



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

As a free public association library serving the New Canaan community, New Canaan Library provides a diverse collection of current materials and resources for the community. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. This Policy is intended to inform the public about the principles underlying the Library's selection decisions, which are guided by the Library's Mission Statement set forth below:

To be an essential place for lifelong learning and a vibrant hub for knowledge, culture, and connection for everyone in our community

and the following:

- First Amendment of the Constitution;
- Library Bill of Rights as adopted and further revised by the American Library Association (ALA) (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>);
- The Freedom to Read Statement as adopted and further revised by the ALA (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>);
- The Freedom to View Statement as adopted by the ALA (<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement>); and
- Public Act 25-168 Sec.322, 323 (<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2025/act/pa/pdf/2025PA-00168-R00HB-07287-PA.pdf>).

The public library is an important place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents and the community as a whole.

Responsibility of Selecting Library Materials

Ultimate responsibility for the Library's collection and its resources rests with the Library Director who operates in accordance with this Policy and other relevant policies approved by the Library's Board of Trustees. The Manager of Collections oversees the selection process for the adult collection with the support of the adult selections team. Likewise, the Manager of Family Services oversees the selection process for the children's and teen collection, with the support of the children's and teen librarians. These librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library and educational materials.

Purpose / Scope of Collection

The Library offers materials and services which are intended to meet the diverse cultural, educational, and recreational needs and preferences of its users. Accordingly, the collection offers a choice of formats and levels of difficulty to accommodate all ages and proficiencies so that a range of individual needs can be met. Formats include the following, where appropriate:

- Print (e.g., hardcover, paperback, large print, newspapers, magazines);
- Non-print (e.g., audiobooks, DVDs);
- Downloadable content (e.g., ebooks and e-audiobooks, e-media, online databases, periodicals); and
- Digital and creative resources (e.g., 3D printers).

New formats are considered for the collection when, by industry report, survey results, and user demand, a significant portion of the community has the technology to make use of the format, where applicable, and/or the Library's resources allow for their acquisition. Similar considerations determine the decision to delete a format from the collection.

Selection Criteria

The Library is primarily a popular materials library, emphasizing breadth of subjects over depth and general over specialized knowledge. The Library allocates its resources largely to popular works which will be of interest or educational value to as many area residents as possible. It does not maintain the resources of an academic, scientific, or research library, but when feasible, will attempt to borrow such resources from other libraries upon request.

Specifically, the Library endeavors to:

- collect, organize, and make available a diverse collection of materials of contemporary significance and of long-term value;
- make available materials in a variety of formats for collaborative learning and innovation;
- offer materials of varying levels of difficulty to accommodate all ages, interests, and abilities; and
- represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole.

Individual selections may be based on all or some of the following criteria:

- literary merit, critical acclaim, artistic quality, and originality;
- favorable assessments by reputable critics, reviewers, or organizations in professionally recognized publications;

- educational and informational value;
- accuracy, objectivity, effectiveness, and timeliness of presentation;
- current interest and demand;
- diversity and representation of viewpoint;
- representation of a literary, political, or social movement, genre, trend, or national culture;
- prominence and credibility of author and publisher;
- availability in a format appropriate for circulation and multiple use; and
- availability at a cost within the Library's budgeted resources.

The Library will purchase multiple copies of materials in high demand in different formats when warranted and based on available resources. Additional copies of other materials may be purchased at the discretion of the Library.

Digital Collections/Databases

Where possible, the Library will license resources to make digital information and content available in the Library and remotely. In choosing to purchase or license electronic databases, the Library applies the same standards for selection as for print materials. However, the Library does not have control over the selection of individual content available in licensed electronic databases. The Library's provision of access to electronic databases does not confer endorsement of any individual content housed therein.

Selection Resources

Resources for collection selections include standard bibliographic works, published reviews in professional periodicals, publishers' catalogs, staff suggestions, and recommendations by local specialists.

User Requests for Purchase

Requests for Purchase of an item by a user on the Library's website are welcomed and will be considered applying the same criteria as that used for the rest of the collection. If a requested item is unavailable or does not meet criteria for purchase, the Library will attempt to obtain the item for any New Canaan resident through Interlibrary Loan.

Deselection Guidelines

Collection evaluation and maintenance is a continuous and ongoing process based upon quantitative and qualitative evidence and professional judgment. When reviewing library and educational material within a public library, librarians will evaluate items using professionally accepted standards: material relevance, physical condition, availability of duplicates, availability of other age-appropriate or grade-level materials, and the continued demand of the material. Materials that have outdated information, are in poor

condition, or are no longer of use or interest may be removed from the collection. Materials are viewed as entire works; deselection is not based on isolated passages or sections.

Gifts / Donations

The Library may accept gifts of new materials with the understanding that the same guidelines of selection are applied to gifts as to materials acquired for the collection by other means. The Library reserves the right to evaluate and to dispose of gifts in accordance with the same criteria applied to purchased materials. The Library generally does not accept donations of used materials.

Monies donated for the purchase of materials are gratefully accepted. Library staff will make the final determination of the materials to be purchased with such donated funds in accordance with this Policy.

Controversial Materials

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 community. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) are solely responsible for determining the suitability of any material for a specific, individual child. The Library maintains several collections for children and teens. Materials may be reassigned among these sub-collections based on a number of factors including appeal, content, and textual complexity, as determined by professionally trained youth services librarians. 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 or library material on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive is prohibited. 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.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship

Free access to the collection is important to the Library's mission and the protection of the First Amendment rights of the Library's users. Therefore, the Library may acquire items which meet the aforementioned selection criteria even though some Library users may personally find them offensive, explicit, or controversial in nature. 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 acquiring and managing its collections, the Library is guided by the intellectual freedom policies of the American Library Association, the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements, and the Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights: Access to Library Resources and Services. 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. Copies of these statements are available on request.

Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion concerning its collections. The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider materials to individual residents of New Canaan, in accordance with [Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323](#), which states that only a resident with a vested interest who wishes that a specific item be reviewed may complete and submit a Reconsideration Form. An "individual with a vested interest" is defined as "any individual residing in the town in which the public library is located or the town in which the contract library is located at the time a reconsideration form is filed" per **Sec. 322 subsection (e)**. For further information about requests for reconsideration, please see the Library's Material Review and Reconsideration Policy.

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