



Collection Development & Maintenance Policy

Mission Statement

The East Haven Library Inc., colloquially known as the Hagaman Memorial Library, is a center for community enrichment and, as such, seeks to provide information, resources and programs for lifelong learning, and to improve to the quality of life of local residents through access to an excellent collection of materials in multiple formats, current technology, and cultural and other programming opportunities.

Purpose of the Policy & Scope

This policy of the Hagaman Memorial Library (the “Library”) provides librarians and library staff members with guidance for the growth and development of collections and informs members of the public of the principles on which collection decisions are made. This policy applies to both the digital and physical materials in the Library’s collection.

The Library strives to select, acquire, curate, and provide—within the limits of funds and space—free and easy access to a collection of library materials. These library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. The Library collection, therefore, covers a diverse range of interests, tastes, viewpoints, values and levels of ability, and formats, in order to serve the greatest number of library users and potential library users possible. This policy provides guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials that anticipate and meet the needs of the community. It also addresses collection maintenance, replacement, and weeding of materials.

The Library recognizes and celebrates the different experiences and viewpoints that make up our community. Library materials should represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole. 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 makes every effort, therefore, to provide library materials for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. We strive to be conscientious in our evaluation of materials, to ensure a collection that reflects many perspectives while supporting an atmosphere that is inclusive, kind, and welcoming for all.

In following this policy, the Library recognizes that specific acquisitions may include items that may be unorthodox, unpopular or controversial in nature. Some materials may be offensive, shocking, or of no interest to some library users, but may be meaningful and significant to others. The Library’s acquisition of such items does not constitute endorsement of the opinions expressed in the materials or their content by the Library, its Director, Staff, or Board of Trustees, but rather allows for their free expression.

The Library adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association as expressed in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View



statements. No library material, display or program shall be removed, or programs be cancelled, because of origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display or program or because of the origin, background or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display or program. 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.

Key Definitions

The following definitions, taken from PA 25-168, Sec. 322, describe terms used in this Policy:

“Library and other educational material” means any material belonging to, on loan to, or otherwise in the custody of a public library, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books, magazines, reference books, supplementary titles, multimedia and digital material and software. It is the assemblage of all materials owned or licensed or otherwise in the custody of a public library in both physical and digital formats, and made available to the public at no cost.

“Public library staff member” means a staff member of a public library, a public librarian, any staff member whose assignment is in the public library or any individual carrying out or assisting with the functions of a public library. This includes all professional staff, nonprofessional staff, and the Library Director

“Individual with a vested interest” means 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.

“Remove” means deliberately taking library material out of a library's collection. “Remove” does not include the process of clearing such collection of any materials that are no longer useful.

Responsibility for 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 Library Board of Trustees delegates the oversight and management of the collection, within the guidelines of this policy, to the Library Director and to Library staff who are professionally trained to curate and develop the collection. The Board of Trustees entrusts the responsibility of the selection, maintenance, replacement, and deselecting of library materials to designated professional staff, whose education and experience prepare them for these important duties, under the overall direction of the Director. The librarians Consortium-level collections may be governed by an additional set of collection criteria.

Procedures

1. Selection Criteria

- A. In order to build and maintain a high-quality collection based on professionally accepted



standards of material relevance, physical condition, availability of duplicates, availability of age appropriate or grade-level material, and continued demand of material, the Library considers the following general criteria when evaluating materials for acquisition:

1. Public demand, interest, and needs of the individual and the community, both expressed and unexpressed
 2. The accuracy and effectiveness of the material
 3. Anticipated potential for long-term public interest
 4. Favorable assessments by reputable critics, reviewers, or organizations in professionally recognized publications
 5. The prominence and credibility of the author and publisher
 6. Relationship to the existing collection and other materials on the subject
 7. Timeliness and importance of material as a document of the times; current or historical significance of the author or subject
 8. Availability and affordability
 9. Compatibility of format for Library use
 10. Value as resource material
 11. Suitability of subject or style for intended audience
 12. Local origination, significance, or particular relevance to East Haven and the region
 13. Public's ability to procure item from alternative sources
 14. Availability of electronic bibliographic records
 15. Adherence to the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statements.
- B. Selection of materials is based on the professional knowledge and judgment of Library staff whose expertise includes familiarity with all types of materials, knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the existing collection and awareness of the needs and interests of the community. Suggestions from patrons are welcome and are given serious consideration. However, library staff will determine which suggestions will be acted upon. Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the Collection Development & Maintenance Policy, Display Policy, or Program Policy. Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this policy shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.
- C. Textbooks will generally not be considered for the collection unless they are the best or only available source of information in their subject area and serve the general public and adult learning community. The Library does not purchase multiple copies of textbooks for use by students, which a responsibility of the Board of Education.
- D. Self-published books by local or Connecticut authors will be considered for the Library collection if they are donated, meet the Library's standards of quality, and are determined



to be of suitable interest to the public.

