

## Collection Development

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Year of Next Review: **2026**

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The Port Colborne Public Library endorses the basic Principles of Intellectual Freedom adopted by the Canadian Library Association in 1985 and the Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual adopted by the Ontario Library Association in 1990. These statements are reproduced in Appendix A. The Board, in establishing a Collection Development Policy, is cognizant of the Constitution Act, 1982, Part 1, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Section 2b, which guarantees everyone the following fundamental freedoms: "freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication."

It is the goal of the Port Colborne Public Library to provide equitable access to ideas and knowledge. The library is committed to making the collections accessible to people with disabilities by offering a choice of formats.

The library will provide diverse collections relating to cultures, languages, religious traditions, and peoples, in all our formats from books to audio and video materials. A broad range of authors, content creators and experiences will be included and highlighted in our collection. Our bibliographic database will use subject headings and descriptors which are more inclusive, including the use of Indigenous Subject Headings as they become available.

This policy sets out the parameters for the development of the collections and decisions on the selection and de-selection of materials and is the basis for collection evaluation, planning, and budgeting.

## Section 1: Scope and Size of the Collection

1. The library provides a collection of books and materials that is responsive to the needs and interest of a diverse community including:
  - a) a variety of alternative **and accessible** formats (such as through the Centre for Equitable Library Access – CELA)
  - b) multilingual materials in response to community need

- c) representation of a wide variety of opinion, lived experience, culture, language, religious tradition, and people
2. The collections shall be balanced and represent diverse points of view and may include materials that some members of the public consider to be controversial in nature.
3. The presence of an item in the library does not indicate an endorsement of its content.
4. The library develops collections which include, but are not limited to, the following areas: fiction and non-fiction for adults, young adult (YA), teens, and children; magazines and periodicals, music and media, local history and local interest, literacy, and government documents. Materials in non-English languages will be made available based upon community demographics and public interest.
5. It may happen that materials in the collections meet the needs of students, but this is not the primary reason for their selection. It is the responsibility of schools to provide materials that support their curricula.
6. Library staff is responsible for developing profiles for each area of the collection to further define the scope of the collections. These profiles are tools for collection development and evaluation.
7. Library staff is responsible for developing profiles for each area of the collection to further define the scope of the collections. These profiles are tools for collection development and evaluation.
8. The library participates in consortia purchasing and collective efforts with other libraries to broaden the scope and size of the collection. See OP-05: Resource Sharing Policy.
9. Recognized, professional standards will be used to determine the appropriate size of the collection. Planning for budgets and facilities must reflect these standards.
10. The library consists of two distinguishable collections: the core collection and the non-core collection.
  - a) The **core collection** is the collection that will satisfy most demands for information. Past usage is a valid reliable prediction of future use. Items with

heavy past usage and current active usage are core collection materials and not candidates for weeding. If an item has not been used for two years, the likelihood of future use is small and it is not a candidate for the core collection.

Some items, although not core collection material, may be retained in the collection without seriously impairing the collection. These are:

- works of local authors
- works related to local history
- works of famous authors including the "classics"
- works that are unique to the collection in that there is little or no information available on that topic elsewhere

b) The **non-core collection** includes any item whose usage has diminished so that its removal from the collection will not impair that collection's information capabilities; any item that has been on the shelf and unused for two or more years (according to circulation statistics) and does not meet the criteria of a, b, c, or d above.

11. Port Colborne Public Library is also a resource library. This means that classics and standard works should be retained despite low usage.
12. Materials related to local history should not be considered for weeding.
13. Knowledge of customer needs acquired by working on the information desk, and by analyzing reference statistical sheets, reserves and overdue slips, is helpful in deciding which books should be removed from the collection.

## **Section 2: Selection of Materials**

1. The board delegates the responsibility for the collection to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
2. Selection responsibility for specific portions of the collections may be delegated to staff. In selecting materials, staff will use professional resources, judgment, knowledge, and experience.

