



**COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**  
**ALLEGANY COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM**

**January 2023**

**Approved by the  
Board of Library Trustees  
Allegany County Library System  
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## **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY ALLEGANY COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM**

**Mission:** The Allegany County Library System enriches people's lives by providing information, materials, services, and entertaining programs to promote our community, lifelong learning, and opportunity for all.

### **Background**

The library collection is one of Allegany County Library System's major assets. The collections are developed and managed to meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of library patrons in our area. Library staff builds and maintains the collection by anticipating and responding to needs and expectations. Staff recognizes the necessity of balancing budget, staffing, and building concerns when making decisions to acquire or to provide access to materials and information. The materials budget is set annually. Allocation decisions are based on a number of factors including demand, cost of materials, publishing trends, changes in the marketplace, and library initiatives and priorities.

### **Purpose of the Policy**

This policy guides staff and informs the public of the principles upon which collection development and management decisions are based. Collection development refers to the ongoing process of assessing the material available for purchase or licensing and in making the decision, first on their inclusion, and second on their retention. This policy defines the scope of the collection and provides a plan for the continuing development of resources.

This policy is applied in conjunction with the [Merchandising and Display Guidelines](#) and the [Suspension of Privileges for Health and Safety Reasons](#) policies.

### **Scope of Collection**

ACLS collects and organizes, and makes available materials of contemporary significance. The collection is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis. The collections are not archival nor are materials available in all branches. Materials that are no longer used in one branch may be reassigned to other branches. Staff makes a final decision to withdraw materials from the library system, making them available for sale, or for other use. Materials are withdrawn from the collection in order to maintain usefulness, currency, and relevancy.

### **Collection Development Criteria**

To build the collection, materials are evaluated according to one or more of the following standards. An item need not meet all of these criteria in order to be acceptable.

#### General criteria for selection

- Subject of interest to local residents
- Wide, current appeal, or useful over a period of time
- Not too specialized
- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Cost
- Copyright date
- Relation to the existing collection and to other material on the subject
- Attention by critics and reviewers
- Requests by the public
- Readily available from established sources

Additional criteria are considered when selecting materials available in electronic formats.

- Ease of use of the product
- Accessibility to multiple users
- Access to needed equipment
- Enhancement of the print equivalent (if any) in terms of speed, flexibility, combinations of search terms, or general utility
- Continued access to retrospective information when necessary or desirable
- Reduction of space requirements over print products
- Reduction in number of copies of a print source when purchased for multiple locations

#### General criteria for weeding

- Poor physical condition
- Missing pages
- Stains, heavily soiled, or odors
- Excess number of copies
- Edition is superseded
- Written in, highlighted, or whitened out words
- Obsolete content
- Lack of use

#### **Collection Responsibilities**

Responsibility for the collection rests with the Executive Director, who operates within the framework of the Allegany County Library System policy. The Executive Director delegates to appropriate staff members authority to interpret and apply the policy in daily operation.

#### **Access to materials**

All library materials are available for use by all patrons. Access to materials is ensured by the way materials are organized, managed, and displayed and via library staff assistance.

The library organizes its collection through a standard cataloging and classification system that is widely used. Staff is available at all library branches to assist patrons in the selection and location of materials of interest.

The library also participates in interlibrary loan networks for the purpose of expanding the materials available to ACLS patrons.

### **Reconsideration of library materials**

Library users occasionally object to specific items that have been selected for the collection. Individual persons seeking the reconsideration of library materials are asked to complete a Request for (Re)Consideration of Library Material form. Completed forms are reviewed by the Library's Reconsideration Committee which consists of staff from various branches and is chaired by the Director of Administrative Services. The committee reviews the specific item for inclusion in the collection in the context of the Library's overall objectives, the Collection Development Policy as a whole, the basic selection criteria, and the Library Bill of Rights. The chair of the committee relays the committee's recommendation to the Library Director who has authority over all library collections.

ACLS believes that books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people in the community we serve. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. ACLS relies on each individual's freedom of choice to select or to not select materials for their needs.

