Collection Development & Maintenance Policy

Introduction:
The Library's mission is to educate and enrich the community by providing free and equal access to information, resources, and experiences. The Simsbury Public Library provides programs, materials, spaces, and services in accordance with the Library's mission, Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Strategic Goals, in order to enrich lives and inspire discovery and connection, while supporting the present and future needs of the community.

Purpose & Scope:
The Simsbury Public Library Collection Development & Maintenance Policy guides the selection, acquisition, evaluation, weeding, and maintenance of the Library's collections, within budgetary and space limitations, to serve current and future community members. This policy guides the creation and curation of the Library's collections, which includes books and other resources in a variety of formats, including print and electronic, that are purchased or licensed by the Library for free use by the public. These materials are provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents.

Library materials should represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole. The Simsbury Public Library recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents.

Responsibility for Selecting Library Materials:
The Library Board of Trustees delegates the oversight and management of the Library, including the development and management of the Library's collections, within the guidelines of this policy, to the Library Director and the Director's designees among Library staff. Responsibility for the selection, repair, replacement, and weeding of materials rests with the designated professional staff under the overall direction of the Director. Consortium-level or partnership collections may be governed by separate collection criteria.

Selection Criteria:
The selection of materials for the Library's collections will be ongoing and based on the professional skills, knowledge, and judgment of the designated Library staff who are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library and educational materials, and who will maintain awareness of current trends and best practices in the development of collections for adult, youth, and children's audiences. Materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of general statute. As good stewards of the Town's tax dollars, the Library will continually re-evaluate materials budget allocations and selection strategies.

The following criteria will guide the selection of library and educational material for the Simsbury Public Library's collections, however, an item need not meet all criteria in order to be selected:

- Current or anticipated patron demand, whether informational or recreational, as evidenced through usage statistics
- Assessments and criticisms from professionally recognized resources, such as published book reviews and trade publications
- Cost, condition, and availability, including through interlibrary loan or other resource sharing partnerships
- Suitability of information, content, or format for intended audience
- Currency, accuracy, and authoritativeness of information or content
- Credibility and integrity of authors or publishers
- Relevance to the Library's mission, values, and strategic goals
- Historical or cultural significance to Simsbury, CT and the Farmington Valley region Contemporary, popular significance or anticipated long-term public interest
- Value of item to existing collections, including duplicate copies and series holdings
- Quality of content, ensuring materials are engaging, accessible, and relevant to the interests and needs of the community

Materials may be excluded from the Library's collections for inaccurate information, lack of integrity, sensationalism, intent to promote hatred or intolerance, content that is too limited or specialized, or materials that do not meet the Library's standards for quality, value, and relevance to the community's needs. This includes AI-generated works that may lack the necessary quality, and credibility to provide valuable, meaningful content. In the case of controversial questions, variety and balance of opinion are sought whenever available.

Accessibility of Collections:

The Library collections will include items that increase access to information or content for patrons with different learning abilities, educational levels, or physical needs, including assistive technologies and other accommodations, such as:

- Large print books
- Items in world languages
- Items for a given audience with content at varying reading levels
- Downloadable and digital items available on websites or in apps with built-in accessibility features, such as dyslexic font, customizable print size, or adjustable playback speeds DVDs and streaming digital items with Descriptive Video Service, Closed Captioning, or Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Handheld magnifiers and other assistive reading devices
- A talking book reader, Braille materials, and access to additional resources through the CT Library for Accessible Books

World Languages:

The Library's collections will include items in languages other than English, as well as English-language learning materials, to meet the needs of a diversifying and inclusive population, focusing on languages that reflect current or anticipated community interests and uses.

Patron Requests:
The Library values demand-driven acquisitions and welcomes requests for purchase from our patrons in order to reflect the community's interests in the Library's collections. The Library will accept purchase requests in-person and online, and will apply the above criteria to all requested items to determine whether to add them to the Library's collections.

Digital Collections/Database:
Whenever possible the Library makes electronic information available in the Library and remotely. In choosing to purchase or license electronic databases, the Library applies the same standards for selection as for print materials. However, the Library recognizes that it does not have the same control over electronic databases as it has over its in-house print materials. The Library will make every effort to provide assistance and ensure that the public learns how to use its electronic databases.

