



Collection Development and Maintenance Policy

Purpose/Scope of Collection

The Collection Development and Maintenance Policy offers guidance to Library staff in the selection and retention of materials for the Meriden Public Library and serves to inform the public of the Library's principles for selection and collection maintenance.

General Principles

The Collection Development and Maintenance Policy is based on the Library's [Mission](#) and the long-established principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association (ALA) as expressed in the [Freedom to Read Statement](#), [Freedom to View Statement](#), the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and relevant interpretations adopted ALA.

All Library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

Collection Objectives

The Meriden Public Library provides a contemporary, relevant collection of resources in a wide range of formats for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. The Library recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents. The Library strives to meet these needs within the limitations of space, staffing, and budget. The Library endeavors to make use of new technologies and formats to offer Library users the greatest access to information and ideas.

The Library maintains a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction materials. Materials and formats are not maintained past their relevance. This ensures a collection of current interest to our patrons. Textbooks and materials of a highly technical or specialized nature more appropriate for research or special libraries are generally excluded from the collection.

The Library strives to build a diverse collection that reflects our community and contains content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically represent a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences.

The Library recognizes that there are ideas, opinions, viewpoints, beliefs, and philosophies which are subject to discussion and debate and that any community will be made up of citizens with divergent viewpoints. The Library endeavors to provide access to diverse points of view

within the limits of financial resources and physical space. Inclusion in the collection is not an endorsement of a particular point of view or belief.

Responsibility of Selecting Library Materials

Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library and educational materials. The ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. The Library Director delegates the responsibility for materials selection to Library Staff.

Selection Criteria

When considering materials for purchase, Library Staff refer to patron requests, reviews in professionally recognized publications, news media, recommended lists by professional organizations, literary awards, and the popularity of similar items.

Certain factors influence the selection of materials for the Library's collection. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, will be reviewed in terms of the following professional standards:

- Community needs and interests
- The importance of the subject matter to the collection
- Authoritativeness
- Availability of age appropriate or grade-level material
- Availability of the material in the Library's consortium
- Price and availability
- Timeliness or permanence of the material
- Favorable reviews in professionally recognized publications

Gifts/Donations

Gifts/donated materials will be added to the Library collection using the same criteria used for purchasing materials. All donations become the property of the Library and cannot be returned. Gifts/donated material may be added to the Library collection, sold for the benefit of the Library or disposed of in a manner appropriate to their condition and usefulness.

Controversial Materials

A. The Library recognizes that some materials may not be considered appropriate by all patrons. Selections will not be made based upon anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the overall Library patron community.

B. Responsibility for the reading, listening and viewing habits of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. The Library maintains several age-appropriate collections for children and

teens. Materials may be reassigned among these sub-collections based on the age appropriateness of the content. Selection of adult material will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The removal, exclusion or censoring of any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive is prohibited.

C. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be removed from the open shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.

D. The decision by an author, publisher, or other content creator to withdraw their work from the market and stop selling or publishing it will not be considered sufficient reason alone for the Library to withdraw it from the collection.

Elements of the Meriden Public Library Collection

Adult Nonfiction: Adult nonfiction is selected on the basis of permanent or timely value to the community and collection, accuracy of information, authoritativeness, clear presentation and readability, and social significance.

Adult Fiction: Adult fiction materials represent a range of genres and literary styles, and are selected based on anticipated popular demand, local interest or appeal, and patron requests.

Teen: Materials in the teen collection are published for and marketed towards middle schoolers and/or high schoolers (grades 6-12, or ages 12-18). The teen collection includes fiction and popular non-fiction. Materials are selected based on anticipated popularity, patron requests, reviews, award lists, and representation within the collection.

Children's: The collection serves the needs of young people from birth to middle school and includes materials specifically designed to help children develop a love of reading, learn to read proficiently, and complete school assignments. Selections are based on professional resources and the requests of parents, children, and teachers. The durability and cost of specific formats are also taken into consideration.

Periodicals: Periodicals are selected on the basis of subject coverage, usefulness, interest and readability. The objective is to maintain a broad collection of popular periodicals for the general reader.

Media: The selection of media, such as DVDs, blu-rays, music CDs, audiobooks, video games and other formats, will follow the same general criteria as that of print materials.

Non-Traditional Materials: Non-traditional materials commonly referred to as a "Library of Things" include items such as equipment, tools or gadgets, technology, games, thematic kits, or toys that patrons may borrow with their library card. The selection of non-traditional materials follow the same general criteria used for materials selection.

Special collections: The Meriden Public Library has two special collections- The Meriden History Collection and the Holocaust /Genocide Collection. Materials are selected on the basis of permanent or timely value to the community and collection, accuracy of information, authoritativeness, clear presentation and readability, and social significance.

Local authors, self-published authors, unsolicited materials: Materials submitted by local authors, self-published authors, and unsolicited materials from publishers will be considered for inclusion in the Library collection using the general criteria for Materials Selection.

Digital Collections/Databases

The Meriden Public Library offers access to subscription databases and digital collections. The selection of digital collections will follow the same general criteria as that of our physical collections. The Library also provides access to digital collections that are offered to all Meriden Public Library cardholders via the Library's membership in a cooperative of libraries ("consortium") that share an integrated Library system and other technological innovations to add value through collaboration. The Library refers to that consortium's collection policies for materials provided through their subscriptions.

Collection Maintenance

Collection maintenance or "weeding" is part of the continuous evaluation of the Library collection by the professional Library staff. In order to maintain a collection that is up to date, reliable, in good condition, and is relevant to the needs and interests of the patrons of the Meriden Public Library, materials are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Materials are withdrawn when they are deemed to be outdated, inaccurate, seldom used, or in poor condition.

Replacement of Materials

The Library does not automatically replace items that are withdrawn from circulation due to loss, damage, or wear. Decisions will be made based on the following criteria:

- Demand for the specific material
- Availability of more up-to-date materials on the subject
- Availability of duplicates
- Availability of age appropriate or grade-level material
- Funding

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship

The Library recognizes not all users will greet all materials with the same degree of enthusiasm and regard. Therefore, some materials selected for the collections may seem controversial and even distasteful to some Library users. It is the right of the individual not to read, view or hear materials that the individual considers objectionable. It is never the right of any Library user or users to deny access to Library materials to others. The freedom to choose from a broad range

of informational and artistic materials will not be abridged. When evaluating Library materials the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements from the American Library Association are used as guiding documents.

Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The Library Board recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in the Library collection. The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider materials, displays or programs to residents of Meriden. The patron will be given a “Meriden Public Library Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials” form to complete, detailing their objections to the material. The completion of the Request for Reconsideration form does not guarantee either accession to the collection or removal from the collection, but does ensure the attention of Library Staff to user opinion, interests, and concerns. Please see our Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and form for further information on this process.

Approved by the Meriden Library Board of Trustees, October 27, 2025.