3. The staff will proactively solicit advice from, as well as anticipate the needs and interests of, the community.
4. What is ordered, and what remains in the collections, is based on the following criteria:
  - a) recommendations by critics or reviewers
  - b) public demand
  - c) interests and composition of the community and region
  - d) relationship of subject to existing collection
  - e) importance of subject matter in relation to community needs
  - f) authority or significance of the author
  - g) quality of writing, production, art and illustrations
  - h) authority and standards of the publisher
  - i) accessibility criteria and features
  - j) suitability of format for library use
  - k) clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
  - l) balance of viewpoints in the collection
  - m) special value as a contribution to social questions and problems of continuing or topical interest
  - n) Canadian content
  - o) availability of funds and space
5. An item need not meet all of the above criteria in order to be acceptable.
6. Materials that do not meet these criteria may be purchased to satisfy demand.
7. If there is considerable topical interest in the subject and a manifest public desire to read and judge the book first-hand, a title may be included which is not considered accurate, according to expert opinion.
8. The library does not buy textbooks specifically related to courses of study in the community. However, textbooks may be purchased if the subject information is not available in any other form.
9. The library acquires materials not only for its present customers but also for those who have not traditionally been library customers.
10. While people have the right to reject for themselves material of which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom of others.

11. As outlined in the library's Respect and Land Acknowledgement Statement (FN-05), the Port Colborne Public Library will provide collections relating to Indigenous cultures, languages, and peoples, including books, audio and video materials. Our collection will include titles by and about First Nation communities and will include titles presented in the First Nation Communities Read program. Our teen and adult materials will also include First Nations and Métis graphic novels, and a selection of media (film, music, etc) on history, culture and Indigenous issues.

### **Section 3: Withdrawal and Replacement of Items**

1. An up-to-date, attractive, and useful collection is maintained through a continual withdrawal and replacement process.
2. The ongoing process of withdrawal is the responsibility of the CEO. This responsibility may be shared with other members of the staff.
3. De-selection should reflect the goals and objectives of the library. Criteria for de-selection should be similar to those used initially for selection on the understanding that selection and withdrawal are different facets of the same continuous process.
4. If the material is regularly subject to loss or damage, the library may protect it by various precautionary measures such as transferring it to the Reference Collection. In some cases, no replacement will be purchased.
5. Replacement of items shall depend on demand for the title, availability of the title, availability of more current material on the subject, and the extent to which the subject is already covered in the collection.
6. The library maintains a policy of on-going discarding based upon the elimination of unnecessary items, outdated materials, materials no longer of interest or in demand, historical importance, cost of replacement, availability of other materials in the field, duplicates, worn, damaged or mutilated copies. Frequency of circulation (including in-house use and interlibrary loans), community or regional interest and availability of newer and more up-to-date materials are of prime consideration.
7. Individual monograph titles may be judged of value and quality by their appearance on standard lists or by the opinion of a specialist or a group of specialists.

8. Materials withdrawn from the collection may be discarded, donated, or sold at the ongoing book sale.
9. Replacement shall depend on demand for the title, availability of the title, availability of more current material on the subject, and the extent to which the subject is already covered in the collection.

## **Section 4: Gifts and Donations**

1. The library accepts gifts of books, other materials, or money for the purchase of materials with the understanding that they will be added to the collection only if appropriate, needed, and contribute to a balanced collection.
2. Gifts of books or other materials may be rejected for donation based upon the physical condition of those materials.
3. The same criteria of selection and withdrawing that are applied to purchased materials are also applied to gifts and donations.
4. No condition(s) may be imposed relating to the donation of any book or other item after its acceptance.
5. Donated materials not added to the collection are discarded, donated, or sold at the library's discretion.

## **Section 5: Recommendations for Purchases from Members of the Community**

1. Suggestions from the community for the purchase of items are always welcome and are given due consideration according to the Library's selection policies.
2. Requests for the re-consideration of, withdrawal of, or restricted access to, a specific item in the collection from a member of the community must be received by the CEO in writing. Responses to these requests are guided by the board's position that:
  - a) people have the right to reject for themselves material(s) of which they do not approve, but they do not have the right to restrict the intellectual freedom of others. (See FN-04: Intellectual Freedom Statement)

- b) It is the right of parents and legal guardians to determine and select the most appropriate materials for minor-aged children in their care.

