



WESTCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Collection Development Policy

The Collection Development Policy upholds the mission of Westchester Public Library by directing staff in the development and maintenance of its collection of materials in various formats to support the educational, informational, and recreational interests of the community.

The Library stands by the right of freedom of information for its patrons and adheres to the principles expressed in the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights. Promoting intellectual freedom and access to information are core values of the Library. The goal of the Library collection is to offer a diverse array of ideas and information, including that which may be unorthodox or controversial. Materials are acquired in order to provide various and different viewpoints; selection of materials does not mean the Library endorses the contents or views expressed in those materials.

Responsibility for materials chosen by minors rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of materials for the collection will not be restricted by the possibility that items may come into the possession of minors, nor does the Library use any system of coding, rating, or labeling to identify or segregate materials for purposes of censorship.

The Library Director has the authority to make exceptions to this policy. The Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to amend this policy and to rule on situations not specifically covered herein.

Criteria for Materials Acquisition

Selectors use several criteria when evaluating and purchasing materials, with attention to the Library's financial resources and availability of physical space. Materials need not meet all criteria for inclusion in the collection. Evaluation criteria for acquisitions include:

- Public demand and anticipated demand
- Relevance to the interests and needs of the community
- Attention of critics and reviewers, awards, or inclusion in bibliographies
- Significance, timeliness, or permanence of subject matter
- Relevance and suitability of physical format
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
- Relevance to early literacy
- Relevance to school-age and teen interests

- Literary merit and contribution to the field of knowledge
- Relationship to the existing collection
- Reputation or qualifications of the author, creator, or publisher
- Value of the resource in relation to its cost
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Availability of content through the internet, subscription databases, or other

means

Additional evaluation criteria, specific to electronic resources, include:

- Ease of use and remote access potential
- Hardware, software, networking, and storage requirements
- Licensing requirements
- Comparison of content and cost with other available formats
- Long-term availability and perpetual access rights

AI-generated materials must meet the above selection criteria to be considered for inclusion in library collections. This includes, but is not limited to, human-guided AI, AI edited, or AI narrated works.

Some of the Library's digital content is provided using third party vendors. In instances where individual title selection is not available, selection of the service will be based upon the reputation and overall content offerings of the vendor.

In these circumstances, the Library is unable to reconsider digital materials that Library patrons object to, but may inform the third-party vendor of user concerns.

Deacquisition

Deacquisition, or deselection, of materials from the collection is a vital part of successful collection maintenance. Continuous evaluation is necessary and materials are regularly removed to maintain a current, accurate, and appealing collection, and to facilitate its ease of use.

Deselected items may be disposed of through book sales, donations to other organizations, recycling, or other means approved by the Library Director. An item may be deselected for several reasons, including, but not limited to:

- Information is out of date
- Item is worn or damaged

- Item no longer responds to current needs or interests
- Format of material is no longer collected

Library of Things

The Library maintains a Library of Things collection—comprised of non-traditional materials—to support the educational and recreational needs of the community . Library staff will select these materials based on the demands of the community and storage space at the Library. Input from the community will be strongly considered; any person may make a suggestion for purchase using the Library’s standard suggestion form, or directly with Library staff. Library of Things collections are managed using the selection standards and processes outlined in this policy.

Local Authors, Self-Published Materials, Publisher Inquiries

Inquiries may occur from authors and publishers requesting that materials (including ebooks) be added to the Library collection. All materials requested to be added to the collection are subject to the same selection criteria as materials purchased by the Library. The Library may acquire self-published material if it fits within the scope of the Library's collection plan, meets the Library’s selection criteria, and has received independent, positive reviews in one or more of the major professional review journals; paid reviews do not qualify. The Library will not notify submitters whether or not material is selected. Materials requested to be added to the collection may be brought to the Library’s attention in one of two ways:

1. Send an email through the Contact Us portion on the Library website. Include:
 - Basic bibliographic information about the material (title, author, ISBN, publisher, date of publication, number of pages, price)
 - Links to reviews of the material in professional review journals
 - A brief description of the material, its intended audience, and information about how or where to buy it
2. Mail a flier or promotional information (do not send review copies) to:

Westchester Public Library
 200 West Indiana Avenue
 Chesterton, IN 46304

Gifts

The Library accepts materials donations that may supplement and enhance its collection. All materials donations must be offered free and clear without restrictions as to use or future disposition, and all materials donations become the unrestricted property of Westchester Public Library. There is a financial cost incurred by the Library associated with the processing, care, and maintenance of gift materials to ensure that the materials may serve the Library's mission, therefore, gift materials are evaluated according to materials acquisition criteria. Donated

materials not added to the Library collection may be given to the Friends of Westchester Public Library to sell, the profits of which directly support Library programs.

Patron Requests

Library patrons are welcome to submit requests for the purchase of materials. Materials requested by patrons for purchase by the Library are subject to the same criteria as other materials selected for acquisition.

Request for Reconsideration

If a patron wishes to submit a formal request for reconsideration of materials in the Library, the patron may complete a [Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form](#). The Library Director will review the request, evaluate the reason for the purchase of the material, and consider the objection in terms of the Collection Development Policy.

The Library Director will reply to the request in writing and may include reviews of the material, a copy of the Collection Development Policy, and a copy the American Library Association [Library Bill of Rights](#) and [Freedom to Read Statement](#). If there are any remaining objections, they may be brought, via the Library Director, to the attention of the Library Board of Trustees. The patron filing the Request for Reconsideration will be notified in writing of the final decision on the status of the item.

Revised and readopted by the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees :

- March 11, 2021
- September 11, 2025
 - May 14, 2026