

Collection Development Policy

JPAB Policy #302
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Introduction

The Santa Cruz Public Libraries (hereinafter the "Library") strives to build and maintain a diverse, accessible collection that serves our community's informational, educational, and entertainment needs. This policy outlines the goals and principles that guide staff in making responsible decisions about acquiring and managing materials, while also providing transparency to the public about our selection criteria and practices.

Aligned with the Library's mission, vision, and values, this policy covers all formats in our physical and digital collections. We are committed to providing free and equitable access to a wide range of materials that reflect a broad spectrum of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds, including those of marginalized and underrepresented groups. Our collection development practices are grounded in principles of intellectual freedom, inclusion, and are responsive to evolving community interests. The Library adheres to the philosophies embodied in the ALA's [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to Read](#) Statement, [Freedom to View](#) Statement, Code of Ethics, Core Values of Librarianship Statement, and other guiding documents in serving the public and in determining the development of its collection.

Responsibility for Selection

The authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials rests ultimately with the Director of Libraries. Under their direction, the collections are professionally selected by assigned library staff. The public and all staff members are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration.

Selection Criteria

The Library seeks to develop an outstanding collection by selecting material that reflects the educational, informational, and entertainment needs of the community. Selection decisions are made within the limitations of the available space and funding, and within the scope of this Collection Development Policy. Selection does not imply endorsement of either the content or viewpoint of the material.

Collection Development staff use the following general criteria to select materials for the collection:

- Relevance to the Library's [Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan](#)

- Supports the goals of the Library's [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan](#) and [Statement of Commitment to Racial and Social Equity](#)
- Current or anticipated demand of material
- Current or historical significance of the author, director, or subject
- Contribution to the diversity and scope of the collection
- Attention by critics and reviewers, with preference generally given to titles vetted in the editing and publishing industry
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, creator, publisher, or issuing body
- Artistic merit, literary value, or major award recipient
- Suitability of format to Library circulation, use, and durability
- Date of publication or release
- Price, availability, and impact on the Library's materials budget

Generally excluded from selection:

- Textbooks and curriculum-related works unless they are considered useful to the general reader as an introduction to a subject and their presentation is superior to other sources
- Scholarly and technical materials that are better suited to academic or special libraries
- Items having removable media such as memorabilia, patterns, stickers, or toys, unless the book is usable without these items
- Puzzle or workbooks that encourage filling in blanks

Exceptions are made for materials whose content is within the scope of the Special Collections area and meet its criteria.

Gifts of Books and Materials

Gifts of books, materials, and media donations can be given directly to the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries. In most instances, gifts will be sold by the Friends. All proceeds will benefit the Library. Gifts to the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries are governed by the policies set forth on their website at www.fscpl.org. In general, gifts of materials are not added to the Library's collection.

Related Document: [Gifts Policy; JPAB Policy #309](#)

Languages included in Collection

Non-English language collections are developed depending upon the local demographics and the identified need for substantial material in a particular non-English language.

Maintenance of Collection

Collection maintenance is part of the ongoing evaluation of collections by Collection Development staff. The Library's collection is a living, changing entity and collection maintenance helps to keep the collection current, attractive, responsive, diverse, and useful to the needs of the community. Great care is taken to retain or replace items that have enduring value to the community.

Replacement

Replacement of lost or withdrawn materials is not automatic. The decision to replace is influenced by:

- Availability of existing copies and formats in the system
- Popular interest
- Coverage in the subject area
- Cost and availability
- Past usage

Mending

The decision to mend materials is made with consideration to the same factors involved in replacement. In addition, the following should influence the decision to mend:

- Historical significance and preservation
- Feasibility of mending
- Cost of mending vs. cost of replacement

Withdrawal Responsibility

Collection Development staff are responsible for regular evaluation of collections in their selection area.

Those materials determined to no longer fit the criteria for inclusion are withdrawn from the collection. An item will be transferred or removed for one or more of the following reasons:

- Physical condition of materials
- Accuracy, currency, and relevance of information
- Accessibility of alternate formats
- Subject or title adequately provided by other materials in the collection
- Ease of borrowing materials from another library system
- Date of last circulation and number of circulations
- Number of copies exceeds demand
- Cost of maintenance of the material is infeasible

The authority to withdraw materials from the collection lies with Collection Development staff, who use their professional expertise in assessing the needs of the community and the content of the collection. Branch staff may withdraw and discard materials unfit for public use, such as those whose condition may compromise other items in the collection (including moldy or water damaged items), and those otherwise damaged beyond repair. If it is the last copy available in the library system, they should notify the Selector.

Requests for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Librarians select material in alignment with the Library's mission using established criteria. The Library welcomes feedback from Santa Cruz County residents about the inclusion of materials in the Library collection.

- Individuals with concerns about material in the Library collection may ask staff about such material. Library staff will provide a copy of this policy and provide an opportunity to share their concerns with a branch manager or librarian.
- Those who wish to submit a formal request for reconsideration may fill out a “Request for Reconsideration Form” (Attachment A). Each form can only be used for a single title.
- In order to maintain focus on local community needs and perspectives, forms will only be accepted from SCPL cardholders who are residents of Santa Cruz County or can provide proof of current, regular employment in Santa Cruz County.
- Requests to remove specific material from the collection are considered in alignment with the Library’s Collection Development Policy.
- A written response to the submitted form will be provided, typically within 30 days of the receipt of the form.
- The item in question will remain available for check out during the reconsideration process.
- Questioned items will be considered in their entirety, not judged solely on portions taken out of context.

An individual title will only be reviewed one time every three years. If a title has already gone through the review process within the previous three years, patrons wishing to submit a review of that same title will receive the same report provided in the original review process.

A patron who wishes to comment further about a specific item may write a letter to the Director of Libraries, who will review the documentation and respond in writing.

While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor children, the freedom of others to read or inquire will not be restricted. The Library does not stand in loco parentis (in the place of parents). Parents and guardians, not the Library or staff, have the responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor children.

ATTACHMENT A
SCPL Request for Reconsideration of Material Form

Santa Cruz Public Libraries has established a Collection Development Policy and has a procedure for gathering input about items in the collection. Individuals who are both an SCPL card holder and resident of Santa Cruz County or can provide proof of current, regular employment in Santa Cruz County may complete a Request for Reconsideration form if they believe an item does not align with this policy. Only one title may be included per form. An individual title will only be reviewed one time every three years. If a title has already gone through the review process within the previous three years, patrons wishing to submit a review of that same title will receive the same report provided in the original review process. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to Library staff. A written response to the submitted form will be provided, typically within 30 days of the receipt of the form.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Library Card Number: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (optional) _____ Email: (optional) _____

Title: _____

Author/Producer: _____

What brought this material to your attention? _____

Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review? _____

What concerns you about the material? _____

What action are you requesting the Library consider? _____
