



POLICY AREA: COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

POLICY NAME: Collection Development and Management

ADOPTED: 11/19/2008

LAST REVISED: 5/24/2023

Purpose of policy

The Collection Development and Management Policy is intended to provide guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials that anticipate and meet the needs and interests of the Easttown Township community. It directly relates the collection to the library's mission statement and defines the scope and standards of the collection.

As the community changes, Easttown Library (EL) reassesses and adapts its collection to reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern. The Collection Development and Management Policy is routinely evaluated and revised as necessary.

Philosophy of selection

Easttown Library is a primary source of materials and information for those who live, work, and go to school in Easttown Township, as well as customers who come to EL from neighboring communities. The collection serves to enhance the cultural, educational, informational, and recreational needs of all library users, while being responsive to changing needs.

In support of its mission "to provide reading and learning opportunities, while supporting economic and cultural engagement," EL fully endorses the principles documented in the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements of the American Library Association. The library strives to present a balanced collection that represents diverse viewpoints.

Easttown Library has identified six primary service responses.

- Create young readers (early literacy)
- Understand how to find, evaluate and use information (information fluency)
- Make informed decisions (business, college, health, wealth, and other life choices)
- Stimulate imagination (reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure)
- Connect to the online world (public internet access)
- Satisfy curiosity (lifelong learning)

Scope of the Collection

The primary responsibility of EL is to serve the citizens of Easttown Township by providing a broad choice of materials to meet their needs. Materials are selected to inform, educate, and entertain. A broad choice of circulating materials in a variety of formats is selected to accommodate the diversity of tastes, reading levels, languages, and interests of users of all ages.

Budget and space limitations, as well as local needs, preclude EL from duplicating the collections that exist elsewhere in Chester County. Access to these print and electronic collections is provided through cooperative networking and interlibrary loan.

Online databases and resources are managed by Chester County Library System (CCLS) staff. The eBook and eAudiobook collection through Overdrive are overseen by CCLS with purchasing responsibilities shared by libraries throughout the System.

Responsibility for Selection

Responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director and reflects the strategic objectives adopted by the Board of Trustees and of the Chester County Library System. The Library Director delegates collection responsibilities to designated professional library staff. Ultimate responsibility for the direction provided through this policy rests with the Easttown Library Board of Trustees.

Criteria for Selection

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. Materials are evaluated according to one or more of the following standards. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection.

General Criteria

- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Contribution to the diversity and scope of the collection
- Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience
- Requests by library users
- Effectiveness and suitability of format in communicating the content
- Relevance of format and content to the intended audience
- Cost
- Popular appeal
- Available space
- Attention by critics and reviewers
- Contemporary significance
- Relevance to the needs and interests of the public
- Accessibility of material
- Physical format
- Quality of production
- Existing library holdings and other community and CCLS resources

Content Criteria

- Authority

- Objectivity
- Clarity
- Currency
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Receipt or nomination for awards
- Reputation or significance of one of the creators of the work
- Published evaluations or reviews
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Consideration of the work as a whole
- Sustained interest
- Relevance and use of the information
- Effective characterization
- Authenticity of history or social setting

Selection tools include, but are not limited to, professional and trade journals, general media, bestseller lists, publishers' materials, and staff knowledge and expertise. Purchase suggestions from the public are welcomed and given consideration in the context of the selection policy.

The selection of materials for the collection does not constitute an endorsement of contents. Selection decisions are made on the merits of a particular item in relation to building the collection and fulfilling the service responses of Easttown Library.

Gifts and Memorials

Gifts of books and other materials are gratefully accepted with some limitations and the understanding that Easttown Library reserves the right to keep, discard, sell, or make another appropriate disposal of any books or materials that are donated as determined by its mission and needs. Donations added by Easttown Library to the general collection are not accorded special shelving or circulation procedures.

Easttown Library does not accept worn, outdated and musty items, materials previously discarded from Easttown Library, textbooks, encyclopedias, magazines, records, VHS, or audiocassette tapes.

Memorial and monetary gifts restricted to the acquisition of materials are always welcome. The conditions under which gifts are accepted by Easttown Library are at the discretion of the Director. The donor's request for a specific subject area or format will be considered. Special gifts of books or other library materials in memory or honor of individuals may be accepted. A bookplate or other notation may be placed in them, at the discretion of the Director.

Materials donated to Easttown Library, including those as memorials, are subject to the retention and weeding criteria established for the collection as a whole. Bookplates are not transferred to other books if the original book is weeded, lost, damaged, or worn out. At their request, donors will be given an acknowledgment of their gift, but Easttown Library cannot provide evaluations or appraisals of the value of donations.

Collection Maintenance

In addition to acquiring new materials, it is important to remove from the existing collection those items no longer deemed useful or relevant. This policy provides authority for the systematic and regular evaluation of the existing collection and subsequent withdrawal of worn, obsolete, or infrequently used materials and supports the public's right of access to an appealing and relevant collection.

Library staff systematically review the collection with the goal of maintaining the quality and vitality of library resources. This process of collection analysis incorporates the use of output measures, circulation reports, and other statistical information for continuous collection evaluation.

Weeding Evaluation Criteria

Weeding in this context is defined as the process of evaluating material to determine if it will be retained, relocated, or replaced.

Easttown Library makes use of the acronym, MUSTIE, to help evaluate an item for withdrawal:

- Misleading and/or factually inaccurate
- Ugly (worn out beyond mending or rebinding)
- Superseded by a new edition or a better source
- Trivial (of no discernible literary or scientific merit)
- Irrelevant to the needs and interests of your community
- Elsewhere (the material may be easily borrowed from another source)

Replacement Criteria

While EL attempts to have copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn. The same criteria that apply to the original selection also apply to replacements. The need for replacement is based on:

- The number of duplicate copies
- Existence of adequate coverage of the subject in the collection or other CCLS collections
- Demand for the specific title or subject area
- Availability of material

Removal of Withdrawn Material

Materials that no longer meet the stated objectives of the Library will be withdrawn from the system. Weeded items may be given either to the Friends of Easttown Library for their book sales, to other nonprofit organizations, or they will be disposed of in a manner EL deems appropriate.

Statement of Concern Form

The Statement of Concern Form should be used when a customer has a concern about material at Easttown Library and wishes to register this concern in writing. The procedure is as follows:

1. Individuals with concerns about materials in Easttown Library's collections should discuss the material in question with the appropriate staff member or the Person in Charge. The complainant should make every attempt to read and understand the full scope of the material in question.

2. If the customer's concern is not resolved, the customer may formally submit his or her concerns by completing the *Statement of Concern Form*, which is available at the Circulation Desk. The form must be completed in full; forms submitted anonymously will not be considered. The individual submitting the Statement of Concern must be a resident of Easttown Township and card holder of Chester County Library System. An item will only be evaluated for reconsideration once in a twenty-four-month period. The completed form will be referred to the Library Director, who will send a letter acknowledging its receipt along with a copy of the Collection Development and Management Policy to the customer.
3. Within a month of receipt of the *Statement of Concern Form*, Easttown Library staff will complete a review of the material in question, and make a recommendation to the Library Director. The Library Director will then respond in writing within 10 working days to the concerned individual.
4. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision made or action taken, he or she may appeal the Library Director's decision to the Easttown Library Board of Trustees at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Appendices

The following documents have been endorsed by the Board of Trustees:

- [First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution](#)
- [Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement](#) and,
- [American Library Association's Freedom to View statement](#)