

## **Collection Policy**

### **Leominster Public Library**

#### **About this Policy**

This policy guides the selection, acquisition, processing, placement, usage, assessment, replacement, withdrawal, and disposal of the books, movies, music, magazines, toys, tools, games, musical instruments, digital content, and other materials that make up the Leominster Public Library's collections. This policy is established by the Board of Trustees of the Leominster Public Library, and guided by the American Library Association's [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to View](#), and [Freedom to Read](#) statements. The Library Director administers this policy on behalf of the Board of Trustees, allocating funding for, and delegating management of, subcollections to individual staff members or teams of staff members.

#### **The Library's Mission and Vision**

This policy is informed by the Library's [Mission and Vision Statements, and by the Library's Strategic Plan](#).

#### **Mission**

The Leominster Public Library serves as a gateway providing free and equal access to materials, information, and technology. The Library delivers programs, services, and resources to enhance the quality of life for the community. It strives to be a welcoming place that reflects the diverse needs of the community and encourages curiosity, free inquiry, and lifelong learning.

#### **Vision**

The Leominster Public Library will be a welcoming place that reflects the diverse needs of the community. The Library will be a place that inspires innovation and creativity, supports lifelong learning, and fosters civic engagement. The Library will bring people together to explore and share ideas.

#### **Strategic Plan**

The library's strategic plan is based on input from the community and guides the library in its service to the community. During the most recent strategic planning process, six major themes emerged:

1. Diversity & Inclusion
2. Innovation & Creativity
3. Learning Opportunities

4. Library Awareness & Advocacy
5. Community Connections & Engagement
6. Sustainability & Growth

The collections, resources, services, and policies of the Leominster Public Library are managed with these themes in mind.

### **About the Collections**

The Leominster Public Library curates its collections to meet the educational, recreational, and cultural needs of the Library's patrons. As part of the CW MARS network, other resource-sharing partnerships in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the larger library ecosystem, the Leominster Public Library recognizes that people from outside of Leominster may access these collections, but also recognizes that its primary responsibility is to the City of Leominster.

Leominster is a community comprised of a multitude of communities, diverse in their abilities, beliefs, backgrounds, goals, and identities. The Library intentionally curates its collections to reflect and meet these diverse needs. As such, the Library offers a collection of materials that represent a spectrum of opinions and viewpoints, and is suitable for a variety of ages and abilities. The collection is balanced in the diversity of its materials, not necessarily in an equality of numbers.

### **General Selection Criteria**

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below, though an item need not meet all these standards in order to be added to the collection. Criteria include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Relevance to community needs
- Contemporary significance, permanent value, and/or popularity of content
- Relation to existing collection
- Public recognition of author, editor, illustrator, or source in the media or in critical reviews
- Evaluative reviews in professional publications and other periodicals
- Accuracy and reliability
- Scarcity of information in the subject area
- Availability of similar materials through the CW MARS network and other resource-sharing networks
- Price and availability
- Format, durability, and ease of use

- Budget and space constraints

### **Children's Selection Criteria**

The Children's Collection serves children from infancy through Grade 6. This collection provides materials in a variety of formats to serve the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the children of Leominster. Some materials are purchased to support local school curriculum. Materials are selected with regard to the appropriateness of reading level, and the emotional and intellectual maturity of children. The Parent Resource Collection (PRC) provides adults with materials that relate to the well-being of children, in addition to books that support teachers in the classroom, and families that homeschool.

### **Young Adult Selection Criteria**

The young adult collection caters to the interests and needs of students in grades 7-12. To support school curriculum needs, the library purchases titles from the summer reading lists of Leominster Middle and High Schools. In addition to the general selection criteria, the young adult collection considers representation of diverse identities, and support to school curriculum. The young adult collection aims to provide diverse materials that help teens better understand themselves, others, and the world.

### **Local History and Genealogical Collection**

The Library collects, preserves and arranges historically significant records, materials and information relevant to Leominster and its citizens. The collection houses materials in a variety of formats including, but not limited to, books, pamphlets, manuscripts, posters, diaries, letters, maps, reports, photographs, postcards, scrapbooks, news clippings, personal papers, and microforms. These items are often unique, fragile, or one-of-a-kind and therefore can only be used within the library.

The library also retains publications dealing with the City of Leominster such as annual reports and street listings but does not otherwise serve as a repository for government records.

The Local History and Genealogy Librarian is responsible for selecting titles and maintaining this collection. For more specific information about the collections featured in the Local History Room, see the Local History and Genealogy webpage.

### **Electronic Content**

The Library provides access to a collection of downloadable and streaming content in addition to its collection of physical materials. This e-content comes in a variety of formats to meet a wide variety of patron needs. Although the library has some control over the e-content is

provides, it does not have nearly as much curatorial control over the content of its e-collections as it does over the content of its physical collections.

### **Donated Materials**

The Library sometimes accepts donated materials, either for its collections or on behalf of the Friends of the Library. For more information, please refer to the Library's Gifts and Donations policy.

### **General Deselection Criteria**

No library has limitless shelf space, and items must be removed from the collection regularly to make room for new selections. Material may be removed from the collection if one or more of the following applies:

- It contains misleading and/or factually inaccurate information.
- It is worn beyond mending or rebinding.
- It is superseded by a new edition or a better book on the subject.
- It no longer has discernable literary or scientific merit.
- It is obtainable from other sources, such as through other libraries.
- It is no longer relevant to the needs and interests of the community.