Parents and legal guardians are responsible for their children's use of library materials. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to define what material or information is consistent with their personal and family beliefs; only they can apply those values for themselves and their children.

### **Labeling and rating library materials**

The Allegany County Library System is committed to using only viewpoint-neutral labels and direction aids. The library rejects any labels, signage, or rating notations that restrict or discourage access to materials or implies any doctrinal or moral recommendations.

### **Donated materials**

Materials donated to the Library are received with the understanding that they are subject to the same selection, evaluation, and disposal criteria as materials acquired for purchase. Donated materials not added to the collection are not returned to the donor. Unused materials may be recycled or placed on the "Free to You" shelves. Generally, the library will not accept donations of textbooks, periodicals or reference works superseded by later editions.

The library encourages contributions in memory of a person or persons. The donor may specify the general type of material that would be appropriate, the amount of contribution, and persons to be notified of the donation. An acknowledgement letter, recognizing the donor will

be sent by the library. Each item will have a gift plate indicating the donor and in whose memory or honor the item is given.

**Policy Formatting**

The library collection is broken into meaningful collection areas for the purpose of collection development. Each collection area is described by an Overview and Summary section; a Selection Plan and Influencing factors section, and a Retention and Weeding section.

	<b>Adult</b>
	<b>Audio books</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	This collection is currently composed of unabridged fiction and non-fiction audio books. Fiction audios include contemporary works and classics, with the emphasis on contemporary fiction. The non-fiction collection covers a range of subject areas, including best-sellers, instructional, and self-improvement.
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	Standard review sources are regularly consulted. The selection considerations include favorable reviews, artistic merit, cost, demand, high interest, cultural and historical significance. Web sites such as Amazon.com are also consulted. Donations will be evaluated by the selection committee for inclusion in the collection.  Patron requests, circulation statistics, budget constraints, and space play a large part in determining purchases of audio books. Because of its popularity among patrons, fiction is purchased more heavily than non-fiction.
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	Primary reasons for weeding are damage, low circulation, space limitations, or items having missing CDs that are unavailable for replacement. Popular items may be replaced as needed.

	<b>Adult</b>
	<b>Biography</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	The biography collection consists of materials about people from all walks of life from the earliest times to the present. Autobiographies and memoirs are included in this collection.
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	In addition to standard review sources, publishers' catalogs are scanned, popular print and social provide the Library with awareness and reviews of titles that represent a broad range of subject interests.
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	Retention of titles is based on the enduring importance of the subject of the biography. Popular biographies of notable people are withdrawn when interest in that person has waned. Poor quality biographies of important people are replaced with new and quality titles that will have enduring value. Biographies that have not circulated in three years are evaluated for discard.

	<b>Adult</b>
	<b>DVD</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	The DVD collection exists to serve the entertainment and educational needs of the library community. The DVD collection contains primarily feature films, television shows, and documentary titles of high interest. The collection does not contain NC-17 or X-rated movies. Movies are purchased in DVD and Blu-Ray formats.
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	The selection considerations include popularity, favorable reviews, artistic merit, cost, demand, cultural and historical significance. Preference is given to the purchase of new titles rather than replacements, but available titles in high demand may be replaced. Donations will be evaluated by the selection team for inclusion in the collection.
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	Closed-captioned DVDs and Blu-Ray formats are purchased whenever available to meet the library's commitment to serving the hearing-impaired. Patron requests are considered if the title meets the library's selection criteria.
	Weeding is based on times circulated, item's date of creation in the system, and condition. Items with little or no circulation are discarded.



