

**General Materials Selection  
and Collection Development  
Policy**

**Norwalk Public Library  
Norwalk, Connecticut**

**Revised August 14, 2016**

## Norwalk Public Library

The Norwalk Public Library System, comprised of the Main Library on Belden Avenue and the South Norwalk Branch Library on Washington Street, serves a core population of a little over 88,000 and is well regarded in Norwalk and the Greater Norwalk area as a vital social and life-long learning resource.

### Mission Statement

The Norwalk Public Library System (NPLS), with our open access to diverse resources, serves as the information and cultural center for Norwalk's citizens and businesses.

### Selection Statement (or Objectives)

The collection development policy supports the Library's mission, and endorses the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the [Library Bill of Rights](#), the [Freedom to Read Statement](#), the [Freedom to View Statement](#), the [Code of Ethics](#), and the [Core Values of Librarianship Statement](#) as adopted by the American Library Association (ALA).

The goal of the Norwalk Public Library is to have a high quality collection in a variety of formats for all ages that reflects, enlightens, and empowers its multiethnic, multilingual, socio-economically diverse community, a collection that offers a range in views and expressions, both popular and unpopular. The Library neither encourages nor discourages any particular viewpoint. Selection of materials by the Library does not mean the Library endorses the contents or the views expressed in those materials.

The Norwalk Public Library materials are inclusive, balanced in opinion, and protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and Article I of the Connecticut State Constitution. The Library does not rate, label, or censor its materials to indicate their political, religious or social point of view, or indicate that an item is controversial. The library provides free and equitable access to the library collection—print, non-print, and electronic formats—to all users who are free to select or reject any item for their personal use.

Adult patrons, including parents/guardians of minor patrons, are responsible for the suitability of material used or borrowed, not the Library.

### GENERAL SELECTION POLICY

1. The Library Director is responsible for library collection as authorized by the Library Board of Trustees. The selection of materials is performed by staff members qualified by education, training, and subject interest using professional resources and experience.
2. Library funds are not unlimited; therefore, selection of materials must be consistent with budget allocations. Inter-Library Loan service, resource sharing with other libraries, as well as electronic and other methods of information access, are alternative ways to meet patron needs.

3. The library will collect materials in all formats appropriate to the purposes of the collection and the current technology. Featuring over 250,000 items for public circulation, the Library collection includes books, CDs, DVDs, magazines, newspapers, atlases, audio books, and downloadable materials (music, movies and magazines), in addition to Norwalk historical documents, maps, photographs, and artwork. Our extensive fiction and non-fiction book and DVD collections include a wide variety of foreign language selections. The Library also offers WiFi, three 3D printers, and 70 high-speed Internet accessible computers online databases. ([Norwalk Public Library's Computer Use and Internet Policies](#))
4. General criteria for selecting material include importance of subject matter, timeliness of the material, permanent value of material as a standard work, prominence of the author, critical reception, suitability of subject and style for intended audience, customer interest. Selection criteria for electronic resources additionally include: ease of access, hardware requirements, comparison of content with other available formats, licensing requirements, networking capabilities, and staff training and customer assistance requirements.
5. Serious consideration is given to timeliness of subjects and authors, in addition to the opinions, needs, interests, and requests of the community when developing the collection. Multiple copies of popular material will be purchased to meet demand.
6. The Norwalk Public Library typically does not order textbooks; however, there will be some exceptions when they provide the best coverage of a subject, are used in our local schools, and are useful to the general public.
7. Materials in languages other than English will be added based on community demographics and demand.
8. Patrons may request that the library order specific items or subject matter they seek that the library does not own. Forms are available for this purpose, and may be requested at the reference desks in our adult and children's departments. Some patron-requested materials will be purchased using the library's general evaluation process and other requests will be met through resource sharing with other libraries, electronic retrieval, or other means.
9. The library welcomes gifts, but is not obligated to accept, or add to its collection any unsolicited gifts. The same principles of selection applied to library purchases will be applied to gifts. The library will not give a dollar valuation for gifts, but can provide the donor with a statement of the number of items and types of materials donated. Gifts not added to the collection will be given to the Friends of the Library for their book sales. Un-sellable items will be discarded.
10. Monetary gifts for the purchase of materials in particular subjects and/or formats are gratefully accepted. If the donor does not specify the purpose for the donation, the Library reserves the right to select the materials using the library's general evaluation process.
11. The Norwalk Public Library strives to ensure its collection remains timely, relevant, interesting and attractive by continually withdrawing (weeding) unnecessary, outdated, worn or damaged materials. This process is accomplished within the context of our general selection criteria and consideration of adequate subject coverage, retrospective buying and budgetary guidelines.

## Patron Complaints Concerning Library Materials

Objections to material owned by the library should be in writing, giving reason in detail, and signed. Forms are available for this purpose, and may be requested at the reference desks in our adult and children's departments Reference Desk. Written objections to materials will be reviewed by the materials selection committee who will reply in writing. The decision may be appealed to the Library Board of Directors. Objections to the Board's decision may be appealed through legal remedies.

1. Patron initiates the complaint.
2. Patron is referred to Librarian at Reference Desk or to the Director if available.
3. Librarian listens to the complaint and initiates appropriate action. Discussion should be conducted in the Librarian's Office or another place with reasonable privacy. Complaint may be able to be resolved at this time.
4. If the complaint is not resolved by discussion, the patron is advised that a Request for Reconsideration of the Material may be made to the Director, and offered the form.
5. When the form is completed it should be given to the Director, with any relevant information including the material itself.
6. The Director consults with the supervisor of the department where the complaint was lodged and responds to the Request by meeting with, or telephoning the patron.
7. If the complaint remains unresolved, the Director will forward the complaint to the Board of Trustees for their consideration. The Board will respond in writing to the patron.

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### NOTE

- I can format and bullet once we decide on content.
- Appendixes can include

#### **Professional Resources** (Needs Updating)

Kirkus, Publishers's Weekly, Library Journal, School Library Journal, New York Times Book Review, Multimedia World, Multicultural Review, Black Books Bulletin, Quarterly Black Review, the Lambda Book Report, Choice, World Literature Today, Video Source Book, Video Librarians, Stereo Review and sources available through the Internet.

**ALA Bill of Rights and various statements** will be included once we decide which ones we will use.

- Graphics of forms can be included as well.