

# Collection Development Policy



## MISSION

The Fontana Regional Library (FRL) provides the public of Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties with excellent service and convenient access to resources for their educational, informational, and recreational needs. FRL's goal is to acquire, organize, make accessible and actively promote materials that support the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community.

## DEFINITIONS

Collection Development includes the planning, evaluating, selecting, acquiring, organizing, displaying, and weeding of the Library's collections.

Library materials include, but are not limited to, the following; books, magazines, newspapers, audiobooks, music, movies, large print materials, online databases, digital and streaming content, special collections, and new formats as they evolve.

## SUPPORT FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

FRL provides information on many topics, reading levels, and interests in an environment that supports an individual's right to have access to ideas representing multiple points of view. To meet its goals and objectives, FRL must protect the freedom of all to choose their own information. Access is provided readily and equitably to users, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, age, disability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or political views. FRL affirms the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* and its interpretations, the *Freedom to Read* and the *Freedom to View* statements in support of acquiring and managing collections.

## OBJECTIVES

FRL's collections are developed and managed to meet the majority of the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the Library's service area. FRL staff build and maintain patron-oriented collections by anticipating and responding to their needs and expectations.

Collection decisions are made in conjunction with the goals and objectives of FRL's Long Range Plan, including the following:

- Committing to excellent service and convenient access for all users
- Developing library services that incorporate both physical and digital collections
- Embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Partnering with community members to promote lifelong learning

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the Regional Director and the County Librarians, who operate within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees. The County Librarians and Branch Librarians determine the budget, guidelines, and organizational structure for the staff who select resources and develop displays. Selectors choose appropriate materials for their collection areas, weed to keep their areas current and in good physical condition, and spend their budget in a timely and organized manner. Library staff members and the public are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration. The addition of new library resources requested by patrons shall meet the standards of the FRL's Collection Development Policy. If a requested material is acquired, the requestor will be notified as soon as it is available. See *Request for Library Resources* form.

Staff have these responsibilities in the development of patron-oriented collections:

- Engaging in open, continuous two-way communication with library patrons and recognizing that individuals have different ways of expressing their needs based on age, language, economic status, culture, or other characteristics
- Interacting with patrons with understanding, respect, and responsiveness
- Handling all requests equitably
- Working in partnership with one another to understand and respond to community needs
- Understanding and responding to rapidly changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes
- Recognizing that materials of varying complexities and formats are necessary to satisfy diverse needs of library users
- Balancing individual needs and broader community needs in determining the best allocation of collection budget for acquiring or providing access to materials and information
- Seeking continuous improvement through ongoing measurement
- Reviewing the collection on a regular basis to identify areas of community interest that may need to be strengthened

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Fontana Regional Library represents a broad demographic and selection criteria takes into account the various interests and needs of the patrons served by FRL. Criteria for selection of materials fulfills FRL's mission and goals. FRL provides collections containing a wide variety of material formats, including print, audio-visual, and digital. In selecting materials and developing collections for adults, as well as for children and teens, FRL staff includes materials that represent the broad range of human experience, reflecting the race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, age, disability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and political diversity, not only of the region it serves but also the larger global perspective. Library collections will provide a wide range of opinion on current issues.

Collections contain popular works, classic works, and other materials of general interest. Works are not excluded or included in the collection based solely on subject matter or on political, religious, or ideological grounds. In building collections, Library staff is guided by the principle of selection, rather than censorship. Furthermore, the selection of a given item for FRL's collections should not be interpreted as an endorsement of a particular viewpoint.

When evaluating potential materials for FRL collections, the following criteria are applied according to the professional judgment, experience with library collections, knowledge of the subject and its literature, and experience of the staff regarding the needs of the community. An item need not meet all of these criteria in order to be acceptable.

