

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to serve as a blueprint for our collections by guiding staff in selection, management, and preservation. It also identifies responsibilities for collection development and guides staff in developing budgets and allocating resources. Finally, it informs the public of the principles guiding our collection development and establishes our commitment to intellectual freedom.

The Rochester Public Library exists to engage the community in life-long learning for all through access to information, technology, gathering spaces, and expert staff. The RPL hopes to see all community members live rich and fulfilling lives through their relationships with the library. The RPL values community, learning & knowledge, imagination & innovation, diversity & inclusiveness, and engagement & collaboration.

The library serves its customers by providing diverse, authoritative collections in multiple formats. Collections are designed to satisfy the educational and recreational information needs of community members, and the library seeks partnerships within the community to further refine and enhance the collections. The library is committed to the principles of intellectual freedom and personal curiosity, which is reflected in the wide scope of materials and information made available to customers without prejudice.

### INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

In a free society, information on multiple points of view should be readily available so that individuals may decide which ideas are meaningful to them. The Central Library incorporates as part of this policy the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights; The Freedom to Read; The Public Library, A Statement of Principles; and the American Film & Video Association Freedom to View.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

Acceptability of books or other material will not be determined on the basis of the author's personal history, political affiliation, race, sex, or cultural background nor on anticipated public response, or personal viewpoint of the librarian.

### ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION

The use of the library will not be denied or abridged because of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, educational background, or by political or social views. It is the Library's philosophy that the parent or legal guardian of a child should be the one to determine what the child will read, listen to, or view.

### CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

In New York State, the confidentiality of library records is governed by Sections 2307 and 4509 of the New York State Civil Practice Law and Rules (CPLR). Section 2307 requires that a subpoena served on a library must be issued by a Justice of the Supreme Court in the library's district, and Section 4509 provides as follows:

*Library records, which contain names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of public, free association, school, college and university libraries and library systems of this state, including but not limited to records related to the circulation of library materials, computer database searches, interlibrary loan transactions, reference queries, requests or photocopies of library materials, title*

*reserve requests, or the use of audio-visual materials, films or records, shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed except that such records may be disclosed to the extent necessary for the proper operation of such library and shall be disclosed upon request or consent of the user or pursuant to subpoena, court order or where otherwise required by statute.*

Staff members are expected to hold in strictest confidence information about questions patrons ask, items consulted by patrons, comments expressed or attitudes revealed by patrons.

#### POLICY GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The collection development policy aims to fulfill the mission and vision of the Rochester Public Library by providing its citizens with unobstructed access to resources and materials in order to satisfy their current educational, recreational, aesthetic, research, and informational needs, primarily by:

1. Providing materials that will assist in the dissemination of accurate historic and current information,
2. Providing resources and materials in a variety of genres and formats,
3. Referring patrons to sources of information or informational matter, including other agencies,
4. Proactively disseminating information about library resources to the community, and facilitating patrons' use of the library and its resources.

#### RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION OF MATERIALS

By tradition and practice, responsibility for the selection of library materials lies with the professional librarian staff within each Central Library Division and each community Branch, though ultimate responsibility lies with the Board of Trustees, who delegate responsibility to the director and his or her staff. Suggestions from the public are welcomed.

#### SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection of materials is a complex process that calls for all of the professional staff's skills, experience and knowledge. Basic factors considered for purchase are;

1. Demand
2. Critical Reception
3. Content
4. Timeliness
5. Local interest
6. Authoritativeness
7. Format
  - a. The library will progressively and actively add digital content and non-print material as demand, emerging technologies and budgetary considerations allow. Additional selection criteria will include accessibility, ease of use, equipment needs, training, and technology requirements, and license agreement requirements.

#### SELECTION SOURCES

Sources used for selection of this collection include both print and digital reviews from standard review

sources, publishers' catalogs and advertisements, and professional bibliographies. The library encourages customer recommendations, subject to the selection criteria outlined above.

### GIFTS

The library accepts donations to the collection using the same selection criteria applied to purchased materials. Final acceptance of material is the responsibility of the Division Supervisor or Branch Manager using the following guidelines.

