



## POLICY

**Policy Type:** Library Services      **Policy Number:** 03-01  
**Policy Title:** Collection Management

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### **Purpose:**

The appropriate selection and deselection of library materials is central to carrying out St. Thomas Public Library's mission: "to educate, enrich, and inform."

The purpose of this policy is to guide staff in the acquisition of material that is of current interest and/or of lasting value to existing and potential library users. The Policy is also intended to familiarize library users with the principles upon which selection decisions are made.

The Collection Management Policy applies to all formats including print, non-print, audio-visual and electronic materials.

### **Context for the Policy:**

The selection of library materials for St. Thomas Public Library is driven by principles defined in the Mission Statement and is further informed by the Canadian Library Association's Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom, appended to this Policy.

### **Responsibility:**

The ultimate responsibility for the selection of all materials lies with the CEO/Chief Librarian acting according to the general policies established by the Library Board. In practice, this authority is delegated to professional staff.

Parents and legal guardians are responsible for children's reading and viewing, not the library staff. Selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain, read or view such materials.

### **Criteria for Materials Selection and Deselection:**

The Library acquires and provides access to materials in various formats to meet the accessibility needs of the community.

Materials are selected:

- to facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual ability
- to provide a wide range of resources for self-development
- to encourage independent study and complement formal education
- to provide materials which stimulate and support enjoyment of and participation in cultural life
- to provide materials for recreational and leisure time use
- to provide materials for users of all ages to encourage and promote continued use of the library
- to provide access to information of local interest or concern
- to foster lifelong love of reading

### **Specific Criteria:**

The specific criteria to be applied are, in no particular order, as follows:

- suitability of physical form for library use
- relation to existing collections and other material on the subject
- accessibility of material in other libraries
- interests and composition of the community and region
- popular demand and current trends
- attention of critics, reviewers, and public
- quality of writing and/or visual art
- reputation, skill, competence and purpose of the originator of the work
- special value as a contribution to social questions and problems of continuing or topical interest
- timeliness or permanence of the work
- availability of funds and space
- comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- clarity, accuracy and logic of presentation
- balance of viewpoints in the collection (challenging though extreme or minority points of view are often represented, though quantity may be limited)

An item need not meet all of the above criteria in order to be acceptable.

Special consideration is given to materials with Canadian content, that record the Canadian experience or that relate to life in Canada or the lives and works of Canadians.

Selection of material cannot be influenced by any anticipated approval or disapproval of its intellectual content by sectors of the community.

### **Exclusions:**

St. Thomas Public Library recognizes the right of individuals to express opposition to authors' ideas or to their creative exercise in materials selected for the library.

However, selection of material cannot be influenced by any anticipated approval or disapproval of its intellectual content by sectors of the community.

St. Thomas Public Library complies with any law enacted at the federal, provincial or municipal level, and therefore does not collect or maintain material which has been deemed obscene or pornographic, or has been banned by the courts, including hate propaganda. The presence of an item in the collection does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by St. Thomas Public Library, but rather is an affirmation of the principle of intellectual freedom as embodied in the Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom.

No materials are excluded from selection for library collections solely because they may come into the possession of a child.

Textbooks and curriculum-related works are not purchased unless they are considered useful to the general reader as an introduction to a subject, are the only source of information, or their content is considered essential to a library collection.

The Library will neither undertake to mark nor remove items to show approval or disapproval .

Physical access to materials will not be restricted. Library customers have open access to all the Library's collections with certain limited exceptions.

### **Reconsideration of Materials:**

The content or manner of expressing ideas in material that is purposely selected to fill the needs of some library users, may, on occasion, be considered to be offensive by other library users. The library recognizes the right of any individual or group to reject library material for personal use, but does not accord to any individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to make use of that same material.

Library users who object to materials located in a library collection are asked to complete a written request for the reconsideration of the materials. Request for reconsideration forms are available for this purpose at the Information desks and on-line.

Decisions made about challenged materials will be communicated to the originators of the requests following completion of a formal staff review.

### **Recommendation for Purchase and Gifts:**

Suggestions from the public for the purchase of books and other materials not in the Library's collection are referred to appropriate staff and are considered according to the Library's selection policies.

The Library welcomes gifts of materials from individuals or groups.

The same criteria and guidelines that apply to the selection of all library materials are used to evaluate gifts. It is understood that gifts are freely given without conditions attached and that all donations will be used or disposed of as the Library deems appropriate.

### **Maintenance of the Collection:**

Selected materials are regularly assessed for their condition, accuracy, currency, performance within the context of the library collection in which they are located and relevance to library users. The withdrawal of materials from any collection is a formal process conducted by knowledgeable staff as a necessary means to maintain collection vitality, size and scope.

In order to maintain an active working collection of high standard, materials shall be withdrawn from the collection on a regular and systematic basis predicated on the following guidelines:

- to remove materials which are no longer useful in keeping with the goals and objectives of the Library
- to remove materials whose contents are out-of-date
- to remove materials which are no longer of interest to the community
- to remove damaged or worn-out materials
- to make room for new materials coming into the collection

The CEO shall have overall responsibility for the materials withdrawn from the collection. In practice, this authority is delegated to the professional staff.

### **Deselection:**

Withdrawn materials shall be disposed of as the Library deems appropriate. If suitable, withdrawn materials will be given to the Friends of St. Thomas Public Library and/or other non-profit organization.

Materials which remain unsold shall be recycled or destroyed.

### **Language:**

Materials are primarily in English.

Small collections in languages other than English will be developed and maintained as needs are identified, and as funds and materials are available.

The Library shall meet the needs of patrons who require materials in languages other than English or French through participation in the interlibrary loan network.

## **Local History Collection:**

The Local History Collection shall be known as the George Thorman Local History Collection. The George Thorman Room is a research space for genealogy and local history. St. Thomas Public Library will collect material pertaining to the history of St. Thomas and its surrounding area as it relates to St. Thomas. The Library will catalogue these materials and make them accessible to the general public on a regular basis. The Library will also provide regular reference services to individuals, organizations, the municipal government, or other groups interested in the activities and holdings of the George Thorman Local History Collection.

The George Thorman Local History Collection will only accept material on a permanent basis, except when borrowing material for short term loans (i.e. to include in Library displays).

Material acquired by the George Thorman Local History Collection shall become the permanent property of St. Thomas Public Library until such time as the CEO/Chief Librarian deems it no longer relevant to the Collection, in which case the material may be deselected.

### Criteria for selection

- Geographical coverage: The Library will collect material pertaining to the history of St. Thomas and surrounding area.
- Time: Material will be collected dating from the earliest period possible to the present.
- Subject fields: All subject fields pertaining to local history will be collected, however there will be an emphasis on railroad history.
- Format: Materials collected will be primarily print. Non-print materials such as photographs and other media may be given consideration or redirected to a more suitable location such as Elgin County Archives.

### Patron use

Materials in the George Thorman Local History Collection may be used in the library only, and will not circulate. Loans of material for display or similar purpose will be made only with the approval of the CEO.

## **Revisions:**

The Collection Management Policy will be regularly reviewed and revised as necessary.

## **Appendices:**

1. Canadian Library Association's Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom

Principles of INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM Adopted November 1985, by the Canadian Library Association.

"All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those that some elements of society may consider unconventional, unpopular and unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.

**Related Documents:**

- Policy #03-12 Children's and Teens' Services
- Ontario Library Association's Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library.

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