### **Patron Suggestions for Additions to the Collections**

Every patron has the right to suggest materials for addition to the Leominster Public Library's print and non-print collections. These suggestions allow the library to consider the opinions of its patrons, who are not directly involved in the materials selection process. The extent to which the library can purchase materials that patrons suggest is largely dependent on the library's annual materials budget.

All suggestions are routed to the library staff member responsible for a particular collection area. The staff member evaluates the suggestion in terms of the library's established selection criteria and makes a decision that best meets the needs of the library. If the library decides to purchase the suggested material, then the patron will be notified according to established reserve procedures. If the library decides not to purchase the suggested material, then every effort will be made to borrow the material from another library using established procedures.

## **REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION**

*Guiding Principles*

The purpose of the Request for Reconsideration Procedure is to consider the opinions of members of the community who are not directly involved in the Leominster Public Library's materials selection process. Every resident of Massachusetts has the right to question materials in the library's collections.

The Leominster Public Library subscribes in principle to the statements of policy on library philosophy as expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, its interpretations, and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements.

The Leominster Public Library expects that a patron questioning an item in the library's collections will have read, viewed, played, or listened to the entire item.

The Leominster Public Library will review the selection decision for the item in question following the established Request for Reconsideration Procedures and will respond to the patron's concern in a timely manner. Access to the item in question will not be restricted during the reconsideration process. A decision to sustain a challenge to an item shall not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the library staff involved in the selection and/or use of the material.

## **REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION PROCEDURE**

### *Informal Request for Reconsideration*

A patron may make an informal statement of concern by presenting an oral or written statement about an item in the library's collections. The library shall attempt to resolve the issue informally.

The Library Director or another appropriate staff shall explain the library's material selection philosophy and selection criteria.

If this explanation does not satisfy the patron, then they shall be given the opportunity to file a formal Request for Reconsideration. The Library Director shall mail a Request for Reconsideration Packet and a copy of the Leominster Public Library Collection Policy to the patron to begin the formal Request for Reconsideration process.

### *Formal Request for Reconsideration*

The patron must meet the following conditions to file a formal Request for Reconsideration:

1. The patron must be a resident of Massachusetts.
2. The patron must read, view, play, or listen to the entire item.
3. The patron must receive and read the Request for Reconsideration Packet and the Leominster Public Library Collection Development and Management Policy.
4. The patron must complete and return the Statement of Concern About Library Resources Form to the Library Director.

The Library Director shall notify the Chairman of the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees of the receipt of the completed Statement of Concern About Library Resources Form. The Chairman shall appoint a Reconsideration Committee consisting of: two (2) members of the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees, the Library Director, the Assistant Library Director, and the Department Head responsible for the area of the collection in question.

Members of the Reconsideration Committee shall perform the following duties:

1. Examine and discuss the patron's Statement of Concern About Library Resources Form.
2. Read, view, play, or listen to the item in question in its entirety.
3. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the item.
4. Weigh the values and faults of the item and analyze the item as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
5. Evaluate the item in relation to the entire collection and review the selection decision based on the Leominster Public Library's Collection Development and Management Policy.
6. Evaluate the item in relation to the principles of intellectual freedom as presented in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, its interpretations, and the Freedom to View Statement.
7. Prepare a written report for the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

The Library Director shall respond to the patron in writing and shall include a copy of the Reconsideration Committee's Report.

The Library Director shall keep a copy of the Reconsideration Committee's Report for the Library's files.

The Leominster Public Library shall attempt to respond to the patron within sixty (60) days of receipt of the completed Statement of Concern About Library Resources form.

If the patron is not satisfied with the Reconsideration Committee's decision, then they may appeal by making a request in writing to the Chairman of the Leominster Public Library Board of

Trustees. Upon receipt of this request, the Chairman shall schedule a public hearing at a posted open meeting with the entire Board of Trustees, the Library Director, and the patron.

The patron's initial Request for Reconsideration shall be kept confidential. If the patron appeals the Recommendation Committee's decision to the Board of Trustees, then the patron's Request for Reconsideration will no longer be confidential. State law requires that all meetings of the Board of Trustees must be open to the public.

At any time during the Request for Reconsideration process, the Reconsideration Committee or Board of Trustees may choose to consult other library professionals and/or community members with subject expertise or related professional knowledge.

## Statement of Concern About Library Resources

This form has been authorized by the Trustees of the Leominster Public Library. Please return the completed form to the Library Director. Feel free to use additional space if necessary.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

If you represent an organization or group, please give its name and address:

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the format of the resource on which you are commenting?

\_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

Did you read/listen to/view/play the (material in its entirety)? \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*IN ORDER TO PROCEED WITH A FORMAL COMPLAINT, YOU MUST HAVE READ/LISTENED TO/VIEWED/PLAYED THE MATERIAL IN ITS ENTIRETY.**

What brought this title to your attention?

Have you read any published reviews of this material? If so, please list the sources.

To what do you object? (Please be specific and cite pages if a book.)

Did you find anything of value in this material?

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey an equivalent perspective of the subject treated?

What do you suggest the library do about this matter?

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Signature of Requester

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Date

Staff Use Only:

Date received by the Library Director:

Date submitted to the Chair of the Board of Trustees:

Individuals assigned to Subcommittee:

Date Subcommittee established:

Date Committee Report submitted to Chair of the Board of Trustees: