

## **Wendell Free Library Collection Development Policy**

Latest Revision Approved by Library Board of Trustees, *May 1, 2025*

The primary responsibility of the Wendell Free Library is to serve the people of Wendell by providing a broad choice of materials to meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs. The Library maintains print and non-print collections for adults, young adults and children.

In the development of its collection, the library recognizes that it is not feasible for a small-sized public library to provide a comprehensive, balanced collection that is strong enough to meet all community needs. As a member of an automated resource sharing network and the state- supported Massachusetts Library System, the Wendell Free Library supplements its resources with materials borrowed from other libraries statewide.

### **Responsibility for Collection Development**

The Library Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing the Collection Development Policy. The Library Director is responsible for the allocation of the materials budget, the selection of materials and the ongoing maintenance of the collection.

### **Collection Goals**

- Contemporary significance or permanent value: source material or a record of the times; representation of an important movement, genre, trend or culture
- Relationship to existing collection: contribution to balanced, up-to date coverage of a broad range of subject areas
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Relationship to materials in other area libraries, especially availability within the C/WMARS consortium
- Materials serving diverse populations
- Materials accessible to patrons with different learning abilities, educational levels, and physical needs, for example audio books
- Currency and usability of formats; downloadable electronic and audio books are purchased cooperatively through the C/WMARS network and statewide through the Commonwealth eBook Collection

### **Selection Process**

Collection development decisions are made using staff judgment and expertise, evaluating reviews in professional journals and other selection tools. We strive to meet

fair and impartial criteria in the selection process. Factors used in making decisions may include, but are not limited to:

- Popular demand
- Diverse community needs and interests as determined by library use as well as requests.
- Current interest and usefulness
- Availability of the materials through lending library programs
- Cost and physical quality of the item and its appropriateness for intended user
- Space considerations
- Resources for patrons with physical, intellectual, language, religious, political or social differences that reflects the American Library Association's affirmation that equity, diversity, and inclusion are central to the promotion and practice of intellectual freedom.

### **Maintaining the Collection**

To maintain a collection that is current, reliable, in good condition, well used, and which relates to the needs and interests of the community, materials will be withdrawn on a systematic and continuing basis. Materials are withdrawn when they are judged to be:

- Dated
- Inaccurate
- Seldom used
- In poor condition
- Otherwise no longer appropriate

Withdrawn items are given to the Friends of the Wendell Free Library except in certain circumstances when the discarded materials can be used by another library, educational institution or non-profit institution.

### **Physical Access to Collections**

Library staff are always happy to retrieve library materials that a patron might find difficult to locate or reach.

### **Donated Items**

Gifts and donations of materials accepted by the Wendell Free Library are subject to the same process as purchased materials. They are considered with the explicit understanding that such factors as duplication, merit, lack of community interest, processing costs, physical condition, or inadequate shelf space may prevent their addition to the collection or permanent retention on the shelves. Gifts and donations are accepted with the understanding that the Library may, at any time, discard them or offer them for sale through the Friends of the Library Book Sale Program.

## **Controversial Materials and Intellectual Freedom**

The Library recognizes its obligation to provide as wide a spectrum of lending materials as possible. Selection of materials is not restricted by the possibility that certain materials might be considered objectionable by some users on moral, religious, political or other grounds. The Library endorses the principles of the Freedom to Read Statement and the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights.

The Library believes it is essential in a free society to provide access to all library materials. No restrictions are placed on what anyone may read or view from the Library collection. Individuals or groups may occasionally question the inclusion of an item in the collection because of fear or doubt about the effects of the material on an impressionable person. Although the Library understands this concern, it is the Library's position that the risk to society is far greater if public access to ideas and information is restricted. Neither an individual, nor group, not even the Library itself has the right to decide what others may or may not read. The Library is opposed to removing from its shelves, at the request of any individual or group, materials that have been chosen according to the Collection Development Policy. In addition, the library will oppose coercion on the part of an individual or group seeking to have material added to the collection that is contrary to the criteria selection stated above.

## **Request for Reconsideration**

If a Library card holder feels that an item in the Library's collection should be moved or removed, they may fill out a *Request for Reconsideration* form. Challenged material will be reviewed with consideration for the objections raised to determine if further action is needed. The Library, upon receipt of a completed form, reviews the item for inclusion in the collection in terms of the Library's Strategic Plan, mission and vision, its Collection Development Policy, the Library Bill of Rights, and ALA guidelines on intellectual freedom. The Library Director will respond in writing to the patron within 30 days of receiving the formal request. Appeals may be directed to the Library Board of Trustees. Trustees will consider the matter at their next regularly scheduled meeting provided that the appeal is presented to the Board 48 business day hours in advance of their next meeting. Trustee decisions will be final.

## **Policy Review and Revision**

This Collection Development Policy will be reviewed periodically by the Library Director and the Board of Trustees.