

# **Berkley Public Library**

## **Materials Selection Policy**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The Berkley Public Library's mission of "providing knowledge and inspiration for our community" helps lead this policy. The purpose of the Berkley Public Library's Materials Selection Policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. All public library collections contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable, and in turn, public libraries may omit from the collection materials that some patrons consider important. This applies to materials for any age or audience.

### **II. DEFINITION OF MATERIALS SELECTION**

"Selection" refers to the decision that must be made to either to add material to the collection or to retain material already in the collection.

### **III. GOALS OF MATERIALS SELECTION**

- A. To maintain a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for information, inspiration, reference, research, and recreational resources. The collection aims to meet the diverse cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of Berkley residents. The library collects and makes information accessible in a variety of formats that represent a wide range of views, expressions, opinions, and interests.
- B. To support the democratic process by providing materials for the education and enlightenment of the community.
- C. To be good stewards of taxpayer and donated funds.

### **IV. RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. The responsibility for materials selection lies with the library director.
- B. The library director will delegate to librarians the authority to interpret and apply the policy in making day to day selections. Librarians at the Berkley Public Library have earned a Master of Library and Information Science degree from an American Library Association accredited program.
- C. The library welcomes, and will consider for possible addition to the collection, all materials recommended by Berkley residents.

### **V. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- A. Selection is based on the merits of a work in relation to the needs, interests, and demands of the Berkley community. Basic to this policy is the Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, which is appended.
- B. The library prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, height, weight, disability, veteran status, familial status, marital status, or any other legally protected status under federal and state laws.

- C. Responsibility for materials to be read, listened, or viewed by minors rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection should not be inhibited by the possibility that items may come into the possession of a minor.
- D. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no book or other item will be sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting it from injury or theft.
- E. It is the responsibility of the library to provide circulating and reference materials for the general public and the student. Special “in depth” collections shall also be maintained when indicated by community interest.

**VI. SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION**

- A. Current usefulness or permanent value
- B. Accuracy
- C. Authority of author
- D. Relation to existing collection
- E. Scarcity of information in subject area
- F. Price, format, and ease of use
- G. Availability of material through inter-library loan
- H. Popular demand
- I. Diversity of viewpoint
- J. Community relevance

**VII. TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are not ordinarily purchased by the library, except in subject areas where in demand with local curriculum and material in another form is not conveniently available.

**VIII. GIFTS**

The library welcomes gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that it will evaluate them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. The library reserves the right to evaluate, accept and/or reject, and dispose of gift items. Items may also be sold by the library or the Friends of the Berkley Public Library with proceeds used to benefit the library’s services.

**IX. MAINTENANCE OF THE COLLECTION**

The collection shall be periodically examined for the purpose of eliminating obsolete, unneeded, rarely used, or damaged materials, in order to maintain a balanced, attractive, and useful collection.

**X. REVISION OF POLICY**

This policy may be revised as time and circumstances require.

Approved by the Library Director and Berkley Public Library Board on November 18, 2015.

Revised on October 20, 2021 and November 16, 2022.

## APPENDIX A

### **Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or view of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019. Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights (<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations>).

## APPENDIX B

### **Procedure for Handling a Patron's Complaint about Material in the Collection**

- A. While the Berkley Public Library welcomes all users to the library, any complaint about material must be made by a Berkley resident. The staff member receiving the complaint will request that the patron fill out the "Request for Reconsideration of an Item" form and return it to the library. The staff member will also inform the director of the complaint.
- B. Upon return of the form, the item will be read, viewed, or listened to independently by the library director, one member of the reference staff, and one member of the library board. Each reader will write a brief review of the item, including in it a recommendation as to whether the item should remain in the collection.
- C. These reviews, as well as at least three professional reviews (if available) of the item in question, will be examined by the library board at its next regularly scheduled meeting. At this time a final decision will be made as to the item's inclusion in the collection.
- D. The library director will write a letter to the patron, informing the patron of the decision and explaining the reasons for it. Copies of all reviews will be enclosed with the letter.
- E. The library board serves as the final authority in cases involving retention or withdrawal of reconsidered library materials.

**Berkley Public Library**  
Request for Reconsideration of an Item

1. Are you a Berkley resident? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Author of the item: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Title of item: \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. In what section is the item shelved? Adult \_\_\_\_\_ Young Adult \_\_\_\_\_ Juvenile \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. How was the item brought to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Please summarize your understanding of what literary critics and reviewers think of this item:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Have you read, watched, or listened to the entire item? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Are you objecting to the entire item? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. What, in your opinion, is theme of the item? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
10. What is your objection to the item? Be specific (cite pages, passages, etc.):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Form continues on next page*

11. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or listening to this item?

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Name	Signature
Street Address	Phone
City, State, Zip	Email