2. Digital Collections & Databases

Wherever possible, the Library makes electronic information 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 recognizes that it does not have the same control over electronic databases as it has over its in-house print materials. The Library will make every effort to provide assistance and ensure that the public learns how to use its electronic databases.

Born digital items are those materials created in a digital format. They are distinct from analog items that are subsequently digitized, such as paper manuscripts or photographs. In order to accept born digital items, the Library addresses:

1. Copyright and licensing
2. Redaction of personally identifiable information
3. Any restrictions on use or circulation
4. Maintenance and evolution of accepted formats

3. Collection Maintenance

Maintenance of the collection includes discarding, replacement, rebinding and repair. If an item is lost or damaged, it may not necessarily be replaced depending upon the number of duplicate copies or similar materials in the collection, existence of adequate coverage of the subject field, and demand for the specific author, title or subject. It is sometimes preferable to purchase current materials rather than replace older ones. The library staff serves as arbiter in such instances.

4. Deselection & Weeding

Deselection, or weeding, is a term used by libraries to describe the removal of materials from their collections. Such items may contain outdated or inaccurate information, have multiple duplicate copies, be no longer of interest, inconsistent with evolving community standards, or in poor condition. At the Library weeding is performed as a regular, ongoing process by qualified staff and the Library Director in the interest of keeping all collections current and useful. Weeded materials in good condition may be sold, donated, or disposed of however the Library deems appropriate. Generally, standard titles of permanent value and materials of local significance may be spared weeding even if they may otherwise meet the criteria for so doing.

5. Gifts & Donations

Accepting gifts and donations is an important way for the library to benefit from the generosity of our community. Donations to enrich the library are welcome! This may include the donation



of physical items, services, programs, or funds. The Library applies to these donations the same standards of selection that govern all other purchases, as outlined in the Library's Collection Development & Maintenance Policy, Display Policy, and Program Policy.

Gifts are accepted with the understanding that no conditions may be placed on any gift by the donor. This is essential in ensuring that the public library staff members designated to make these decisions continue to select materials and services independently from donors, and ensure that the donation of physical items, services, or funds do not interfere with the Library providing a collection and services which meet a diverse range of interests, tastes, viewpoints, values, and ability levels, in order to serve the greatest number of library users and potential library users possible.

Gift materials that are deemed to have met the Library's selection criteria by designated staff may be retained and those that do not may be otherwise used by the Library, given to the Friends of the Library Book Sale, or disposed of by other means. Funds donated for material purchases or programs are allocated, under the supervision of the Director, to purchases selected by designated Library staff to meet the requirements outlined in the Library's Collection Development & Maintenance Policy, Display Policy, and Program Policy. The library reserves the right to make the final decision on the use or disposition of all gifts and donations.

6. 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 patron community.

The Library provides free access to materials, including but not limited to: books, magazines, newspapers, online databases, and sound and video recordings. The Library recognizes the importance of allowing individuals to form their own opinions and, therefore, acquires materials that may be of a controversial nature. Open access is provided for all users, and materials are made accessible to all. A work will not be excluded from the collection solely because it represents a particular aspect of life, because of frankness of expression, or because it is controversial. It will be evaluated as a complete work and not on the basis of a particular passage or passages.

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. The Library does not act as a censor in the reading, viewing, or listening



of any member of the community. The Library does not act *in loco parentis*.

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.

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.

7. Placement of Library Materials

Placement of materials within the Library is a professional decision delegated to designated Library staff. Criteria for placement include: age level; assigned subject classification; physical format; susceptibility to loss or damage; rarity or cost. The Library labels the materials for placement only, not to predispose the user for or against materials. The Library considers the various components of its collections to be elements of one unified collection. In general, the Library does not maintain special interest collections. Materials may be put in the non-circulating reference collection because of cost, format, comprehensiveness, high use, or high rate of theft.

8. Intellectual Freedom & Censorship

The library recognizes not all users will respond to all materials with the same degree of enthusiasm and regard. Therefore, some materials selected for the collection may seem controversial or 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 not the right of any Library user or users to deny access to Library materials to others. The freedom to choose from a wide range of informational and artistic materials will not be abridged. The Library adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association as expressed in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements.

9. Library Material Review & Reconsideration Policy

The Hagaman Library Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of hearing from the public regarding program selection. The Library administration and staff seriously consider suggestions made by East Haven residents. The completion of the Request for Reconsideration form does not guarantee accession to the collection or removal from the collection, but does ensure the attention of Library Staff to user opinion, interests, and concerns. The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays, or programs to individual residents of East Haven who are current Hagaman Library Card holders. Please see our Material Review & Reconsideration Policy for further information on this process.



10. Location

This policy is in accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323. This policy will be housed and maintained on the website of the Hagaman Memorial Library: www.hagamanlibrary.org/policies. A copy is also maintained in the Library Director's Office. The Library neither approves nor disapproves of the views expressed in materials included in the collection.

Approved by the Hagaman Memorial Library Board of Trustees November 20, 2025.