	<b>Adult</b>
	<b>Fiction</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	The primary purpose of the fiction collection is to satisfy the heavy demand from recreational readers for classics, popular best-sellers, critically-acclaimed first-time authors, and genre fiction. Fiction circulates well and a heavy demand for popular authors dictate selection in the best-seller category. Titles are purchased in regular, paperback, and large print formats.
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	In addition to standard review sources, patron demand, reputation of the author and publisher, literary merit, local authors and interest, cost, and whether the title is a part of a series influence selection. Popular best-sellers are obtained in multiple copies and are ordered as far ahead of publication as possible.
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	Literary classics, regional authors, and well-recognized contemporary authors are retained, sometimes in duplicate, as fits demand. Weeding of duplicate copies, books in poor condition, and of ephemeral authors must be done on an annual basis to maintain space for new books. Popular items may be replaced as needed. Titles that have not circulated in three years are evaluated for discard. Paperbacks are retained only as long as they are in good condition and circulating.

	<b>Adult</b>
	<b>Nonfiction</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	<p>Most materials in the nonfiction collection have been published in the last ten years. Older works are retained as demand indicates, space allows, if there is a scarcity of current publications, or as the reputation, “classic” status, or timeless quality of the works warrants. On controversial subjects, the collection reflects a wide diversity of opinion. The collection level varies from strong to basic, depending on the level of demand in each subject area.</p>
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	<p>The Library acquires materials in all subjects based upon the merits of work in relation to the needs, interests, and demands of the community. Accuracy of information, cost, demand, historical value, authoritativeness of the writer and reputation of the publisher, impartiality of opinions, local author and interests are all influencing factors. In addition to the standard review sources, publishers' catalogs and web resources are checked regularly</p> <p>Public library patrons have extensive interests in all areas of nonfiction. Books are selected that represent numerous sides of controversial issues. Attention is paid to authors and books spotlighted in the media, with an emphasis on materials for the general public.</p> <p>The Local History and Genealogy collections typically do not circulate, and are intended to serve family and local historical research needs of patrons.</p> <p>Graphic novels, comics and manga are book-length collections of sequential art containing a single story or set of interrelated stories. The collection consists primarily of fiction designed to meet the recreational needs of library users. Selections are based on professional reviews, customer requests, and the popularity of styles, authors, characters, and series.</p>
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	<p>When weeding this collection, the publication date, the number of circulations, the availability of other books in the collection, whether a book is considered a classic, and the book’s physical condition are considered. Books are generally discarded five years after copyright unless they are still circulating. Computer materials and medical books are aggressively weeded to ensure that all sources are accurate and up-to-date. Self-help and pop psychology are weeded as their popularity declines. Due to the research focus, Local History and Genealogy materials are rarely discarded. Many may be out of print, or difficult or impossible to replace, so their long-term preservation is important.</p>

	<b>Adult</b>
	<b>Periodicals</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	The periodicals collection consists of magazines and newspapers and includes both circulating and noncirculating items. Titles selected reflect high patron interest.
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	Decline in library periodical and newspaper use is an influencing factor in the development of periodical collections. A primary consideration for addition to the collection, in addition to cost, is whether the title is indexed in our electronic resources.
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	Magazine titles are kept for varying lengths of time, although the majority are not retained for more than one year. Usage is continually evaluated, and titles not used are weeded so that new periodicals can be acquired. Because of space limitations, newspapers are retained for no more than one month.

	<b>Children's &amp; Juvenile Biography</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	Biographical materials are collected on historical and contemporary individuals of world or American significance. Collective biographies are cataloged primarily in the 920s or the relevant subject area.
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	Patron requests and notification by students of school assignments alert staff to topics of interest. Factors which influence the selection of these materials include cost, author's reputation, and the publisher. Recommended reading lists influence selection.  Biographies of individuals with strong, but short-term popularity, such as screen stars and sports figures, are added to the collection to satisfy popular demand. Paperbacks are purchased if available and appropriate for the collection. For younger children, selection is based upon anticipated interest. Books selected are well- illustrated and accurate.
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	If a book has not circulated in more than five years, it is considered for discard. For historical individuals, a book's condition is more of a factor than copyright date. Biographies of contemporary individuals are weeded as they become out-of-date or badly worn.

