

Collection Development & Maintenance Policy

The North Hampton Public Library provides materials of literary merit on diverse viewpoints, with both current and permanent value, as part of its mission to meet the educational, cultural, informational, and recreational library interests and needs of the community of North Hampton.

The Library subscribes to the principles stated in the Library Bill of Rights, a document issued by the American Library Association, which affirms a commitment to the rights of an individual to use the Library regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, or social or political views. Accordingly, the staff of the North Hampton Public Library provides equal service to all library users. Children and adults are equally free to use the entire library, and to borrow all materials in the circulating collection. In addition to the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read statement and the Freedom to View statement of the American Library Association are endorsed by the Trustees and staff of the library, and provide the general foundation for all selection decisions. (See attached copies of these statements.)

Library Roles

North Hampton Public Library serves a community comprised of a wide range of ages, educational levels, and interests. To meet this diversity, the Library must fill a number of service roles for the community. After considering building and materials use, local demographic trends, citizen expectation as expressed in surveys, other library resources in the area, and current resources of the Library, the North Hampton Public Library chooses to emphasize the following service roles:

- Information agency and adult independent learning center – The Library provides materials which help users to be informed, and to pursue self-improvement in hobbies, careers, and education
- Early education center – The Library encourages young children to develop an interest in reading and learning through services for children and parents
- Popular materials center – The Library provides recreational books and audio-visual materials to meet a wide range of tastes and to reflect the diversity of the community.
- Reading and program center for children and young adults – The Library offers materials and programs specifically designed for the interests and needs of children and young adults.
- Community center – The Library serves as a meeting place for people and groups in the community.
- Education support center – The Library assists students of all ages in meeting educational objective established during their formal or self-directed courses of study.
- Local history and genealogy center – the Library collects information on community and family history of local interest.

Collection Development Objectives

The Library will strive to:

- Provide materials that meet patrons' interest and needs in a timely manner
- Provide materials for preschool and grade school children to encourage and promote continued use of the library

- Provide a broadly-based and diverse collection that can support the roles of the library as a popular materials center, education support center, and independent learning center.
- Provide a variety of viewpoints on all subjects in its collections.

Selection

Materials for the collection are selected by the professional staff after careful review of standard selection guides, and with attention to the following criteria: contemporary significance or permanent value; authority of the author and accuracy of the work; relation of the work to the existing collection; price, format and ease of use; scarcity of information in the subject area; availability of material elsewhere in the community; popular demand; subject suitability; technical quality (for non-print formats).

Every attempt will be made to provide a basic level of general information in all subject areas, and to collect information that responsibly presents representative views on issues of concern to community members. Areas which may exceed the basic level of collection are materials by New Hampshire or North Hampton authors, as well as materials about New Hampshire or North Hampton. The Library will strive to attain a strong degree of comprehensiveness in materials relating to North Hampton history.

The Library will attempt to have information available in a variety of formats when practical. Multiple copies of popular materials may be purchased to meet demand. Periodicals of general interest or useful in supporting the mission of the Library are also collected. Mass market editions of paperback generally will not be purchased, although donations will be accepted and circulated from the designated paperback shelving. Other print formats such as pamphlets, brochures, and government documents will be collected only as they represent information otherwise unavailable and satisfy community interests and needs. Non-print materials collected by the Library will include spoken word audio and video of broad family appeal and general interest, and computer programs on CD which fit the selection criteria.

Subscribed electronic databases will be selected using the same criteria as for other non-print formats. However, information accessed through library connections to global information, services, and networks is not subject to the same selection guidelines and may not meet the Library's collection development criteria. It is, therefore, left to users of these resources to determine what information is appropriate to their needs.

The Library will not attempt to acquire textbooks that support local curricula. Nor will the Library collect non-print items or items such as furniture, personal possessions, art objects, household objects, or natural history specimens.

The Library welcomes suggestions for the purchase of materials. Suggestions will be subject to the same standards of selection as other considered materials.

Reviews by professionals in the field recommending age appropriateness of material aid staff librarians in choosing and placing material within the library's collections. While collections for adults and children are housed separately, patrons of any age may use the entire collection. The Library will not act in loco parentis, censor, or label materials in such a way that patrons may be predisposed against them, or restrict access to materials because of a patron's age. It is the responsibility of the parents, not the library staff, to monitor library use by children.

Gifts

Gift materials in good condition are welcomed by the Library. Gifts will be evaluated using the same criteria as for purchased items. Gifts become the property of the Library, and will be used as deemed most appropriate for the ongoing development of the collection. The North Hampton Public Library will not assign a value to donated gift materials, but will provide a receipt of items if requested by the donor. (See also “Gift Policy”)

Gifts of money are always welcome and appreciated. Specific recommendations from the donor are honored as far as the suggestions enhance subject areas of need within the collection and are in accordance with the material selection criteria. Memorial gifts of books can be ordered upon patron request, and after consultation with the Director.

Evaluation and Removal

The selection process also requires continuous evaluation of the selected materials. In the manner, strengths and weaknesses of the collection can be determined, and materials which are worn, outdated, or no longer needed can be removed. Library staff will make every attempt to recycle these materials to other libraries, to library patrons through resale, and to other institutions. Materials not suitable for these purposes will be disposed of by other means as determined by the Director.

Reconsideration of Materials

The Library recognizes the pluralistic nature of its community and the varied backgrounds and needs of all its citizens. Materials for the collections are chosen to meet these diverse needs. While the Library does not endorse particular beliefs or views, it supports the belief that the right to read and the right of free access to library collections are essential to the individual’s freedom of thought, which is fundamental to the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement.

Comments from members of the community about the collection or individual items in the collection frequently provide librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. The Library welcomes expressions of opinion by patrons, which may be made informally to staff members in the appropriate department at any time. Such comments will be conveyed to the Library Director. If a meeting with the Director is desired, it will be arranged.

A formal written comment requesting removal of materials from the Library, for reconsideration of the placement and/or handling of materials, for alteration of displays or exhibits, may be made using the “Request for Reconsideration of Materials” form (attached). The Director will review this request with the Trustees in open session at their next regularly scheduled meeting. During reconsideration, materials challenged will remain in circulation and displays and exhibits will remain intact. A written response to the request will be made within 30 days of the filing.

Approved by Board of Trustees on July 17, 2002. Amended February 22, 2006

Request for Reconsideration of Material

Date Submitted: _____

Name: _____

Address _____

Telephone: _____

If you are acting as the official spokesperson for an organization, please specify:

Library Material on which you are commenting:

Call Number: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Please comment on the material as a whole. Be specific about those matters which concern you. Feel free to suggest other materials on this subject which you would like to see added to the collection in its place.
