

Ledyard Public Library Collection Development and Maintenance Policy

Purpose and Scope

Ledyard Public Library is committed to providing a robust, dynamic, and inclusive collection of materials that serve the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. Our goal is to ensure equitable access to a wide range of perspectives, ideas, and educational resources for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

This policy aligns with the principles outlined in the Freedom to Read Bill (CT Senate Bill 1271, June 4, 2025) and recognizes the public library as a vital place for voluntary inquiry, dissemination of information and ideas, and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents.

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.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship

Ledyard Public Library affirms the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements. Materials are selected and maintained without restriction based on political, religious, or ideological viewpoint. Inclusion of any item does not imply endorsement of its content.

The Library respects intellectual freedom and limits reconsideration requests regarding materials, displays, or programs to individual residents of Ledyard.

Responsibility for Selection

The Library Director holds ultimate responsibility for the selection of library materials, operating under policies established by the Library Commission. Selection responsibilities may be delegated to qualified staff members with appropriate professional training. Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library and educational materials.

Collection Philosophy

Library materials are selected to support a diverse range of informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs, reflecting the mission, vision, and strategic plan of the Library. The collection encompasses print, multimedia, and digital resources, recognizing varied learning styles and preferences.

Materials are not excluded solely based on subject matter, viewpoint, or controversy. Electronic and digital resources are evaluated using the same professional standards as print materials, whether accessed in-library or remotely.

Objectives

The objectives of the Ledyard Public Library collection are to:

- Provide resources that meet the interests, information needs, and educational enrichment of all residents.
- Offer materials that address both current topics and topics of enduring value.
- Support digital, informational, and cultural literacy.
- Supplement local resources through electronic access and interlibrary loan services.
- Increase social awareness and promote active community involvement.
- Advance equity, diversity, and inclusion through thoughtful material selection.
- Represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole.

- Preserve and promote free expression and voluntary inquiry for all community members.

Selection Criteria

Materials are evaluated using professionally accepted standards, considering all or some of the following:

- Accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, durability, and ease of use
- Cultural significance and critical acclaim
- Contemporary or historical significance of author or subject
- Diversity of viewpoints and experiences
- Literary, artistic, or informational merit
- Price, format, and availability
- Public demand, appeal, and local interest
- Relevance to current and potential community needs

Suggestions from patrons are welcome and evaluated using the same criteria.

Gifts and Donations

Gifts of physical materials, including those from local authors, must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. Monetary gifts intended for the collection are addressed in the Library's Gifts and Donations Policy. The Library reserves the right to determine the use, placement, and disposal of all donated materials.

Material Review Procedure

To ensure the collection remains current, relevant, and in good condition, library materials undergo a continuous professional review process based on the following:

1. Material Relevance: Meets current and potential community interests, educational needs, and informational requirements.
2. Physical Condition: Assess wear, damage, or obsolescence; determine repair or replacement needs.
3. Availability of Duplicates: Evaluate if multiple copies exist; replace worn or outdated copies as needed.
4. Age-Appropriate / Grade-Level Suitability: Ensure materials for children, teens, or educational purposes are suitable; update outdated or incomplete resources.
5. Continued Demand: Review circulation records, interlibrary loan requests, and patron inquiries to determine relevance; low-use items may be withdrawn if removal does not compromise collection balance or diversity.

Review Frequency: Conducted on an ongoing basis, with staff periodically evaluating sections or formats to maintain a balanced, up-to-date collection.

Outcome of Review:

- Materials not meeting criteria may be withdrawn, replaced, or updated.
- Withdrawn items may be donated, recycled, or disposed of according to Library procedures.
- Individual items removed from the collection are not held for specific patrons.
- This process ensures the collection remains aligned with professional standards, supports intellectual freedom, and meets evolving community needs.

Controversial Materials

The Library acknowledges that some materials may be controversial or represent diverse viewpoints. Decisions to include such materials are guided by professional standards, the Library's mission, and intellectual freedom principles.

Residents wishing to request a reconsideration of materials must first review the Ledyard Public Library's Material Review and Reconsideration Policy (available on the Library's website and upon request, in person) before submitting a reconsideration form.

Digital Collections and Databases

Digital materials and licensed databases are selected to expand access to information. They are evaluated using the same criteria as print materials and are accessible both in-library and remotely, within the limits of licensing agreements.