emotional and intellectual maturity
- Relationship to existing materials in the collection
- Alignment with the Library's mission and strategic plan
- Representation by and of diverse individuals and groups
- Cost and availability
- Anticipated viability and/or longevity of the format

The Library also serves the community by collecting objects that are useful to residents for checkout. These items are considered part of a special collection called the Library of Things (LoT). The LoT collection helps the community be sustainable by sharing resources, making commonly used items available without a fee, and saving storage space for those who live in small and/or shared spaces. These items will be selected based on one or more of the following standards.

- Popular interest
- Supportive of other City department services and spaces

LoT items may require a liability waiver at the Director's discretion.

The library may provide access to subscription databases and shared online collections. The library may not have direct control over the inclusion or exclusion of specific titles within those shared collections.

### **C. Collection Maintenance**

Maintenance of the library's collection through reevaluation by the Library staff ensures its usefulness and relevance to the community. Staff sets a collection review schedule such that all areas of the collection are reconsidered every three years, using the criteria set above for selection. Staff utilizes collection development materials, professional judgment, and experience to withdraw and/or replace items in the collection. Outdated, obsolete,

irrelevant, seldom used, or worn items will be removed from the collection. Materials easily obtainable from another library may also be withdrawn. Items withdrawn from the collection will be disposed of in accordance with all applicable laws and municipal policies.

LoT items will be maintained as needed with cleaning and replacement of parts.

#### **D. Suggestions for Purchase**

Recommendations from the public are encouraged and given careful consideration. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically added to the collection.

#### **E. Gifts**

Donated materials will be evaluated by library staff prior to being included in the library's collection and must meet the library's selection criteria. The Library Director may establish additional criteria to be used by Library staff in accepting gifted materials, such as the items' condition or publication date, availability of storage space, and other factors.

Once donations are accepted by staff, items become the property of the Library . They may be added to the collection, given to other libraries or non-profit agencies (including the Friends of the Library), sold, traded or discarded. Donated items will not be returned to the donor.

Monetary gifts given without restriction may be accepted for the purchase of materials. Monetary gifts offered with specific restrictions will be reviewed by the Library Director and the Board of Trustees as needed.

#### **F. Access to Other Library Collections**

The Library's collection is further enhanced by the following services:

- Interlibrary Loan is a nationwide system that allows Library staff to borrow requested materials from other libraries to meet individual interests. No fees will be charged for this service.
- The Homecard System allows reciprocal lending between many nearby libraries, enabling our card-holders to borrow books and other materials from any Homecard library using their South Burlington library card.
- The ABLE Library is a free national program that provides large print books, braille books, digital talking books and audio described DVDs and videos for people who have difficulty reading regular large print or handling print materials. Applications may be approved by library staff.

## **G. Reconsideration of Materials**

As mentioned above, the Library supports and adheres to Vermont's Freedom to Read statement <https://vermontlibraries.org/vermont-library-freedom-to-read-statement>. Nonetheless, from time to time, Library patrons may raise objections to materials in the Library's collection.

- A South Burlington resident with a concern about the inclusion of an item in the library's collection is encouraged to discuss their concern with the library director (the Director).
- If speaking with the Director does not resolve the concern, the resident may initiate a formal request that an item be removed from the library collection or relocated within the library collection by completing a Request for Reconsideration form and submitting it to the Director.
- The library will review only one Request for Reconsideration of materials at a time and will do so in the order in which requests are received.
- The item in question will remain in circulation; it will not be relocated or removed from the library collection during the review process.
- The Director or their delegate will review the Request for Reconsideration form and the material in question. They will read, listen to, or view the item and will read reviews of the item in professional journals when available. They will evaluate the usage of the item by the public (circulation) and evaluate whether the selection of the item conforms with the library's Materials Selection Policy.
- The Director will notify the resident of the library's decision regarding the request within 21 library business days of receipt of their Request for Reconsideration form, stating the reasons for the decision to the resident who submitted the request.
- If the resident is not satisfied with the library's decision, they may submit a written appeal to the Board of Trustees (the Board) of the library within 15 library business days of receipt of the decision letter.
- The Board will notify the resident when their appeal will be heard by the Board at one of its regularly-scheduled meetings.
- The Board's vote determines the final decision on that challenged material and no additional requests for reconsideration may be filed regarding that material. The library will retain or withdraw challenged materials as mandated by the decision of the Library Board of Trustees.

**SOUTH BURLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS FORM**

The South Burlington Public Library's Collection Development Policy describes the procedure for reconsideration of an item in the Library's collection.

A South Burlington resident with a concern about the inclusion of an item in the library's collection is encouraged to discuss their concern with the library director (the Director). If speaking with the Director does not resolve the concern, the resident may initiate a formal request that an item be removed from the library collection or relocated within the library collection by completing a Request for Reconsideration form and submitting it to the Director.

The library will review only one Request for Reconsideration of materials at a time and will do so in the order in which requests are received. The item in question will remain in circulation; it will not be relocated or removed from the library collection during the review process.

The Director or their delegate will review the Request for Reconsideration form and the material in question. They will read, listen to, or view the item and will read reviews of the item in professional journals when available. They will evaluate the usage of the item by the public (circulation) and evaluate whether the selection of the item conforms with the library's Materials Selection Policy.

The Director will notify the resident of the library's decision regarding the request within 21 library business days of receipt of their Request for Reconsideration form, stating the reasons for the decision to the resident who submitted the request. If the resident is not satisfied with the library's decision, they may submit a written appeal to the Board of Trustees (the Board) of the library within 15 library business days of receipt of the decision letter.

The Board will notify the resident when their appeal will be heard by the Board at one of its regularly-scheduled meetings. The Board's vote determines the final decision on that challenged material and no additional requests for reconsideration may be filed regarding that material. The library will retain or withdraw challenged materials as mandated by the decision of the Library Board of Trustees. The Library Board of Trustees will discuss requests for reconsideration publicly and these forms may be subject to public records requests.

Author:

Title:

Publication date:

Format of material (physical or electronic):

Type of material (book, magazine, other):

Where in the library is the material located?

Barcode number of material:

Request initiated by:

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Have you read, watched, or listened to this item in its entirety? If not, please identify which parts of the material you are referring to.

What are your concerns? Please be specific.

How would you like this to be resolved?

Date:

Signature:

Approved by the Board of Trustees 7/13/23  
Updated July 2024 and 4/10/25