

# CUSTOMER POLICIES

## MATERIALS SELECTION

Board Policy:

**DATE REVIEWED: 01/26/2023**

**DATE APPROVED: 01/26/2023**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/01/2023**

**REPLACING POLICY EFFECTIVE: 11/07/2014**

Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) selects and acquires materials in a variety of formats to promote its purpose and vision. By acquiring, organizing and maintaining these materials, CML seeks to provide access to a broad and balanced view of society – its culture, history and diversity of beliefs.

### A. Selection

1. Selection of materials for CML's collection is delegated to qualified employees in the Collection Services Department of CML. The ultimate responsibility for the development of the collection lies with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) under the authority of the CML Board of Trustees.
2. Employees utilize some or all of the following criteria in determining materials appropriate for CML's collection:
  - a. Relevance to the vision, purpose, goals and service responses of CML
  - b. Timeliness and importance for contemporary society
  - c. Competence, popularity, local interest and reputation of author, illustrator, creator, producer, performer and/or publisher
  - d. Relevancy of content to the community
  - e. Suitability of subject and method of presentation for intended audience
  - f. Relationship to existing collection and other media in the same subject field
  - g. Legal definition of obscene materials
  - h. Cost and availability of funds
  - i. Accuracy
  - j. Representative expression of controversial or minority points of view
  - k. Suitability of physical form to library use
  - l. Textbooks: information also serves the general public or is unavailable in other forms
  - m. Provides added value over other formats
  - n. Film rating

Employees rely on a number of professional tools for selection, including library and publishers' journals, reviews, etc., as guides for inclusion of materials into

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the collection. Internal collection scope statements are prepared and maintained to provide additional detail and guidance.

## B. Labeling

CML does not mark or identify materials to show approval or disapproval of contents, including labeling or altering materials due to controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter. Labeling included in packaging or as part of the item that indicates outside rating services or private advisory codes will not be altered or removed. Library collections will be organized and maintained according to an accepted system of organization (Dewey Decimal, alphabetical, genre, etc.). CML will not remove or shield materials in the collection due to controversial content or images.

## C. Donated Materials

Gifts of books and other materials are accepted by CML with the understanding that CML reserves the right to handle or dispose of them in the best interest of the organization. Materials added to the collection must meet CML's selection criteria.

Financial gifts to support the purchase of materials are directed to CML's Development Department and the Columbus Metropolitan Library Foundation (CMLF).

## D. Collection Maintenance

In order to maintain a collection of popular materials in good condition, materials are removed from the collection on an ongoing basis. Damaged, unattractive, outdated and unused materials are subject to recycling, discard or donation. Because the Board of Trustees has determined that, in general, the greatest benefit to CML from discarded material can be realized through donation of those materials to the Friends of the Library (FOL), discarded materials are largely donated to the FOL.

## E. Diverse Viewpoints

CML's collection provides the community the means to study several sides of an issue by offering access to materials expressing opposing views on contentious topics, including those of an unorthodox and/or unpopular nature. This does not necessarily imply numerical balance of materials representing opposing views. Materials meeting the selection criteria will not be removed from the collection nor

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will materials that do not meet the criteria be added because of pressure by groups or individuals.

CML does not automatically remove older titles with content that may not be deemed acceptable by current societal standards. Titles are reviewed on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration the enduring popularity and historical value of the work.

## F. Request to Review Library Materials

Individuals with concerns about items in the collection may ask employees about such material. The employee in charge of the location at the time will discuss these concerns and offer the individual a copy of this policy for background on how selection decisions are made.

Individuals may formally request reconsideration of an item or items by submitting a written Library Materials Review Request via CML's website or paper form available at all locations. When a request for review is received, administration will respond and provide documentation (reviews, publisher/author's credentials, etc.) indicating the criteria used in selecting the item in question. Any appeal to this response will be referred to the CML Board of Trustees with a recommendation for disposition. The individual making the appeal will be informed in writing of the Trustees' decision as soon as possible after the next regular Board meeting is held. The final responsibility for materials removal resides with the Board of Trustees.

### Administrative Procedure:

**DATE REVIEWED: 00/00/0000**  
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### Related Policies/Forms:

- Access to Library Materials and Services
- Cardholder Registration and Account Access
- Exhibits
- Free Materials and Community Information
- Interlibrary Loans
- Programs