



Pitkin County Library Collection Development Policy

The policy used to determine the selection and acquisition of Library materials is determined by the Pitkin County Library (“PCL”) Board of Trustees. This policy guides the selection and continuous evaluation of the collection to reflect PCL’s mission.

As part of its mission, the Library embraces the importance of freedom of information for all and, therefore, provides access to varying expressions of ideas. Library resources are provided for the interest, information, and entertainment of all people the Library serves.

The Library has a professional and ethical responsibility to be fair and just in defending library users’ First Amendment rights to read, listen, or view, free from censorship by others. The choice of materials is purely an individual matter; while anyone is personally free to reject books and other materials, an individual may not restrict the access of others. Materials should not be excluded from the collection solely because the content or its creator may be considered offensive or controversial. The inclusion of an item in our collection does not constitute an endorsement, official or otherwise, by the Library. Refusing to select resources due to potential controversy is considered censorship, as is withdrawing or moving resources for that reason. Materials in the collection are arranged to facilitate access to the information; access to items is not restricted except for protection from damage or theft.

The Library is opposed to the removal from its shelves of materials that have been chosen according to this policy. In addition, the Library will oppose efforts to have materials added to the collection that are contrary to this policy.

To achieve an informed citizenry, the Pitkin County Library Board of Trustees supports the work of librarians in developing an inclusive collection that provides access to content on subjects by diverse authors and creators. Collections should be developed and managed to ensure consideration of historically oppressed, underrepresented, and underserved groups.

The determination of appropriate subject matter of any materials used by children or young adults rests entirely with their parents or legal guardians. Children's viewing and reading activity is ultimately the responsibility of parents, who guide and oversee their child’s development. Pitkin County Library does not intrude on that relationship.

The PCL Board of Trustees has adopted the American Library Association’s (ALA) following guidelines:

- [Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Freedom to Read Statement](#)
- [Freedom to View Statement](#)
- [Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors](#)

Materials Selection

The Board of Trustees delegates authority for the selection of books and other materials to the County Librarian. Library workers must not permit their personal biases, opinions, or preferences to influence collection development decisions. The Library seeks to develop an outstanding collection for a large and diverse population.

Responsibility for Selection

The day-to-day work of evaluation, selection, and deselection is the responsibility of PCL's staff of professional librarians. Individual librarians are assigned areas of responsibility for developing procedures that are governed by, but not part of, this policy.

Public Participation

The general public is encouraged to submit a [Purchase Suggestion Form](#) in person or [online](#) to recommend materials for purchase. Patron suggestions are considered if the item meets the selection criteria and other collection development policies outlined in this document. Accepting a suggestion form does not mean that the Library is obliged to purchase the item. An interlibrary loan request is an additional avenue for obtaining materials for patron use.

Scope of Materials

The Library shall provide materials that help to meet its objectives, including books, graphic novels, Books on CD, Playaways, periodicals, pamphlets, newspapers, microfilm, DVDs, music scores, maps, Spanish language materials, Large Print titles, Music CDs, and electronic resources. The Library's website provides access to eMaterials, such as eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, eVideos, eComics, and eMusic. The selection of eMaterials is based on the same selection criteria used for the rest of the collection. Not all titles are available in all formats.

The Library will provide government documents for our residents that contain information concerning upcoming projects such as highway construction, environmental impact studies, special community meetings, and those required by statute. These types of materials will be held locally for the specified duration of the project and/or evaluation period. Government documents of lasting value, such as floodplain information, will be cataloged.

Selection Criteria

In general, the Library's policy is to purchase and accept as gifts materials that best meet the needs, within budget and space limitations, of Library users. The following general criteria are used to evaluate potential purchases and gift materials:

- Timeliness and/or permanent value
- Literary and/or artistic merit
- Author's reputation and significance as a writer
- Favorable attention of critics, reviewers, and the public
- Authoritativeness and accuracy
- Clear presentation and readability
- Price
- High-demand holds and anticipated use
- Physical quality of the material and sustainability of the format
- Scarcity of material published on the subject

- Availability of material elsewhere in the area
- Social and local significance
- Importance of the subject matter to the collection
- Availability from a preferred vendor
- Presentation of all sides of controversial issues

Not all criteria must be met, and no one criterion will be decisive. Additional criteria may be used to select materials for specific collections. No book or library material shall be excluded because of race, religion, nationality, gender, sexuality, or political or social views of the author.

Items generally excluded from selection include:

- Materials such as textbooks needed for formal courses of study offered by elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher learning. The Library has materials for self-study, but it is not designed to furnish the reading required for academic study.
- Scholarly and technical materials suitable for academic or special libraries, including specialized medical or legal books
- Abridged editions of materials that are best read in their entirety
- Puzzle or workbooks that encourage filling in blanks
- Materials that are publicized solely through infomercials or personal websites
- Self-published materials that do not fit the Library's selection criteria
- Materials without published, authoritative, and evaluative critical reviews from review journals or newspapers of record

Special Collections

Special collections housed in the Pitkin County Library consist of works of local cultural and historical significance. These collections are non-circulating and may include restrictions due to copyright law or the rarity of the collection. These materials may be accessed only within the Library. Included in the special collections are:

- Aspen Music Festival and School recorded and program archives
- Microfilmed local newspapers
- Locked Case collections, which provide research and reference materials on Western Colorado history with a particular emphasis on Pitkin County and local authors of merit
- LP music collection

Although the Library owns several rare, expensive items, it does not intend to acquire books or materials requiring preservation or extensive maintenance.

Collection Maintenance

Binding and Repair of Library Materials

Damaged materials that are cost-effective to repair and that will retain an attractive appearance will be cleaned and/or replaced by library staff.

Removal and Replacement of Materials

As materials become worn, outdated, damaged, or lost, their removal and/or replacement will be determined by the appropriate staff member, using the following criteria:

- Condition of the item

- Continued relevance to community needs
- Accurate, timely, and up-to-date information
- Number of copies in the collection across all formats
- Circulation statistics
- Shelf space
- Relevance/ sustainability of format
- Availability for purchase and replacement
- Availability of updated, newer, or revised materials
- Historical value
- Availability from another library or organization

Materials withdrawn from the collection in good condition are donated. Materials that are damaged will be recycled, when feasible, or discarded. PCL does not remove materials from the collection for the purpose of selling them.

Replacement of Lost or Damaged Items

Decisions to replace items lost or damaged by patrons will be made as described above. Patrons will be charged a replacement fee regardless of whether the specific item is replaced. Due to processing requirements, the Library does not accept replacement items from patrons.

Request for Reconsideration

Library patrons in good standing who are residents of Pitkin County may question the presence of an item in the Library's collection. A formal Request for Reconsideration Policy and process has been developed to ensure these requests are handled attentively and consistently. PCL will carefully reevaluate an item when a [Request for Reconsideration Form](#) is submitted. The Library considers the value of each item in its entirety, not on specific passages or sections within the item itself.