



Library Policy Selection

Library Statement of Objectives

I. Ascension Parish Library was established for the purpose of making available to all citizens of the parish books and other library materials for education, information, and recreation. The Library strives to maintain a program of service to locate information, guide reading, and promote the most effective use of these materials. (Adopted by the Board Jan 15, 1964)

II. The aim of the Ascension Parish Library is service to all people. This encompasses individuals and groups of every age, education, philosophy, occupation, economic level, ethnic origin, and human condition.

Fulfilling the educational, informational, and recreational needs of these people is the broad purpose of Ascension Parish Library.

More specifically the Library helps people to adapt to change in all areas, to educate themselves continually, to become better members of their family and community, to become socially and politically aware, to be more capable in their occupations, to develop their creative abilities and spiritual capacities, to appreciate and enjoy literature and art, to contribute to the overall expanse of knowledge, and to stimulate their own personal and social well-being. (Adopted by the Board July 11, 1973)

Support for Intellectual Freedom

Ascension Parish Library Board adopts as part of its policy the following paragraphs from the Library Bill of Rights:

I. As a responsibility of library service, books and other materials should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of race or nationality or the social, political, or religious view of the authors.

II. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times: no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. ¹

Further, the Library Board affirms the American Library Association's Freedom to Read and Freedom to View policy statements.

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American Library Association. "Library Bill of Rights." (Adopted June 18, 1948; amended February 2, 1961 and June 27, 1967 by the ALA Council)



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Objectives of the Collection

The Library is responsible for providing materials to patrons of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. The Library collection taken as a whole will be an unbiased and diverse source of information, representing as many viewpoints as possible. Subjects will be covered in sufficient depth and breadth to meet anticipated and expressed individual and community needs.

The collection is presented to provide individual access to information and materials in various formats, and to serve a wide variety of needs:

- To promote the joy and importance of reading
- To educate and inform
- To encourage and enhance personal, artistic, and intellectual growth
- To assist in developing the skills and abilities needed for economic and creative success
- To develop the social awareness and knowledge needed for self-government and successful participation in a diverse community

The Library neither encourages nor discourages any particular viewpoint. In accordance with La. R.S. 25:225, the Library will take into consideration the current community standards for the entire population served when acquiring library material through purchase or donation that would be accessible to a minor and will, therefore, provide materials that reflect the diversity of experiences, ideas, and information needs of the population. No material will be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political or social views of the author. Selection of materials by the Library does not mean the Library endorses the contents or the views expressed in those materials.

The Ascension Parish Library Board recognizes that Library resources are not unlimited. The selection of materials must be consistent with budget allocations. Resource sharing with other libraries, as well as electronic and other methods of information access, are valid and necessary ways of meeting patron needs.

Responsibility for Selection

The final responsibility for selection is and shall be vested in the Library Director. The Library Director may delegate to such members of the staff as are qualified by reason of training, the authority to interpret and apply the policy in making selections.

All staff contribute to the development of a patron-oriented collection by:

1. Suggesting materials that meet patrons expressed needs and interests
2. Interacting with patrons with understanding, respect, and responsiveness
3. Handling all requests equitably
4. Working in partnership with one another to understand and respond to community needs and expectations
5. Understanding and responding to changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes

Criteria for Selection

To build a well-balanced collection that reflects the needs and interests of all people in the community, materials are evaluated according to one or more of the following standards. An item need not meet all the criteria to be selected.



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General Criteria:

1. Present and potential relevance to community needs
2. Suitability of physical format for library use, including type legibility
3. Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience
4. Cost
5. Importance as a document of the times
6. Relation to the existing collection and to other materials on the subject
7. Inclusion in standard bibliographies, indexes, or professional review materials
8. Potential user appeal
9. Published by an established publishing company
10. Recognition of merit through awards and honors

Content Criteria:

1. Authority
2. Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
3. Reputation and significance of the author
4. Objectivity
5. Consideration of the work as a whole
6. Clarity
7. Currency
8. Technical Quality
9. Representation of diverse points of view
10. Representation of important movements, genres, or trends
11. Artistic presentation and/or experimentation
12. Sustained interest
13. Relevance and use of the information
14. Authenticity of history or social setting
15. Timeliness or permanence

Special Considerations for Audiovisual Materials:

1. Available public performance rights
2. Appropriateness of the subject to the collection in a specific format
3. Quality of the material in the available format
4. Quality of content in a specific format
5. Use and cost of maintenance

Special Considerations for Digital Materials

1. Ease of use of the product
2. Availability of the information to multiple simultaneous users
3. Equipment needed to provide access to the information
4. Technical support and training
5. Availability of the physical space needed to house and store the information or equipment
6. Available in full text



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Special Considerations for Non-traditional Materials:

1. An interest or need within the community
2. Sufficient quality to be used repeatedly
3. Reasonable cost of maintenance and/or replacement
4. Requires minimal upkeep, cleaning, or repair between uses
5. Inclusion removes a barrier of access for the community

The library recognizes its obligation to provide reference and research materials for the direct answering of specific questions and for continuing research. It also recognizes the purposes and resources of other libraries in the community and shall not needlessly duplicate functions and materials.

