



## **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

Monmouth County Library's mission is to support the lifelong pursuit of knowledge through reading and learning. We aim to help patrons of all ages meet their educational, recreational, and cultural needs through our extensive collections, information resources, and electronic content resources. To ensure that the Monmouth County Library's collection is balanced, current, and reflective of community interests, this policy outlines the underlying philosophies behind the selection and acquisition of materials. This policy serves as a guideline for active collection, maintenance, and provides a framework for responding to changing community needs.

### **General Principles**

The Monmouth County Library System's collection development is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, the education and enlightenment of the people of the community, and the provision of educational, informational, and recreational reading, viewing, and listening. Emphasis is placed on popular materials and general information rather than on scholarly and specialized materials.

The service population of the Monmouth County Library comprises a range of culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse individuals from an array of socio-economic backgrounds. As such, the Monmouth County Library actively seeks to acquire materials representing views, authors, subjects, and life experiences that are of interest to people of differing ages, gender identities, ethnicities, lifestyles, and beliefs. Materials will be acquired in a variety of languages and non-standard formats as needed.

The digital collection includes research databases and instructional programs, as well as popular downloadable and streaming eBooks, audiobooks, magazines, and movies. These digital resources are available through the Library's website and app.

### **Selection Criteria**

Materials purchased for the Monmouth County Library's collection are evaluated as complete works and not on the basis of any one particular passage. A work will not be excluded from the Library's collection solely because it represents a particular aspect of life, frankness of expression, or because it is controversial. Similarly, no work will be removed from the collection solely because an individual or group finds it to be objectionable, so long as the work meets the standard of this policy statement. The

inclusion or non-inclusion of any particular work is based on the considerations described in this policy statement and does not amount to an act of endorsement by the Library of any particular viewpoint or position. Sources for selection of works to be included in the Monmouth County Library's collection include, but are not limited to, published recommendations from standard review sources and specialized publications, publisher/vendor catalogs, advertisements and availability, professional and trade bibliographies, and customer requests/recommendations with accompanying community demand. In the case of digital subscription services, direct selection of materials is not always available to the Library.

The general selection criteria listed below apply to the selection of all materials for the Monmouth County Library.

- Quality of the work as assessed by one or more reliable reviewers
- Authority and competence of the author
- Reputation and standing of the publisher
- Date of the publication
- Appropriateness of the work to the collection in which it is to be placed
- Cost, availability, and impact on the materials budget
- Relationship of the work to other works in the collection
- Local significance of the author or subject
- Demand and/or predicted demand and interest
- Contribution to diversity, depth, or breadth of the collection
- Likelihood of enduring value

Additional criteria for digital resources:

- Ease of use
- Licensing and System Requirements (hardware, software, networking, storage, etc.)
- Assessment of content, quality, and cost as compared to other available formats
- Long term availability and accessibility

The Monmouth County Library is aware of the purposes and resources of other libraries in the State and shall not unnecessarily duplicate functions and materials.

### **Children's Materials**

Monmouth County Library understands that materials acquired for the youth must be regarded with special care due to the developmental needs of children and their readiness to master sensitive topics and/or content. In response, the Monmouth County Library asserts that the responsibility of a child's use of materials as well as content appropriateness lies with the parent or guardian.

### **Young Adult Materials**

Monmouth County Library maintains a collection of materials for young adults (grades 6-12) which consider the development needs of teens and involve their readiness to master sensitive topics and/or content. In response, the Monmouth County Library asserts that the responsibility of a young adult's use of materials as well as content appropriateness lies with the parent or guardian.

## **Suggestions for Purchase or Loan**

Monmouth County Library patrons may suggest items for purchase. Requests will be reviewed by designated library staff in consultation with the selection criteria as outlined in this policy. Customers can also request items that the Library does not own by completing the Library's Interlibrary Loan Request form available at branch reference desks. Interlibrary loans are governed by the Monmouth County Library's Interlibrary Loan Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

## **Reconsideration of Library Materials**

The Monmouth County Library has a responsibility to provide a comprehensive collection representing a wide range of ideas and viewpoints; moreover, the Monmouth County Library has committed to the right of free access to information for all individuals. Patrons wishing to recommend the removal or reclassification of a particular item may submit a *Request for Material Reconsideration* form. All requests for reconsideration will be reviewed by the Library Director in consultation with the selection criteria as outlined in this policy and may include librarians chosen for a review committee.

The Library Director or an appointed designee will review the *Request for Material Reconsideration* and provide a written response to the reconsideration request. The material in question will not be removed from the shelf during the reconsideration process.

## **Collection Management**

### Responsibility for Collection Management

The ultimate responsibility for material selection rests with the Library Director who operates within the policies determined by the Monmouth County Library Commission. Day to day implementation of the Collection Development and Management Policy and management of the collection is assigned to Library staff.

### Criteria for Weeding and Withdrawal

A regular review of materials is essential to maintaining the quality of the Monmouth County Library System's collection. Materials in the collection are managed through an assessment and evaluation process to ensure that the collection remains up-to-date, balanced and attractive. Professional staff with collection management responsibility will evaluate materials for possible withdrawal using the following criteria:

- Physical condition
- Number of copies available in the collection
- Accuracy and currency of information
- Enduring value
- Local interest or specific community relevance
- Current demand and recent usage patterns
- Availability elsewhere, including other libraries and online resources

## **Gifts**

Monmouth County Library may accept donations of materials in a variety of formats, at select locations but ultimately has the right to accept, refuse, use, or dispose of the materials in whatever manner is most beneficial to the Library, whether selling at a book sale, adding to the collection, or in any other way. The Library does not appraise donated items.

## **Statement on Intellectual Freedom**

The Monmouth County Library is committed to the principle that the constitutionally protected freedoms of speech and press are enjoyed by all. To this end, the Library strives to offer a collection that represents the needs of our diverse communities. Inclusion of items in the collection does not imply endorsement of any theory or statement contained in those materials and resources.

While every patron may not agree with the viewpoints offered in some Library material, the Library has a responsibility to provide a balanced collection with access to material reflecting diverse ideas through which opposing sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored, provided that the material meets the outlined selection criteria. The balanced nature of the collection is reflected in the diversity of materials, not in the equality of numbers. Customers are free to choose what they like from the collection and to reject what they do not like, but not to restrict the freedom of others to make the same choice.

Selection of materials for adults is not constrained by possible exposure to children or teenagers.

## **Statements endorsed by the Library**

The Monmouth County Library System endorses the following statements:

- American Library Association's [Freedom to Read Statement](#)
- American Library Association's [Library Bill of Rights Statement](#)
- American Library Association's [Freedom to View Statement](#)

**Approved by the Library Commission April 12, 2022**

Please Note: To obtain a *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials* form, email [mcl@monmouthcountylib.org](mailto:mcl@monmouthcountylib.org) or contact the reference desk at the Headquarters Library (732-431-7220) or Eastern Branch Library (866-941-8188)