



# McKENZIE COUNTY

• PUBLIC LIBRARY •

## I. Purpose

This policy defines the scope of the collection and articulates the overarching principles which shape the development and management of the McKenzie County Public Library (MCPL or, the Library) collection. This policy guides the Library's responsibility to select, acquire, make accessible, maintain, and preserve the Library's collection.

This policy establishes a process for addressing patron questions and concerns, and defines the roles and responsibilities for addressing any questions or concerns.

## II. Principles

The collection is one of the Library's major assets. It advances the Library's mission to "provide equitable access to resources and opportunities so that residents can achieve their goals, explore their passions, and develop social connections." It helps generate a future where every person has the opportunity and resources to learn, meet, share, read, play, and create.

- We value intellectual freedom and the importance of an individual's right to read, view, and listen to a broad spectrum of knowledge, ideas, opinions, and creative expression. We uphold the right of the individual to access information.
- We embrace the diverse ways in which people learn and acquire information.
- We believe the Library has a responsibility to be inclusive and not exclude materials solely because of the origin, background, or views of those who created it.
- We recognize the importance of resource sharing with other libraries throughout the region because it broadens all library patrons' access to resources and information.
- We expect the Library to be responsive to changing patron interests and demographics, follow professional standards, and stay abreast of the new and evolving ways information is disseminated, accessed, and used.

## III. Definitions

- The Library's collection is the body of materials selected for and made accessible to patrons.
- "Materials" has the widest possible meaning and includes books and other print media; audiovisual, electronic, and digital formats; and other additions to the collection. Materials may be owned or leased by the Library, housed in a physical location, downloaded, or accessed via the Library's website and other Online services.
- "Selection" refers to the decision that is made by Library staff to add a specific item to the MCPL collection and make it accessible either in a physical location or via the Library's website or other Online services.
- Intellectual freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored.

## **IV. Collection Scope**

The Library's collection is designed to support the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational interests of MCPL patrons. It reflects the interests of the general public and supports the demographics and diversity of the community of which it is a part.

The collection has materials on many topics and viewpoints. It has materials in different formats, languages, and levels of difficulty.

The Library emphasizes breadth over depth, unabridged over abridged, and general materials over those that are highly specialized. Budget and space restrictions preclude the Library from duplicating specialized and comprehensive collections that exist elsewhere in the region and are reasonably accessible to MCPL cardholders. The Library is fully committed to providing access to these specialized materials through referral, cooperative agreements, and resource sharing through interlibrary loan. The Library does not serve as an archive for McKenzie County or any organization.

## **V. Access and Resource Sharing**

Access to materials is ensured by the way they are organized, managed, and displayed. The Library uses standards-based cataloging and classification systems. Any labeling, sequestering, or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter will not be sanctioned.

Patrons access the collection via the Library's catalog, the Library's website, other Online services, and through their interactions with staff. The Library's outreach services enable greater access to the collection.

Use limitations ensure fair and equitable access to materials. Access to some items may be limited by their value, uniqueness, fragile physical condition, or a combination of these factors. In-house and remote access to digital and electronic resources is provided within technical, budgetary, and licensing constraints.

Items that are not in the Library's collection may be obtained on behalf of patrons from the Online Dakota Information Network (ODIN) starting in March 2024 or beyond via established interlibrary loan networks. Conversely, MCPL materials may be lent to other organizations that also participate in these networks. Regular evaluation of these exchanges may also influence purchasing and collection development.

## **VI. Intellectual Freedom**

The Library provides an impartial environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions. Individuals apply their personal interests and values to the materials they choose for themselves. The values of one may not be imposed on another. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for their minor's or ward's use of library materials, as per the MCPL Library Card Policy.

MCPL considers reading, listening, and viewing, to be individual, private matters. We believe that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves; their own minor child(ren); or vulnerable adult(s) in their care; the freedom of others to read or inquire will not be restricted. Only parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren) or vulnerable adult(s). The Library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis) or legal guardians.

The Library's selection of materials for the collection does not constitute an endorsement of the content. Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, nor are materials sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

The MCPL Board acknowledges the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements in support of intellectual freedom. In addition, the American Library Association's [Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Q & A](#) provides additional guidance on this subject.