1. Donated materials not accepted for the collection will be donated to the Friends and Foundation of RPL, or may be disposed of through other means determined by the library.
2. The Library will provide a written acknowledgement of any donation but cannot assess the monetary value.
3. The Library is pleased to accept monetary gifts intended for the purchase of library materials when the donors' intentions for the gifts and the library's collection development objectives are consistent.

### SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

While the RPL strives to provide the community with high demand popular literature as part of its mission to serve the community, the RPL also houses numerous special collections. Collection development within these areas follows the above criteria, however because of special funding or contractual agreements, these collections often provide resources beyond the scope of the rest of the library's collection.

### DISCARDING (WEEDING)/MAINTENANCE AND COLLECTION EVALUATION

The weeding of library materials is an important and necessary means of maintaining a useful, balanced, lively, and accessible collection. This requires the time, skill, care, and knowledge of a trained and experienced reference librarian who knows both the strengths and weaknesses of the collection and is aware of the changing needs of the community. Weeding should be done continuously on a regular basis and by all reference staff. The Library may try to maintain copies of standard and important works but does not automatically replace all materials that are lost or withdrawn due to damage or wear. While research and special collections materials are not routinely removed from the collection, there are some circumstances where deselection is appropriate.

General weeding guidelines include the following:

1. Physical Condition- Is it such that the item should be rebound, replaced, or discarded?
2. Publication date- Is a newer edition available? If not, is this material out-of-date, inaccurate, or harmful? Is this an older but still valid edition that can be saved to meet demand for the title?
3. Uniqueness- Is the title unavailable elsewhere in the community or is it available in digital format? Would it be difficult to obtain via interlibrary loan?
4. Authority of author and publisher- Is the title listed in any current (three years or less) standard reference bibliography?
5. Usefulness to the collection- Is it one of only several works on the topic? Is it heavily used or if it is infrequently used now, would it be of use in the future based on professional judgment?

6. Local interest- Does the material have local relevance or does it have any local connection that would make it useful acquisition?
7. Based on professional judgment, is there demand for this item now or in the future?
8. Value- Is this a worn item but one whose replacement cost would be prohibitive? If the item is not within the collection development guidelines, should it be withdrawn and sold? Is it available in other formats?

#### CENTRAL LIBRARY CLOSED STACKS

The decision to retain an item in closed stacks is a professional judgment based upon the following criteria:

- Last activity date – if the item does not meet any of the criteria below and has not circulated in 10+ years, it should be weeded from stacks.
- Titles listed in standard bibliographies
- Titles with reference or research value
- Rare/valuable titles and any titles with local interest
- Titles by a local author
- Important primary sources
- Titles by important authors whose works are in constant demand, regardless of copyright date
- Availability through interlibrary loan

#### PERIODICALS

RPL locations will maintain periodical collections based on demand and these influencing factors:

1. Demand for current information may be met by the resources found in digital databases rather than print periodicals. As a result, the periodical collection has diminished in size and is now more focused on recreational reading.
2. Space considerations and availability of a variety of full-text digital resources influence periodical and journal selection and retention.
3. Divisions and Branches will evaluate usage and generally keep the most current five (5) years of most periodical runs with the option of keeping longer runs based on professional experience.
4. Additional weeding criteria for periodicals could include the following:
  - a. Indexing- Is the material within the periodical indexed and easily accessible?
  - b. Holdings of other libraries- Do other libraries in the area have the same holdings? Do those libraries intend to retain the periodical?
  - c. Digital Access- Are current issues available online? Should only a back file be retained?
  - d. Is the item of local interest?
  - e. Uniqueness- Does it contain unique information and/or materials that are available elsewhere?
  - f. Illustrations- Are there illustrations, pictures, tables, or charts that are worth keeping?
5. Last copies or out-of-print titles should be examined carefully against these and other such criteria.
6. Titles withdrawn indirectly through loss or damage should be replaced if they meet selection criteria and are available.

7. Weeding is done under the supervision of the Division Supervisor or Branch Manager. It should be recognized that some subject areas require frequent weeding, while in other areas, materials may be kept a long time due to historical value or long-range usefulness.

