

POLICY MANUAL	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 1 of 10

Purpose of Policy

This policy is intended to guide staff in their approach to the acquisition and deselection of library materials, and to familiarize library patrons with the principles that underpin selection and deselection practices at the Welland Public Library.

This policy also:

- Identifies responsibility for collection development protocols at the Welland Public Library
- Establishes procedures for public input
- Defends freedom of information and protects against censorship

Goals of the Collection

WPL’s collection must fulfill the library’s mission and support established core values which include:

- Enriching lives in the community by providing access to a wide range of resources
- Promoting lifelong learning and supporting the enjoyment of reading and discovery
- Providing equitable access to ideas and knowledge that represent a variety of viewpoints in various formats
- Meeting the diverse needs and interests of individuals, businesses, and organizations
- Supporting access to information without prejudice or discrimination

Intellectual Freedom

The Welland Public Library Board supports the individual’s right to intellectual freedom as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Welland Public Library will develop and maintain its collections based on the belief that individuals have the right to access all expressions of knowledge, opinion, and creativity of some value or significance. Such freedom of access to information is essential to the health and development of a democratic society.

The Ontario Library Association’s “Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual” (Appendix A) and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations’ “Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries” (Appendix B) are endorsed by the Library Board and appended in their entirety to this policy.

Responsibility for Selection

The ultimate responsibility for the selection of materials lies with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), acting according to the general policies established by the Welland Public Library Board.

In practice, the CEO delegates the responsibility to the Manager of Customer Experience and qualified professional staff.

<i>POLICY MANUAL</i>	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 2 of 10

Responsibility for selections in certain areas of the collection may be assigned to library vendors in the form of standing orders or Automatic Release Plans (ARPs) with clear instructions given by the library. However, ultimate responsibility for selection will remain with the CEO and designated staff.

Scope of the Collection

Children’s Collection — Consists of fiction, non-fiction, periodicals, non-print materials, and electronic resources that are written at a level appropriate for children up to the end of grade 8. The Main Branch also maintains a collection of children’s materials that serves as a resource repository for programming.

Young Adult Collection — Consists of print materials, non-print materials, and electronic resources that appeal to young people in grades 7 to 12. This collection focuses on recreational reading, meets the needs and interests of young people, and bridges the Children’s and Adult Collections.

Adult Collection — Consists of reference materials, periodicals, fiction and non-fiction, audio-visual materials, and electronic resources. The library does not purchase textbooks specifically related to courses of study in the community, although textbooks may be purchased if the subject information is not available in any other form.

Technology Collection — The library provides access to some lendable and in-house technology, such as laptops and tablets. Some collections may circulate and restrictions are governed by the library’s Lending Policy (LS 1-1.2) and internal procedures.

Local History Collection — The library maintains a collection of materials focusing on the history of Welland and communities forming part of the original Welland County. The library may also include materials focusing on other communities in the Niagara Region, or the Niagara Region as a whole, provided those materials contain historical information relevant to Welland or the original Welland County.

Non-Traditional Collections — The library provides access to an eclectic variety of non-electronic kits and activity items including (but not limited to) musical instruments, board games, puzzles, items to maintain healthy brain function, educational toys, etc. These materials are curated and decommissioned in accordance with community needs and preferences.

Access to Collections

The Library collection supports the interests and needs of people of all ages starting with early literacy, and including children, teens, and adults. Physical access to items will not be restricted except for the express purpose of protecting an item from damage or theft, or under the following conditions:

<i>POLICY MANUAL</i>	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 3 of 10

- Films rated “R” or “18A” by the Ontario Film Review Board and Games rated “Mature” by the Entertainment Software Rating Board are limited to customers 18 years of age or older.
- Responsibility for the use of these collections by children rests with their parents or legal guardians.

No materials will be excluded from selection or removed from the collection solely because they may be accessible to children.

No materials shall be excluded from selection solely because of the race, ethnic group, nationality, immigrant status, socio-economic status, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, language, religious affiliation, age, or any other prohibited ground of the creator of the work or the work itself.

The Library does not collect or retain materials that have been identified as hate propaganda/obscene by Canadian Courts.

Criteria for Materials Selection

All selection must be considered in terms of the following criteria:

- Suitability for the intended users
- Reputation and authority of the author and publisher
- Quality of writing, production, and illustration
- Comments of reviewers, critics and publishers
- Preference for Canadian content
- Representation of Canadian Indigenous content
- Representation of diverse thought, experiences and identities
- Suitability of format for library use
- Demand in the community for a certain subject area or title
- Availability of materials through other libraries in the community or area
- Strengths and weaknesses of the existing collection
- Timeliness and accuracy of the information contained therein
- Purchase price and other budgetary considerations

An item need not meet all of the above criteria in order to be acceptable. Materials which do not meet these criteria may be purchased to satisfy demand.

Recommendation for Purchase

Suggestions for purchase are always welcomed from members of the public. These suggestions will be considered according to the library’s selection criteria. The decision to purchase recommended and/or unsolicited titles will reside solely with staff responsible for material selection.

<i>POLICY MANUAL</i>	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 4 of 10

Format

Materials should be purchased in a variety of formats for library patron use. The introduction of new formats to the library collection is carefully considered based on demands of the community, access to other library resources, the present library collection, spatial constraints, and the budget. The selection of material in any new format may result in the library's decision to retire specific items or formats from its collection in order to accommodate trends in user demand and/or changes in technology.