**Children's & Juvenile  
DVD**

**Overview  
and  
Summary**

The DVD collection includes current titles of high interest and classics, juvenile informational and feature films. Information titles include educational titles for learning colors and letters, as well as popular topics such as trucks and trains. The juvenile DVD collection contains only G-rated movies and their equivalents.

**Selection  
Plan &  
Influencing  
factors  
Retention  
and  
Weeding**

Publisher's catalogs, ads and patron requests are used to identify current high-interest releases and non-fiction films suitable for purchase. Web sites such as Amazon.com are also consulted. Preference is given to the purchase of new titles rather than replacements, but available titles in high demand may be replaced.

Changing technology is always a factor to be considered in the long range development of the collection.

Weeding is based on times circulated, item's date of creation in the system, and condition. Movies with little or no circulation are discarded.

**Children's & Juvenile  
Easy Picture Books**

**Overview  
and  
Summary**

This section is one of the most heavily used areas of the Children's Collections, and contains a wide variety of quality materials for preschoolers through first or second grade.

**Selection  
Plan &  
Influencing  
factors**

Books may be selected from publishers' catalogs and patron requests. These sources are checked for positive reviews and to determine age-appropriate titles. The primary emphasis is on current materials. Caldecott winners and nominees are purchased.

**Retention  
and  
Weeding**

Although the copyright date is not a determining factor, Easy books may be discarded that have not circulated in three years. Soiled or damaged books are discarded; popular or classic titles are replaced.

## Children's & Juvenile

### Fiction

#### Overview and Summary

The Juvenile Fiction collections encompass material suitable for 2nd through 6th grades. They generally have chapters and are about 40-80 pages in length. The subject matter appeals to children in 2nd and 3rd grades, although readers in 1st and 4th grades may also find them appropriate. Books may be illustrated, but in most cases, the illustrations are supplemental, rather than essential, to the text.

#### Selection Plan & Influencing factors

Requests from library patrons are considered, and a wide range of subjects, themes, and life situations are recommended. Books may be selected from publishers' catalogs and other standard review sources, as well as patron requests.

Middle readers enjoy series with readily identifiable characters. Mysteries, sports, fantasy, and contemporary realistic fiction, as well as historical fiction, are popular. Newbery Award winners, Newbery Honor books, and award winning titles are purchased.

#### Retention and Weeding

Weeding is ongoing, and worn copies are replaced as needed. Favorite series are maintained and retention is based on use. Additional copies are withdrawn as demand wanes. Books that have not circulated in three years or more may be considered for weeding regardless of the copyright date.

<b>Children's &amp; Juvenile</b>	
<b>Nonfiction</b>	
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	<p>Children’s and juvenile nonfiction collections serve children from infancy through age twelve. These materials are selected based on their suitability for children. The Children’s Nonfiction Collection strives to achieve a balance between well-loved favorite classics, up-to-date materials for homework assignments, and a wide selection of topics and titles. Material selection is also influenced by patron demand and inclusion in certain award lists.</p>
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	<p>The following criteria in general are to be considered when selecting materials for purchase: accuracy of information, demand, historical value, authoritativeness of the writer and reputation of the publisher, impartiality of opinions, local author an interests. In addition to the standard review sources, publishers' catalogs are checked regularly</p> <p>School homework assignments, such as science projects and book reports, necessitate a literature collection responsive to demand. Books are selected that represent numerous sides of controversial issues. Overall factors that are considered include cost and reputation of the author and publisher. Attention is paid to authors and books spotlighted in the media, with an emphasis on age appropriate materials-</p> <p>Graphic novels, comics and manga are book-length collections of sequential art containing a single story or set of interrelated stories. The collection consists primarily of fiction designed to meet the recreational needs of library users. The collection may also include non-fiction and classics in the graphic novel format and illustrated works about graphic novels. Selections are based on professional reviews, customer requests, and the popularity of styles, authors, characters, and series.</p>
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	<p>The following factors are considered when weeding this collection: the publication date, the number of circulations, the availability of other books in the collection, whether a book is considered a classic, and the book’s physical condition. Books are generally discarded five years after copyright unless they are still circulating.</p>