Born digital items are those materials created in digital format. They are different from analog items that are subsequently digitized, such as paper manuscripts or photographs. In order to accept born digital items, the Library addresses:

- Copyright and licensing
- Redaction of personally identifiable information
- Any restrictions on use or circulation
- Maintenance and evolution of accepted formats

Gifts/Donations:
The Library will apply the above criteria to all donated items to determine whether to add them to the Library's collections. The Library reserves the right to give donated items not accepted into the collection to the Friends of the Simsbury Public Library for inclusion in the Book Store or annual book sale. The Library does not accept: textbooks, magazines, scores, reference books, academic titles that do not meet the needs of the general public, items in obsolete or deaccessioned formats, or items in poor condition (i.e. torn, worn, dirty, moldy, foul smelling). See the Library **Gifts Policy** for more information.

Controversial Materials:
The Library recognizes that some materials may not be considered appropriate by all patrons. Selections will not be made based upon anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the overall library patron community.

Responsibility for the reading, listening and viewing habits of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. The Library maintains several age-appropriate collections for children and

teens. Materials may be reassigned among sub-collections based on the age appropriateness of content. Selection of adult material will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The removal, exclusion or censoring of any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive is prohibited.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be removed from the open shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.

The decision by an author, publisher or other content creator to withdraw their work from the market and stop selling or publishing it will not be considered sufficient reason alone for the Library to withdraw it from the collection.

Collection Maintenance:
Maintenance of the Library's collections will be based on the professional skills, knowledge, and judgment of the designated Library staff, who will maintain awareness of current trends and best practices in collection management. Collection maintenance includes repair, replacement, and weeding, and requires regular assessment of the collections to meet the ever-changing needs of the community. Librarians will review Library material within a public library using professionally accepted standards; material relevance, physical condition, availability of duplicates, availability of age appropriate or grade-level material, and continued demand of material.

Accessibility of Collections:
The Library will maintain the physical accessibility of the Library's collections for all patrons through regular shelving, shelf-reading, and spatial reorganization of items, as well as direct staff assistance with retrieval. The Library will maintain accessibility to both physical and digital items by removing or reducing barriers that prevent people with disabilities or impairments from using the Library's collections.

Repairs and Replacements:
Whenever feasible, the Library will mend physical items that become damaged due to wear and tear so they may be returned to the shelf and borrowed again, however, some types of damage cannot be repaired, like mold. There may be instances when it is more cost-effective or efficient to replace, rather than repair, lost or damaged items. Library staff will determine whether to repair, replace, or withdraw lost or damaged items based on usage statistics, cost, condition, and availability.

Weeding:
Ongoing and regular withdrawal of materials is required to keep collections current, accessible, and responsive to community needs. Space is limited and the importance of an item to the Library's collections may change over time. Once items are withdrawn, Library staff will

determine how to dispose of them by re-selling, giving away, reusing, or recycling the items as deemed appropriate.

Due to the nature of purchasing and licensing downloadable and digital content, some materials may be removed due to loss of rights or other digital rights management protections. Otherwise, the following criteria will guide the withdrawal of items from the Library's collections, however, an item need not meet all criteria in order to be discarded:

- Damage beyond repair
- Infrequent or low historical use
- Outdated or inaccurate content
- Availability of superseding editions or more current titles about the subject
- Obsolescence or deaccession of format
- Space limitations
- Duplication within the collections
- Availability through interlibrary loan or other resource-sharing partnerships

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship:
The Library endorses the principles articulated in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to View and Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association, as well as the Intellectual Freedom Statement Against Censorship adopted by the Connecticut Library Association.

In accordance with the selection guidelines above, items in the Library's collection will address an array of topics and provide a diversity of perspectives, whenever available, giving patrons of all ages free and equal access to a range of information and content. It is understood that the inclusion or exclusion of items that may be considered controversial in the Library's collections does not constitute an endorsement of the item's information or content.

No information or content will be excluded or removed based solely on the author's or the author's fictional characters' race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information (including family medical history). No Library materials shall be sequestered or removed from free and equal public access, except for the purpose of protecting the materials from theft or damage.

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion from the public about Library material. The Library limits requests to reconsider materials, displays and programs to residents of Simsbury. Please see the Request for Reconsideration Policy and Form found on the Library's website.

The Collection Development and Maintenance Policy is subject to review and amendment by the Library Board of Trustees.

~Approved by the Library Board of Trustees October 20, 2025