### **General Criteria:**

- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Cost
- Importance as a document of the times
- Relation to the existing collection and to other materials on the subject
- Attention by critics and reviewers
- Recognition as award-winning or classic titles
- Potential user appeal
- Requests by library patrons

**Content Criteria:**

- Authority
- Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- Skill, competence, and purpose of the author
- Reputation and significance of the author
- Objectivity
- Consideration of the work as a whole
- Clarity
- Currency
- Technical quality
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Representation of important movements, genres, or trends
- Vitality and originality
- Artistic presentation and/or experimentation
- Sustained interest
- Relevance and use of the information
- Effective characterization
- Authenticity of history or social setting
- Local or regional significance

**Special Considerations for Electronic Information Sources:**

- Ease of use of the product
- Equipment needed to provide access to the information
- Technical support and training
- Available in full text
- Media type appropriate to the content and to the intended audience
- Format is effective for its intended use

## SELECTION PROCEDURES

All materials and formats are selected by County and Branch Librarians, or by staff members within that Library, who are qualified to do so by reason of education, training, experience, knowledge of subject area, and needs of the community. Subject specialists and the community members may also make recommendations for selection.

Library Staff select materials for FRL collections to fulfill the Library's mission. Because the communities served by FRL differ in their needs and interests, the types or levels of collections developed also differ. Selectors may choose to develop collections on varying levels, ranging from minimal to comprehensive. Selectors are expected to exercise impartiality in materials acquisition practices.

Materials are selected for the general public. Materials are placed in children's, young adult, or adult sections of the collection, depending on reading and interest levels.

Tools used in selection include professional and trade journals, online resources, and reviews from professional journals and other sources. Selectors are responsible for reading reviews and staying informed about current trends in purchasing.

Recommended lists may be consulted in the selection of materials, but selection is not limited to their listings:

- Best movie lists (e.g. Award winners, American Film Institute)
- Best books lists (e.g. Book awards, professional journal lists)
- Other specialized bibliographies

Review Sources include but are not limited to:

- *Booklist*
- *Library Journal*
- *Horn Book*
- *Kirkus*
- *School Library Journal*
- *Publishers Weekly*
- *BookPage*
- *New York Times Book Review*
- *Novelist*
- *Goodreads*

Popular Media Resources used as part of the selection process include:

- Talk and news shows
- Popular and local magazines
- Popular and local newspapers
- Online services
- Booksellers: online, local, and national

Materials are obtained through a variety of sources, primarily through FRL's primary vendor, Baker & Taylor, but also through the following:

- Direct from publishers (e.g. School of Government, Gale Cengage)
- Local Bookstores or Booksellers
- Other distributors (e.g. Ingram, Barnes & Noble, Amazon)
- Gifts, in keeping with the FRL's Collection Development Policy

Gift materials and donations are judged by the selection criteria and are accepted or rejected by those criteria.

Textbooks are not purchased for the collection unless they fulfill a basic information need better than any other available material.

Selection is an ongoing process and materials that are removed are replaced as appropriate.

### **Selecting Materials on Controversial Topics**

FRL strives to have a balanced collection to represent multiple points of view. This includes having all sides of controversial issues as far as availability of materials, space, and budget allow. Selection is based upon criteria stated in this policy. The race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, age, disability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or political views of an author or creator; offensive language; depictions or descriptions of violence or sexually explicit activity; controversial content of an item; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community does not cause an item automatically to be included or excluded from FRL's collection.

The Library collection will be organized and maintained to facilitate access. No collection materials, book club selections, storytime selections, or library displays will be labeled, restricted, sequestered, or altered because of any controversy about the author, subject matter, or intended or potential audience.

All public libraries contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable. Libraries may omit from the collection materials that some patrons feel are important. In either case, FRL has procedures that patrons may use in requesting the reconsideration of materials.

## **GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

Gifts and donations of materials or funds for the purchase of materials are accepted in accordance with the FRL Gift Policy. Materials are reviewed using the same criteria as purchases. FRL reserves the right to dispose of any gifts that are given to any of its member libraries. FRL staff will determine how to best incorporate gift materials into the existing collections. Materials not added to the Library collections may be used for programs or given to other local organizations such as Friends of the Library, schools, or senior centers. Most gift materials received by FRL that are not added to the Library's collection are forwarded to the appropriate Friends of the Library group for sale at their Bookstores or Books sales. Monies from such sales are used to benefit member libraries of FRL.

Monetary donations may be made for the purchase of library materials. Recommendations from donors on the use of the funds are considered if the suggestions align with the Collection Development Policy.

