



AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Austin Public Library Board Materials Selection and Consideration Policy

PREAMBLE

Materials selected for the library collection are intended to meet the cultural, informational, educational and recreational needs of the library users of the City of Austin and Mower County. The scope of the collection is intended to offer a choice of format, treatment and level of difficulty so that most individual library needs can be met and service given to individuals of all ages (without needlessly duplicating the resources available in other libraries in this area).

The collection scope is intended to provide supplemental materials for individuals pursuing educational programs and a start or referral point for those needing more advanced information or materials. The majority of the collection is not archival, although in some areas of city and county history archival material is kept. The collection is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis to meet contemporary needs.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which selection decisions are made. A policy cannot replace the judgment of librarians, but stating goals and indicating boundaries will assist them in choosing from an array of available materials. A goal of the library is the provision of materials which best meet the community's informational and educational needs. Basic to this policy is the Library Bill of Rights adopted by the Austin Public Library Board.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the Library are to collect, organize, and make easily available materials of contemporary significance and of long-term value. The Library will always be guided by a sense of responsibility to both the present and future in adding material which will enrich the collection. The Library also recognizes an immediate duty to make available materials for enlightenment and recreation, even though such materials may not have enduring interest or value.

All staff members selecting, organizing and transmitting library materials are expected to keep these objectives in mind when applying their professional knowledge and experience in making decisions; however, final responsibility lies with the Director.

GUIDELINES

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some library users. Decisions are not made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building the collection and to serving the interests of library users, thus, the selection of any material for the Library's collection does not constitute an endorsement of its contents. The Library selects materials of varying complexity and format because it has a diverse public embracing a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, interests, sensory preferences and reading skills.

The Library pays due regard to the special civic, commercial, cooperative, cultural, industrial and labor activities of this community.

Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that material may be accessible to use by children. Responsibility of children's use of library materials rests with their parents, legal guardians, or caretakers. Selection and availability of materials obviously cannot be confined to only items deemed suitable to adolescents.

The purposes and resources of other libraries in the area are recognized and the Library will not needlessly duplicate materials.

The Library does not attempt to acquire textbooks or other curriculum-related materials except as such materials also serve the general public.

The Library acknowledges a particular interest in local, county and state history and genealogy. It takes a broad view of works by and about Minnesotans, as well as general works relating to the State of Minnesota. The Library will add to its collection works produced by authors, printers or publishers with Minnesota connections that meet the purpose and objectives of this policy.

LABELS AND SHELVING

Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and materials are not sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft. If an item comes from the producer with a Parental Advisory Label, it will remain on the item for parental awareness.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

The Library Director responds to initial requests for reconsideration of library materials. The Library Board will review appeals on requests for reconsideration. Materials appeals require careful review for compliance with the established Austin Public Library Material Selection Policy. Therefore, collection appeals must be presented in writing to the Library Board ten days in advance of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. The Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form may be used in place of a letter. In the event that the notice is received less than ten days prior to the next meeting, the appeal will be scheduled for the following regularly scheduled Board meeting.

WEEDING OF MATERIALS

Weeding (the review and removal of materials from the collection) is an ongoing process directly related to collection development. Materials that are worn, damaged, outdated, duplicated or no longer used may be removed from the collection. Other factors taken into consideration are frequency of use, community interest and availability of other material on the subject.

GIFTS

Please refer to the Austin Public Library Gift Policy.

REVISION

This policy will be reviewed by the Library Board at least every two years.

Last Reviewed: October 2025
Adopted: October 1996



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CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

DATE _____ REQUEST BY (name) _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____

REQUESTOR REPRESENTS: ____ SELF ____ OTHER (name/organization) _____

TITLE OF MATERIAL _____

AUTHOR _____ BOOK ____ OTHER ____

PUBLISHER (if known) _____

1) To what in the book or other material do you object? Please be specific (cite pages of book).

2) What do you feel might be the result of reading this book or viewing or listening to this material?

3) For what age group would you recommend this material?

4) Is there anything positive about this material?

5) Which parts of this book or video did you read, view or listen to?

Requestor's Signature

Date

Received by (Name of Austin Public Library Staff Person):

Date: _____

October 2025