## **Section 6: Challenged Materials**

1. The Port Colborne Public Library is a resource where many points of view and modes of expression may be examined without hindrance. No ideas and opinions have universal acceptance or condemnation in a pluralistic society. The use of language, either descriptive or expressive, can in itself stimulate controversy.
2. The Port Colborne Public Library, therefore, recognizes the right of individuals to express opposition to authors' ideas or to their creative exercise of language in materials selected for the library. However, the library will not engage to satisfy customers by removing items purchased in compliance with the principles of this policy. Selection of material(s) cannot be influenced by any anticipated approval or disapproval of its intellectual content by sectors of the community.
3. The Port Colborne Public Library complies with any law enacted at the federal, provincial, or municipal level, and therefore does not collect or maintain material which has been adjudged obscene or pornographic, or has been banned by the courts. The relevant sections of the Criminal Code of Canada are: sedition, hate propaganda, and obscenity.
4. The presence of an item in the collection does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Port Colborne Public Library, but rather is an affirmation of the principle of intellectual freedom as embodied in the Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom.
5. The following will not cause an item to be automatically included or excluded from the collection:
  - race, religion, nationality or political views of an author
  - frankness or coarseness of language
  - controversial content
  - endorsement or disapproval of an individual or group
  - language of the text
6. The library will neither undertake to mark items to show approval nor disapproval nor expurgate any materials.

7. Physical access to materials will not be restricted except for the express purpose of protecting an item from damage or theft.
8. As per the circulation access guidelines, library patrons have open access to all the library's collections with certain limited exceptions.
9. The responsibility for borrowing and in-library use of materials by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. No item will be excluded from the library collection only because it may come into the possession of children.

## **Section 7: Handling Challenged Materials**

In the event of an objection or complaint, the steps for resolution are as follows:

1. The library patron will put the objection(s) in writing, using a Statement of Concern about Library Materials form. (See Appendix B)
2. The written complaint will be forwarded to the CEO who will read, review or listen to the material, discuss the complaint with the appropriate library staff and, when necessary, check with outside review sources.
3. When the review is completed, the CEO will provide the patron with a written explanation for the decision. The decision will reflect the principles outlined in the Library's Collection Development and Material Selection Policy.

### **Appendices:**

- Appendix A: Principles of Intellectual Freedom (adopted by CLA) and Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual (adopted by OLA)
- Appendix B: Port Colborne Public Library. Statement of Concern About Library Materials

### **Related Documents:**

- Port Colborne Public Library. FN-03: Values Statement
- Port Colborne Public Library. FN-04: Intellectual Freedom
- Port Colborne Public Library. OP-03: Accessibility in the Library
- Canadian Federation of Library Associations. Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries.



## **Appendix A**

### **Principles of Intellectual Freedom**

Adopted November 1985, by the Canadian Library Association.

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those that some elements of society may consider unconventional, unpopular and unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.

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### **Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual**

Adopted 1990, by the Ontario Library Association

In affirming its support of the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the freedom to read and the freedom of the press, as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Library Association declares its acceptance of the following propositions:

That the provision of library service to the Canadian public is based upon the right of the citizen, under the protection of the law, to judge individually on questions of politics, religion, and morality.

That it is the responsibility of librarians to maintain this right and to implement it in their selection of books, periodicals, films, recordings and other materials.

That intellectual freedom requires freedom to examine other ideas and other interpretations of life than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general, including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional or unpopular.

That freedom of the press requires freedom of the writer to depict what is ugly, shocking and unedifying in life when such depiction is made with serious intent.

That free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that the freedom to read, listen and view is fundamental to such free traffic.

That it is therefore part of the library's service to its public to resist any attempt by an individual or group within the community it serves to abrogate or curtail the freedom to read, view and listen by demanding the removal of any book, periodical, film, recording or other material from the library.

That it is equally part of the library's responsibility to its public to ensure that its selection of materials is not unduly influenced by the personal opinions of the selectors, but determined by the application of generally accepted standards of accuracy, style and presentation.

**Appendix B:**

**STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone & Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of any organization you represent: \_\_\_\_\_

**Resource about which you are commenting:**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author / Producer: \_\_\_\_\_

Copyright Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read the Library's Collection Development Policy? YES NO

What brought this resource to your attention? (For reviews, please give publication details if possible.) \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read/viewed the entire work? What sections did you review? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your objections to this library resource? Please be specific and give page references where applicable. \_\_\_\_\_

What action(s) are you recommending? \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# Port Colborne Public Library

Please include additional pages if you require more space to answer the above questions.