*See Gift forms for monetary donations and materials donations*

## **COLLECTION MANAGEMENT AND WEEDING**

Evaluation of FRL collections is done under the supervision of County and Branch Librarians. FRL Library staff continually withdraws items from the collection to maintain a viable, relevant, and useful collection. Staff base their decisions on a number of factors, including publishing date, frequency of circulation, community interest, historical value, condition, unnecessary duplication of titles, space considerations, cost of replacement, availability in the NC Cardinal consortium, the availability of newer or revised materials, or whether another item or format better serves the same purpose.

Some areas of the collection, such as classics, award winners, and resources of local interest, may be retained despite low usage statistics. Some special collections are important to the community and material is not regularly weeded from those collections. The Kay Byer Poetry Collection at the Jackson County Public Library and the Jim Casada Outdoor Collection at the Marianna Black Library are two of these special collections in FRL.

To maximize the effectiveness of the collection, materials will be kept in their best possible condition by proper storage, cleaning, repairing, and rebinding.

Withdrawn books are donated to the Friends of the Library for book sales. The proceeds from such sales are used for the benefit of the Library. Books that are not sold will be disposed of at the discretion of the Friends of the Library.

## **RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES**

A singular obligation of the public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view on controversial or debatable subjects. Fontana Regional Library recognizes the importance of varying points of view among the community for whom they provide service. Comments from members of the community about the collection frequently provide library staff with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. County and Branch Librarians are governed by this Policy when making additions to or removing items from its collections.

All library users have a First Amendment right to read, view, and listen to library resources. FRL supports intellectual freedom and subscribes to the principles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and its interpretations, Freedom to Read and Freedom to View. An individual or group concerned about the appropriateness of library resources may make an informal or a formal complaint using the following procedures. The individual or group members must be residents of Jackson, Macon, or Swain counties and full-service library card holders.

## Procedures for Reconsideration of Library Resources

### Informal complaint

- If an informal complaint is received by Library staff, the patron will be given the opportunity to discuss the complaint with the County or Branch Librarian.
- The Library staff will explain that the Library has materials for everyone and all items go through a selection process or are purchased to fulfill patron requests.
- The Library staff will offer to assist the patron to find alternate materials that will better meet the needs and interests of the patron and/or their family members.

### Formal Complaint

1. If the patron chooses to go forward with a formal complaint, Library staff will provide a packet of information, including the Collection Development Policy and the ***Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources*** form. The patron should put their request in writing by completing the form.
2. Once the completed form is returned to the Library, it should be given to the County or Branch Librarian.
3. Library resources under reconsideration are not removed from the collection during the review period.
4. The County Librarian (in conjunction with Branch Librarians, where applicable) will review the completed form and the resource in question to consider whether it meets the criteria stated in this Policy.
5. The County or Branch Librarian will gather reviews of the resource under reconsideration and other relevant information.
6. The *Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources* form, together with resource reviews, are discussed with the FRL Director and the County Library Board.
7. No single Library staff member or Library Board member has the authority to remove the resource under reconsideration.
8. When the patron submits a completed *Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources* form, they will receive a written response detailing any action taken regarding the resource under reconsideration within two weeks of the date of submission.

9. If the patron is not satisfied with the decision of the County or Branch Librarian, the patron may submit a written appeal to the FRL Director. The appeal must be submitted within two weeks of the initial decision.
10. The Director will inform the FRL Board of Trustees of the appeal and the Board will review the complaint and all accompanying documents at their next scheduled Board meeting. In reviewing the request for reconsideration, the FRL Board will employ the selection criteria, consider other appropriate information including professional reviews, recommendations from the Library staff, and comments from the patron. The patron will be notified of the time and location of the Board meeting; they may state their concerns during the public comment session.
11. The FRL Board of Trustees will recommend an action within 30 days of the Board meeting. The Director will inform the patron and the County and Branch Librarian of that decision in writing.
12. The decision of the FRL Board of Trustees is final.
13. A title or resource will be reviewed by the Library Board of Trustees only once within a 3-year period unless the content has undergone major revisions or at the discretion of the Library Director or the Library Board of Trustees.