	<b>Teens</b>
	<b>Fiction and Non-Fiction</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b>	The collection consists primarily of teen novels and some genre literature selected specifically to meet the needs of teens. Novels about contemporary teens are popular. The collection consists of a mix of paperbacks, popular series, and graphic novels.
<b>Selection Plan &amp; Influencing factors</b>	Books may be selected from publishers' catalogs and other review sources. Patron requests and notification by students of school assignments alert staff to topics of interest. Series are extremely popular. The problems, adventures, and topics of interest confronting teens on a daily basis are the factors to consider when selecting titles The non-fiction collection focuses on current interest and controversial topics. Graphic novels are the focus of non-fiction selection for teens.
<b>Retention and Weeding</b>	Due to changing interests and trends, as well as circulation statistics, only popular, circulating titles are retained. Generally, teen titles which have not circulated in three years are discarded.

**Disposal of Magazines, Journals, and Newspapers.  
Allegany County Library System**

**Context:** From time to time, library staff is asked by groups or individuals if they can have back issues of magazines, journals, and newspapers. The purpose of this memo is to clarify the library's response.

**Policy:**

Discarded magazines, journals, and newspapers are taken to local recycling facilities. Discarded magazines, journals and newspapers may also be given to an individual or group on an infrequent basis after the individual or group makes a request to the individual branch.

**Definitions and Requirements:**

A magazine, journal or newspaper is eligible for disposal if and only if it is a "discarded magazine, journal or newspaper."

Discarded magazines, journals and newspapers are defined as items that are older than the holdings period as indicated in the Branch's current periodical holdings list. (For example, if your holdings list says you keep 12 months of a magazine, only magazines older than 12 months can be disposed of.)

Discarded magazines, journals, and newspapers should be labeled as such and Facilities staff should be notified so that they can be taken to a recycling facility.

Stacks of discarded magazines, journals, and newspapers will create a fire hazard so they should be taken to recycling facilities on a regular basis.



## **General Guidelines for Donations of Materials to the Allegany County Library System**

The Allegany County Public Library System has benefited from the generosity of countless individuals and groups who have donated to our libraries. Used book and AV material donations of good quality are accepted if they are published/released within three years of the donation date, determined to be clean and in good condition. Any materials that cannot be added to our collection will be made available for free to the public. Materials donated to the Allegany County Library System become library property, and as such cannot be returned for any reason to the donor. The inclusion of the materials in the library collection is based on the guidelines included here and the judgment of library staff.

### **Items will not be accepted into the collection if:**

- ...pages are highlighted or underlined
- ...item emits odor
- ...item is discolored, including pages that have yellowed with age
- ...age does not meet with standards set in collection development policy
- ...item is incomplete or missing parts, such as box, sleeve, cover, or missing media

**Request for (re)consideration of Library Material  
Allegany County Library System**

(Requests for (re)consideration of Library Material will only be considered if they are received from individual Allegany County residents.)

**Please describe the item in question as fully as you are able:** *(Print and fill out this form.)*

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_

Format (book, recording, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Call number or location in library: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state the action you wish taken on this item:**

Add it to the Library  Shelf it elsewhere  Remove it from the Library

Other (specify):

**Why?**

**Please explain how such an action would improve the Library's service to the community:**

**Have you read/viewed/listened to the entire work?**

**If not, then which parts?**

**How was it brought to your attention?**

**Request for (re)consideration of Library Material**  
**Allegany County Library System**  
(Continued)

If this is a request to reconsider library material, please answer these additional questions

Specifically, what in the work do you object to? (Please cite the pages containing this.)

To what degree do the objectionable parts dominate the entire work?

What do you feel may be the result of reading/viewing this material?

Do you have information from other sources concerning this work? If so, what are these sources?

All titles in the Allegany County Library System's collections have been selected within the Library's Collection Development Policy which is the basis for materials selection. Have you read the policy? Do you believe that the material falls outside the policy? If so, in what specific ways?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_