Collection Maintenance

To keep the collection timely, attractive, and useful to the community, it is necessary to withdraw materials systematically and periodically. De-selection must be considered in terms of the following criteria:

- to remove materials which are no longer useful in the light of the goals and objectives of the library
- to remove materials whose contents are out-of-date and therefore potentially misleading
- to remove materials which have little to no recent circulation activity or in-library use.
- to remove damaged or worn-out materials or materials that have been superseded by a more recent edition
- to make room for new materials coming into the collection

Replacement of items depends upon the demand for that particular title, the availability of more current material on the subject, and the extent of the coverage of the subject in the collection.

Local History materials are given special consideration because of their historical value (see Local History Collection Guidelines).

Local History Collection Guidelines

Overview

The Local History collection consists of books, documents, photographs, maps, visual and audio recordings, and related digital materials and images. Physical local history items are considered reference materials and may only be used in-library at the Main Branch location. Especially rare or delicate items are housed under lock and key in the Rare Books cabinet. Permission to view items in the Rare Books cabinet must be obtained from front-line staff, and items must be returned to front-line staff when no longer in use so that they may be appropriately replaced in the cabinet.

Exceptions to the lending/viewing guidelines noted above may be granted at the discretion of a manager. All requests are adjudicated on a case-by-case basis.

POLICY MANUAL	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 5 of 10

Selection/Deselection

The following criteria shall be considered when determining an item’s suitability for the Local History Collection:

- The item’s relevance to the Local History Collection as outlined under Scope
- The material and staffing resources required to make the item available
- The extent and terms of any restrictions attached to the item (donor requests, copyright considerations, etc.)
- The availability of appropriate storage facilities
- The physical condition of the item and the library’s capacity to adequately maintain it

Local History materials shall be held until such time as they are deemed to no longer fit the approved selection criteria. Librarians and collection specialists must use professional judgment when reappraising collections. Exceptions are handled on a case-by-case basis. Reappraisal and de-selection are essential components of every collection management plan.

Donation of Materials

The Library accepts donations of popular material from the public based upon the following criteria

- Published within the last 5 years
- In good condition
- Of interest and use to the community

Once accepted, donated material becomes the exclusive property of Welland Public Library and the Library reserves the right to decide the disposition of donated material. Due to space limitations and storage restrictions, the library may not be able to accommodate large donations of material. The library will not issue tax receipts for donated books or audio-visual equipment, nor will it accept donated material in lieu of payment for lost or damaged items.

Request for Reconsideration

The Welland Public Library is an institution where many points of view and modes of expression can be examined without hindrance. No ideas and opinions have universal acceptance or condemnation in a pluralistic society. The use of language, either descriptive or expressive, can in itself stimulate controversy.

The presence of an item in the collection does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Welland Public Library, but rather is an affirmation of the principle of intellectual freedom as embodied in the Ontario Library Association’s “Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual”.

<i>POLICY MANUAL</i>	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 6 of 10

The Welland Public Library recognizes the right of individuals to express opposition to authors' ideas or to their creative exercise of language in materials selected for the library. However, the Welland Public Library will not remove items purchased or acquired in compliance with the principles of this policy. Selection of material cannot be influenced by any anticipated approval or disapproval of its intellectual content by sectors of the community.

In the event of objection or complaint by a library user, the Welland Public Library requires the complainant to fill out a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form. Decisions made about challenged materials will be communicated to the originators of the requests following the completion of a formal staff review.

The final decision concerning Library materials rests with the CEO and may include consultation and consideration of the Library Board.

<i>POLICY MANUAL</i>	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 7 of 10

Appendix A
Ontario Library Association
Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual

Introduction

The Ontario Library Association and its divisions are committed 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.

Ontario Libraries have the important responsibility to facilitate expressions of knowledge, creativity, ideas, and opinion, even when viewed as unconventional or unpopular.

The Ontario Library Association declares its acceptance of the following principles for libraries:

1. Equitable access to 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. Intellectual freedom requires freedom to critically examine and create other ideas, opinions, views, and philosophy of life, other than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general and including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional, uncommon or unpopular.
3. The free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that the freedom to read, listen, view, and create is fundamental to such free traffic.
4. Library governance ensures that the principles of intellectual freedom and expression of thought are upheld.

Library Service, Collections and Resources:

5. 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, and other materials including the provision of access to electronic sources of information and access to the internet. Materials are not excluded from library collections based on race, place of birth, origin, ethnic origin, ethnicity, citizenship, age, creed, disability, family structure, sex, and sexual orientation.
6. It is 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, censor or curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view, listen or participate by demanding the removal of, or restrictions to library information sources in any format.

<i>POLICY MANUAL</i>	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 8 of 10

Library Programming, Events, and Space Bookings

7. It is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and expression by implementing it consistently when hosting programs and events within the public space of the library including rented public space by individuals and community organizations.
8. Libraries create welcoming community spaces where community members are free from discrimination and may engage in peaceful assembly. Libraries may cancel or deny permits to individuals or organizations when speech or displays are used in a way that is unlawful.

Applicable legislation:

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: Section 2(b) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects “freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication”.

Criminal Code: Section 63 pertains to Unlawful Assemblies and Riots. Section 297 pertains to defamatory libel. Section 318 pertains to hate propaganda.

Ontario Human Rights Code: Sub-section 13 pertains to infringing on freedom from discrimination.

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<i>POLICY MANUAL</i>	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 9 of 10

Appendix B
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 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 Associations supports and promotes the universal principles of intellectual freedom as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 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.

<i>POLICY MANUAL</i>	Section No. : LS 2 – 2.1
	Effective : June 16, 2008
SECTION : Collection Management	Revised : March 16, 2015, April 24, 2017, June 21, 2021; May 15, 2023
SUBJECT : Collection Development Policy	Page 10 of 10

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.

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