The library acquires textbooks and other curriculum-related materials when such materials serve the general public. The library acknowledges a particular interest in local and state history; therefore, it will seek to acquire state and municipal public documents, and it will take a broad view of works by Louisiana authors and about Louisiana, whether or not such materials meet the standards of selection in other respects. However, the library is not under any obligation to add to its collections everything about Louisiana or produced by authors, printers, or publishers with Louisiana connections.

A balanced collection attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues as far as availability of materials, space, and budget allow. Selection is based upon criteria stated in this policy. The race, religion, nationality, or political views of an author or creator; offensive language; depictions or descriptions of violence or sexually explicit activity; controversial content of an item; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community does not cause an item automatically to be included or excluded from the library's collection. All materials selected for the collection will be classified according to the intended audience.

All public libraries contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable. Libraries may omit from the collection materials that some patrons feel are important. In either case, the library has procedures that patrons may use in requesting the reconsideration of materials.

La. R.S. 25:255 requires that libraries limit and restrict a minors' access to material defined as sexually explicit material by majority vote of the Library Board in an open meeting. Any such material can only be checked out by a minor with parental permission. Restrictions will be implemented, and permissions given by parents through the use of the tiered library card system or blocks placed on certain items in the library's online catalog. For purposes of this Policy, the Library adopts the definitions provided in La. R.S. 25:225[B].

The library maintains a collection of digital materials available for checkout by patrons. Materials for adults, teens, and children are hosted on the same platform. Some material may not be age-appropriate for all children. If a parent or legal guardian wishes to restrict their child's access to these digital platforms, they may choose one of our youth restricted cards. The digital platforms blocked from access by the youth restricted cards are cloudLibrary, Libby, Hoopla, Freading, Freegal, Kanopy, and The Shelf.

Special Collections

Genealogy and Local History Collection

The library will seek to collect and digitally preserve images, documents, and interviews that reflect the unique history of Ascension Parish. Personal historical images and documents, as well as yearbooks, church directories,



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advertisements, and any other materials related to Ascension Parish's culture and history, will be accepted on loan for the purpose of digitizing or as donations from patrons. For the purposes of genealogical research, the library will collect materials related to Louisiana.

Jeannette Jefferson Collection

The library will maintain a memorial collection housed at the Donaldsonville location that is comprised of resources highlighting the history, legacy, and everyday lives of Black Americans. Current print fiction and nonfiction titles for adults, teens, and children will be added on an ongoing basis as materials are found that fit the mission of the collection.

Donations, and Memorials

Only unconditional donations and contributions may be accepted by the Library on behalf of the Library Board of Control.

Collections of books and other materials will not be accepted with restrictions that necessitate special housing or which prevent integration of the items into the general library collection.

The same standards of selection will govern the acceptance of donations as govern purchase by the library. If material is useful but not needed, it may be disposed of at the discretion of the Library Director.

The donor must sign an unconditional donation form each time an unconditional donation is made to the Library.

Donations received by the library that are not added to the library's collection may be forwarded to the Outreach Department or the Friends of Ascension Public Library for their disposition at a future sale. The proceeds from this sale shall accrue directly to the benefit of the library in a fashion consistent with accepted library policies and services as determined by the Library Board of Control. Any items unsold by the Friends of Ascension Public Library may then be donated to another organization or discarded.

The library accepts monetary donations for the purchase of materials, including memorial and recognition donations. The library staff must make the selection with the general selection principles set forth in this policy.

Collection Maintenance

The library continually withdraws items from the collection, basing its decisions on several factors, including publishing date, frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer or more current and accurate materials. Items dealing with local history are an exception, as are certain classics and award-winning children's books. Fiction that was once popular but no longer in demand and nonfiction books that are no longer useful are withdrawn from the collection.

Withdrawn books may be donated to the Friends of the Ascension Public Library for book sales if the books are in good condition, have current resale value, and do not contain outdated information. The proceeds from such sales are used for the benefit of the library. Books that are not sold will be disposed of at the discretion of the Friends of the Ascension Public Library.

Requests for Reconsideration



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All requests for reconsideration of library materials will be handled by the Library Director and will follow the approved Reconsideration Policy. The reconsideration of materials will be based on the Selection Policy, Censorship Policy, and Children and Libraries Policy.

Selection Policy Revisions

No revisions to this policy will be undertaken while a formal challenge to a library resource is occurring. The library will follow the current governing board-approved policy and process to maintain good faith with the community, complainants, and supporters. Revisions may occur after the final decision on the questioned material has been made if deemed necessary by the Library Director and Library Board of Control.

Adopted by the Library Board of Control, July 11, 1973

Revised and adopted by the Library Board of Control, January 27, 1993

Revised and adopted by the Library Board of Control, October 26, 2011

Revised and adopted by the Library Board of Control, August 31, 2022

Revised and adopted by the Library Board of Control, October 25, 2023