#### DISPOSITION OF MATERIALS OF EXCEPTIONAL MARKET VALUE

1. Background

The primary mission of the RPL is to facilitate public access to information. RPL recognizes that the library's collection plays a critical role in fulfilling this mission. Unique materials and original manuscripts in the collection are key factors in distinguishing libraries one from another and to help define the value of a library. However, it is recognized that these unique and rare materials require preservation and security measures that are commensurate with the library's financial resources and take into account an obligation to fund other service priorities. Because of these factors, the library may, from time to time, face a decision as to whether a valuable item in the collection should be kept, safeguarded, preserved, or de-accessioned so as to preserve the item and/or maximize its value to the library and the community. This policy is intended to guide these decisions, when they are necessary.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy is intended to cover the removal and disposition of books, manuscripts, or other materials that have exceptional market value from the collection of the Rochester Public Library. This policy shall cover individual unique or rare items or collections that have been acquired by the library through purchase or gifting. As a general guideline, the potential market value of items to be covered by this policy will exceed \$1,000.

3. Criteria for Selecting Materials for De-accessioning

The following guidelines shall be used to determine whether or not an item is a candidate for de-accessioning:

- a. Does the item have a strong local (Rochester Region) significance?
- b. Can the library adequately preserve and provide a secure environment for the item?
- c. Does the original version of the item have an inherent reference value as part of the library's collection? Can an alternative format (microfilm, facsimile, or digital image) of the item provide equal or improved access by the public to the information included?

4. Determination of Eligibility

A committee consisting of the Library Director, the RPL Collections Manager, the City Historian, and a representative from the Friends & Foundation of RPL shall be responsible for evaluating items that are candidates for de-acquisition under this policy.

5. Disposition guidelines

- a. If the item is deemed to have strong local significance:
  - i. An attempt will be made to transfer the item, through sale or gift, to an accredited local not-for-profit institution, which can ensure a secure environment and maintain some degree of public access to the item. Such institution or organization must have a 501c (3) or similar federal tax-exempt designation and/or be chartered by the NY State Board of Regents.

- ii. In the event that the item cannot be sold, loaned, or gifted to a local institution based on the above requirements, an attempt may be made to sell the item at fair market value to a national or international audience that may include institutions and individuals.
  - b. If the item to be de-accessioned does not have strong local significance:
    - i. An attempt may be made to sell the item at fair market value to a national or international audience that may include not-for-profit and for-profit institutions as well as individuals.
    - ii. In the event that the item cannot be sold at fair market value, consideration may be given to loaning or gifting an item to a local, national or international institution, provided that public access and preservation requirements are met.
- 6. Decision-making Process
  - a. The Library Board will make the final decision regarding disposition of items covered by this policy based on recommendations by the committee described in section 4.
- 7. Disposition process and Income
  - a. Friends & Foundation of RPL in collaboration with the Library Director's Office shall process the disposition of items selected for de-accessioning under this policy.
  - b. Income derived from the sale of items will be placed in an endowment fund managed by the Friends & Foundation of RPL, the earnings of which will be used for preservation, increased access to the collections, or for the acquisition of materials.

#### PRESERVATION

As part of the responsibility of maintaining the collection, special handling of those books deemed "rare and valuable" should be employed following the recommendations of the 2009 Rare and Valuable Book Team and reviewed annually.

#### CHALLENGES TO THE POLICY

All materials added to the library collection have been deemed to meet the criteria for selection as specified in this policy. Complaints regarding specific materials and/or requests for reevaluation of material shall be referred to the Director. The patron will be offered a Material Re-Evaluation Form, available at every RPL location and online at <http://www.roccitylibrary.org>.

This form must be filled out in its entirety and signed by the individual requesting the action. The Library Director will investigate the complaint and provide a written response to the request within 30 days. The decision by the Director may be appealed to the Board of Trustees, which shall make a final determination within 60 days of the receipt of the appeal. Challenged materials will not be removed from the collection prior to a decision by the Board of Trustees.

This collection development policy will periodically be evaluated and revised as times and circumstances require.

***Approved by RPL Board of Trustees December 19, 2012***

***Revised and approved by the RPL Board of Trustees on March 30, 2022***