

Collection Management Policy

Suffolk Public Library

Purpose

The Suffolk Public Library's collection management policy establishes guidelines for selecting and maintaining the written, recorded, and digital resources that make up the library's collection across all three locations, the Library2Go and digital resources. This policy is designed both to guide library staff and to inform the community about the principles and criteria behind building and sustaining the collection. In alignment with the Library's mission, the collection is developed to help the citizens of Suffolk fulfill their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs by promoting lifelong reading, providing access to knowledge across all fields, and supporting both formal and informal learning for people **of all ages**.

Our Philosophy

SPL believes that confidential, unrestricted access to information is essential for people to exercise their constitutional rights and uphold the principles of the American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement and the Library Bill of Rights. Reading, listening, and viewing are individual matters, and selection of an item does not indicate that the Library, its Board, or its staff endorses the ideas it presents. Recognizing that we are part of a diverse local, national, and global community, SPL actively collects materials that represent a wide range of viewpoints, including those that may be controversial. We are especially committed to acquiring works by voices and perspectives that have been historically marginalized or underrepresented in library collections. Through continual community engagement and regular evaluation, SPL strives to maintain a collection that authentically reflects diverse experiences and meets the needs and interests of our community.

Responsibility Statement

The initial responsibility for materials selection lies with the Collection Strategy Senior Librarian. The Collection Strategy Senior Librarian may assign trained library staff the task of assisting in the development of the collection. All staff and community members may recommend materials for consideration through our online [form \(link\)](#) or at one of our physical locations. The Library puts great value on the material recommendations of community members and does not place the needs or preferences of one community member above another. The ultimate responsibility for material selection, as for all library activities, rests with the Director of Libraries.

Collection Philosophy and Principles

- SPL considers the need to balance budget and space limitation when selecting items for the collection. We place priority on filling contemporary needs rather than building historical or rare book collections except for the purchase and maintenance of materials particularly relevant to the city of Suffolk or the larger Hampton Roads region. The Library also attempts to meet all relevant collection standards, whether issued by governmental agencies, professional associations or regional accrediting bodies.
- SPL recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some people. The collection will attempt to provide a balance of viewpoints on all controversial issues. Only individuals can determine what is most appropriate for their needs.
- Selection and placement of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that items may inadvertently come into possession of children or adolescents. Responsibility for the reading material of children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians. Parents are encouraged to define what material or information is consistent with their values and apply those values to themselves and their minor children.
- SPL will not label materials to indicate appropriateness or acceptability of contents. The Library will retain labeling provided by the publisher or manufacturer and will not alter the appearance or contents of any library material save for information used by the library to locate and circulate said item. Any alterations made to library materials could result in copyright violations.

Selection Guidelines

To build collections of merit and significance, materials must be measured by objective guidelines. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated are considered for inclusion in the collection by the principles written below. An item need not meet all of them in order to be acceptable. Materials are evaluated on the significance of the entire work rather on individual parts. All items are purchased in new condition directly from one of our book vendors. We do not purchase self-published or “print-on-demand” titles except when needed for the local authors collection or library programming. All exceptions to self-published or “print-on-demand” titles are at the discretion of the Collection Strategy Senior Librarian or the Director of Libraries.

The following principles will guide selection of material in all formats:

1. Reputation and/or authority of the author, editor or illustrator
2. Scope and accuracy of the content or the creator
3. Potential or known demand for, or interest in, the material based on user's requests and circulation trends
4. Awards, honors, prizes and reading lists
5. Cultural sensitivity of the content of the material
6. Quality of writing, design, illustration or production
7. Contemporary significance or permanent value
8. Presentation of a new or under-represented subject or viewpoint in the collection
9. Suitability or sustainability of the physical format for library circulation
10. Availability of the item in area libraries and obtainable through Inter-Library Loan (ILL)

Donations

- A donation to the Library may consist of materials or funds donated through the Friends of the Suffolk Public Library. Funds may be given for the acquisition of materials recommended by the Collection Strategy Senior Librarian or suggested by the donor. The library encourages gifts not earmarked for specific items in order to allow for the most flexible and cost effective use of the donation.
- All donated items must meet the same criteria and standards for selection as purchased materials. Donations that do not meet these criteria may be given to the Friends of the Suffolk Public Library.
- Once a donation is received, the library retains all ownership of the item and reserves the right to make all decisions concerning the item including, but not limited to, the circulation and display of the item.