## **VII. Roles and Responsibilities**

The McKenzie County Board of Commissioners appropriates Library funding. The MCPL Board approves the Library's monetary allocations, which includes collection development.

The Library Director works under the direction of the McKenzie County Library Board and within the framework of this policy. The Library Director delegates to staff the authority to interpret and apply this policy in daily operation.

Library staff provide continuity for the development and management of the Library's collection. They plan, budget, select, acquire, catalog, process, replace, remove, and generally manage library materials. The Library recognizes and respects intellectual property rights and conforms to legislative mandates regarding copyright protections.

Library staff participate in collection development and management to serve all members of the community.

MCPL staff:

- Engage in open, continuous two-way communication with patrons and other staff
- Handle all requests equitably
- Understand and respond to demographic, societal, and technological changes
- Identify materials of varying educational levels and formats
- Balance individual patron and local community needs
- Seek continuous improvement through ongoing data collection and evaluation

Patrons also play a key role in the development of the Library's collection. They make suggestions and provide feedback via the [web-form](#) or directly to staff.

## VIII. Selecting Materials for the Collection

Patron interest, both expressed and anticipated, as well as the Library's understanding of current collection and material availability, are the primary influences for the materials and formats that are selected. Collection Development staff use a set of criteria to guide selection decisions. *Not all criteria are applied to each selection decision.* General criteria for selection:

- Patron requests gathered through the public web-form, emails, phone calls, or in-person visits
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Format options
- Physical design is suitable for library use
- Subject and style is suitable for intended audience
- Publicity, critiques, and reviews
- Price of material
- Relevance to current trends and events
- Relation to the existing collection
- Potential appeal
- Relation to other community resources
- Representative of movements, subjects, genres or trends of lasting patron interest

Content criteria for selection:

- Competence, reputation, and qualifications of author or publisher
- Consideration of the work as a whole
- Currency of information
- Objectivity and clarity
- Comprehensiveness
- Technical quality
- Represents a diverse point of view
- Sustained interest or demand
- Usefulness of the information

Additional considerations for electronic formats:

- Ease of use
- Available to multiple, concurrent users
- Remote access
- Vendor data privacy practices
- Technical requirements and compatibility with existing equipment and systems
- Technical support and training

## **IX. Reconsideration of Library Materials**

A selection decision may be reconsidered by submitting a “Request for Reconsideration of Materials” form (attached) to the MCPL. Library Administration will submit all reconsideration requests to the Library Board, and notify the patron of the date of the Library Board Meeting at which the review will take place. The patron will be notified in writing via either email or letter as to the Library Boards Decision.

The Library Board, upon request, hears appeals of the Library’s response. Appeals must be presented in writing to the Library Board at least ten (10) days in advance of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. Decisions on appeals are based on careful review of the objection, the material, and this Collection Development policy. Additional guidance for an appeal may come from the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View documents. Appeals are heard and decisions finalized at Library Board meetings. An Item once adjudicated upon by the library board will not be subject to the reconsideration process for a year starting from the date of the Library Boards final decision.

## **X. Collection Maintenance**

The collection is reviewed and evaluated on an ongoing basis in order to maintain its usefulness, currency, and relevance. Items may be kept, repurchased, re-catalogued, or withdrawn.

Staff rely on a set of criteria to guide their decisions to withdraw items from the collection. While not all criteria are applied to each de-selection decision, multiple factors are considered in most cases. Criteria include:

- Space limitations
- Insufficient use or lack of patron demand
  - Examples include, circulation over item’s lifetime, current year, and year-to-date
- Purchase and item record creation date
- Format or physical condition is no longer suitable for library use
  - Examples include, damage, wear and tear, or missing parts
- Obsolescence
  - Examples include, information that is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
- Little or no relevance to current trends and events
- Content is available in multiple formats to MCPL patrons
- Sufficient number of copies in the collection
- Ease of availability to MCPL patrons through other regional collections

Withdrawn materials may be sent to third-party vendors, the Friends of the MCPL, outreach sites, sold, recycled, offered to the public, or discarded.

Materials of longstanding or historical value are donated to the North Dakota State Library and other regional archives.

