

Collection Development and Management Policy

Adopted 9/13/2022

Guiding Principles

The Russell County Public Library supports and upholds the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the principle of Intellectual Freedom. It is the Library's mission to purchase and make available materials on the broadest variety of viewpoints, opinions, and ideas, ensuring that every member of the community may freely read materials of their own choosing.

The selection of library materials is predicated on the right of all individuals to read, and similarly, the freedom from censorship by others. When RCPL carries out these principles, it may result in the inclusion of an item that is contrary to a community member's personal views. That same material, however, may appeal to a different community member. Seeking to deny access to information infringes on the Freedom of Speech guaranteed under the First Amendment.

RCPL holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that, while anyone is free to reject for themselves materials of which they do not approve, they cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Access to the Collection

RCPL supports parental and guardian rights to determine their own child's selection of reading and viewing materials. Selection of materials will not be limited by the possibility that items may come into the possession of minors. Parents or guardians who wish to limit their child's access to certain materials should accompany or advise their child. RCPL will assume no responsibility in this regard—the parent or guardian holds ultimate responsibility for the content their child accesses.

Breadth of the Collection

RCPL strives to curate a broad collection, allowing for the maximum possibility of free expression and free access to ideas. This includes materials in varying formats, skill levels, and languages, portraying all sides of important, complex, and controversial issues, and including unpopular or unorthodox viewpoints. Language, situations, subjects, or graphics that may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material from inclusion in the collection. The presence of individual titles within the Library's collection does not imply promotion or endorsement of the content of those materials.

Selection of Materials

The Library Board of Trustees is responsible for approving the Collection Development and Management Policy. The Board delegates responsibility for selection of library materials to the professionally trained personnel employed by the library.

The library acquires:

- Resources that document and illuminate the past.
- Contemporary resources representing various points of view, including resources which reflect current conditions, trends, and controversies.
- Resources designed to increase an individual's ability to function effectively as a productive member of society.
- Resources which extend an individual's capacity to understand the world and form their own opinions.
- Resources which enhance an individual's enjoyment of life.

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered primarily in terms of the criteria listed below. Materials are evaluated on the value of the entire work rather than individual parts. When judging the quality of a work, several criteria and combinations of criteria may be used. A work need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Present and potential relevance to community needs and interests
- Reputation and/or significance of the author, illustrator, publisher, or producers
- Authority, accuracy, and accessibility
- Creative, artistic, literary, or technical quality
- Local interest author or subject
- Extent of publicity and customer demand
- Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience
- Relationship and importance to the existing collection
- Cost

Request for Reconsideration

Once an item has been selected for the collection, it will not be removed unless it can be shown to be in violation of the Library's policies and selection criteria. Despite the care taken to select items according to this policy, Russell County residents may request that items be removed or reclassified by submitting a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form. No action will be taken on the basis of a verbal complaint alone, and all items in question will remain in the collection while examination of the request takes place.

The request form and the item in question will be reviewed by the Library Director and collection development personnel. They will examine the concerns expressed in the request and will read, view, or listen to the item in its entirety. Further, they will determine if the item was selected within the parameters of this policy, basing all decisions on the entirety of the work rather than on limited passages or sections taken out of context.

The Library Director will notify the requestor of the decision in writing within 60 days of the date of the request. In the event that the requestor is not satisfied with the decision, he or she may seek a hearing before the Board of Trustees by making a written appeal at least 10 days in advance of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Board will determine whether the request was handled in accordance with this policy. The final decision regarding request for reconsideration appeals rests with the Board. In all cases, RCPL will defend the principles of Intellectual Freedom and the responsibility of the professionally trained staff in serving those principles.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Are you a resident of Russell County? Yes No

Do you represent yourself or an organization? Self Organization

Name of Organization (if applicable): _____

Title of Item: _____

Author: _____

1. What brought this item to your attention?

2. Have you read, viewed, or listened to the item in its entirety? If not, what sections did you review?

3. What concerns you about this item?

4. Are there items you could suggest to provide additional information or other viewpoints in place of this particular item?

5. What action are you requesting from the Library?

Signature: _____ Date: _____