Electronic Resources

SPL provides electronic resources in the form of downloadable eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, music and video. SPL's digital content vendors determine the following criteria based on publisher restrictions or contract agreements with the library:

1. Availability of titles offered for download
2. Loan periods
3. Renewal limits
4. Hold limits
5. Amount of monthly downloads
6. Amount of purchase requests

The library provides access to online databases funded by SPL and our partnership with the Library of Virginia.

Collection Maintenance

In order to maintain a diverse, attractive and useful collection for the community, the Library will regularly evaluate materials, both physical and digital.

Removal of Materials (Weeding)

SPL uses the following criteria when evaluating materials to be removed from the collection:

1. Lack of circulation and/or demand
2. Damage that cannot be mended
3. Inaccurate information including but not limited to:
 - Scientific or medical data
 - Misrepresentation of people or cultures
4. No longer relevant or superseded by a newer edition
5. Redundancy such as multiple copies that are no longer needed
6. Lack of physical space

In accordance with Library guidelines, staff will make every effort to transfer items in usable condition, but no longer needed in the library, to the Friends of the Suffolk Public Library.

Replacement Criteria

If an item is removed from the collection because of damage, wear, or loss, it is not automatically replaced. Budget, need, and demand will be considered when deciding whether or not an item should be replaced.

Reconsideration

Any person who believes specific items are in violation of our collection management policies may fill out a Request for Reconsideration form, available at our service desks or [online](#). The Request for Reconsideration form must be completed and returned to any Suffolk Public Library location.

The Library has a formal procedure for the reconsideration of materials which includes a review by a committee of professional librarians and community members.

Items that are under reconsideration will remain available to library users unless a decision is made by the committee to remove said item.

Special Collections

Local History and Genealogy Collection

- SPL houses a local history and genealogy collection at our downtown library location. This collection is made up of historical documents of particular interest to the city of Suffolk. Our collection includes: newspapers, images, family histories, birth, marriage and census records as well as a variety of other items.
- Donations to the local history and genealogy collection will be evaluated by the Cataloging and Genealogy Librarian

Local Authors Collection

- The Suffolk Public Library has developed a Local Authors Collection, housed at our downtown library location, to allow Suffolk authors and illustrators a chance to showcase their work to the community.
- A Local Author is a person who currently resides in Suffolk or the greater Hampton Roads region. Authors who have previously resided in Suffolk or the greater Hampton Roads region and whose work has ties to the area will be considered as well.
- All materials submitted to the local authors collection become property of the Suffolk Public Library and are considered under the same collection management guidelines and policies as all library materials
- If you would like a copy of your book to be added to the Local Authors Collection, please give a copy to a staff member at any of our library locations or mail a copy to:

Local Authors Collection
Suffolk Public Library
443 W Washington St.
Suffolk, VA 23434

Community Materials

The Library reserves the right to purchase requested materials for community members and partners on a case-by-case basis. These materials may be distributed for official library purposes or may be used by local book clubs, reading groups, schools and other community organizations.

Resource Sharing

Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

The Library supplements its collections through resource sharing agreements with other libraries. Peoples may request that items not included in the Library's collections be borrowed

from other libraries by Interlibrary loan. The form to request an ILL is available online or may be requested in person at one of our service desks.

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.

Adopted June 19, 1939. Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

Suffolk Public Library

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Name _____ Date _____

Library Card Number _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Do you represent yourself or an organization? _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting: Book _____ Video _____ Display _____ Magazine _____ Newspaper _____

Library Program _____ Audio Recording _____ Electronic Resource _____

Other _____ Title _____

Author/Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource? _____

4. What concerns you about the resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary)

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

Signature _____

Please return this form to a staff member at any of our locations during normal business hours.

Date _____