**Cambria County Library**

**and Johnstown District Center**

**Collection Development Policy**

1. **OBJECTIVES**

Knowledge of the community is of vital importance in the responsible selection of library materials. The area served by the Cambria County Library System and District Center encompasses a diverse population including children, students from elementary through college age, the business community, the elderly, and the general public. The educational, cultural, and vocational backgrounds, as well as the interests, barriers, and needs of the residents must be considered when building and maintaining a balanced collection.

The Cambria County Library endeavors to provide resources for informational and recreational needs, to supplement formal and informal study, to support business and cultural activities, to increase knowledge of community and world affairs, and to reflect a variety of opinions. As a partial depository for Federal Documents, the library will provide free and timely government information to the public. It is recognized that some members of the community have specialized research needs that cannot be met locally. Interlibrary loan and reference services are provided to assist these individuals.

Freedom of speech and freedom of the press are rights of our heritage, guaranteed by the Constitution and defended by our legal system. Since a public library serves and is supported by many and varied groups and individuals, it must respect these differences by providing a varied and balanced collection of topics and beliefs. Inclusion of materials on particular views does not constitute endorsement by the library. The Cambria County Library System endorses the [Library Bill of Rights](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill) and the [Freedom to Read Statement](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement) published by the American Library Association.

2. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION**

The authority for the selection of library materials is delegated to the Library Director and under their direction to individual professional librarians or other staff who are qualified for this responsibility by reason of education, training, and experience.

Suggestions and donations from patrons are welcome and are given serious consideration but the final decision for inclusion in the collection rests with the library.

3. **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

When making decisions for materials selection, librarians consider reviews in library publications and other journals, publishers’ and booksellers’ catalogs, standard bibliographies, user requests, and authoritative reading lists. When selecting media, such as music and film, librarians consider reviews from trade publications and critics, user requests, authoritative viewing or listening lists, and popular demand.

An effort is made to select a balanced collection of materials, within financial limitations, wherein users can examine issues freely and make informed decisions concerning personal acceptance or rejection of an item.

While a single standard cannot be applied to each potential item for inclusion, materials are judged by the following general criteria:

Suitability of format for library use

Suitability of subject and style for intended audiences

Artistic merit and/or scholarship

Critic and staff reviews

Reputation of the author, actor, or artist

Reputation of the publisher, director, or composer

Relevance to community needs

Currency of the information

Relationship to existing materials in the collection

Local demand for the material

Quality of physical format

Cost in relation to similar titles

Funding for materials

Inclusion of the work in indexes or bibliographies

Importance of the item in providing balance or diversity

4. **ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR LIBRARY MATERIALS**

The Director of the Cambria County Library system, in collaboration with the Board of Directors, is responsible for determining how funds will be allocated within the materials budget. The materials budget makes up at least 12% of the library’s overall expenditures and is divided among the following collection areas:

Reference

Fiction

Non-fiction

Pennsylvania Room

Periodicals

Large Print

Juvenile

Young Adult

Government Documents

Microfilm

Electronic Information

Literacy Collection

Music CDs

Music streaming and downloads

E-books

E-audio books

DVDs

Video Games

Books on CD

Graphic Novels

Collections made be added or removed as needs, technology advances, or collection demands require.

5. **COLLECTION MAINTENANCE**

Withdrawal of materials

Materials are regularly discarded from collections after careful consideration of each title in order to ensure a vital, useful and well-kept library. Library staff will generally follow the CREW method for weeding, which establishes six general criteria for considering weeding an item from a library collection. These have been summed up with the acronym MUSTIE.

M – Misleading, factually inaccurate

U – Ugly, worn beyond mending or rebinding

S – Superseded by a new edition or by a much better book on the subject

T – Trivial, or no discernible literary or scientific merit

I – Irrelevant to the needs and interests of the library’s community

E – Elsewhere, the material is easily obtainable from another library.

Usage will also identify candidates for weeding. For instance, items that have not circulated for three or more years may become candidates for weeding.

Items that have been withdrawn may be made available for purchase to the public through the Friends of the Library Bookstore, special library book sales, or online vendors. Any items that cannot be resold are donated or recycled.

Replacement

Items withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear will not automatically be replaced with the identical title. Need for replacement is judged by:

Existence of coverage on the subject within the library

Existence of more current material

Demand for the specific title

Gifts and Donations

Donations of books and other materials, both new and used, may be accepted with the understanding that they may be added to the collection or disposed of as the library decides. No conditions may be imposed on any donation either before or after acceptance by the library. If an item is not added to the collection it will be given to Friends of the Library Bookstore. The library cannot provide evaluations of donations for tax purposes but will give a receipt, if requested, for the total number of items received. The library and the Friends of the Library do not accept Reader’s Digest Condensed Books, old issues of magazines or newspapers, encyclopedias, textbooks over five years old, or any materials in poor condition, such as mildewed, dirty, or torn.

The library sponsors two formal programs wherein individuals or groups may specify subject areas in which their monetary donations are to be used. A Memorial Book program allows a donor to request materials in a specific area or by title if in accordance with the library’s selection policy. The Adopt-a-Book plan gives patrons a choice of the format and general area where the donation will be used. In both plans, a bookplate is attached with the donor’s name and the name of the recipient of the gift.

6. **RECONSIDERATION PROCEDURE**

Materials representing a diversity of viewpoints are acquired by the Cambria County Library System. They are evaluated as a whole and not on the basis of particular text, illustrations, or passages.

The choice of library materials by users is a personal matter. While an individual may reject some materials for himself, he cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to others. Since responsibility for the reading of children and adolescents rests with the parent or legal guardian, library materials will not be identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, nor will they be segregated.

Recognizing that the variety of materials available in a large public library may lead to some concerns, a procedure for reconsideration has been established.

1. A patron who wishes to question a particular item will be asked to speak first with a department head who will provide him with a copy of the library’s Collection Development Policy. The material will be checked by the department head to determine if it adheres to standards set by the policy.
2. If the patron decides to pursue a complaint, he may complete a copy of the REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL and submit it to the Director of the library. The Director, along with professional material selectors, will review the complaint then contact the user regarding the course of action decided upon within two weeks. The director will also share a copy of the complaint (without identifying personal information) and the course of action with the Board of Directors and the American Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee.
3. If the patron is unhappy with the Director’s decision, he/she may submit an explanation of why the decision is erroneous to the board of directors in writing for further consideration. The board will discuss and issue a final statement in writing within four weeks.

Adopted by Board of Directors of Cambria Library Association on March 31, 1997

Amended, Board of Directors, April 16, 2014

Amended, Board of Directors, March 16, 2022