
SECTION 5: MATERIALS SELECTION AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

5.1. Selection and Purchase of Library Materials

The Austin County Library System aims to provide library materials that meet the informational and educational needs of the citizens of Austin County. Selection and purchase of library materials rests with the library director and branch library director who will adhere to accepted professional practices when making selection decisions.

5.1.1. Principals of Material Selection

- Materials are selected which provide for the interest, information, enlightenment, entertainment, education, development, and enrichment of all library customers, within budgetary constraints and availability of materials.
- The freedom to read, along with the freedom to hear and to view, is protected by the *First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States*. This freedom, essential to our democracy, will be upheld, supported, and defended in the selection and accessibility of all library materials. In this regard, the library upholds the principles of the *American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (Attachment 2)*, *Freedom to Read (Attachment 3)*, *Freedom to View (Attachment 4)*, and *Free Access to Libraries for Minors (Attachment 5)* as well as to the *Texas Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Statement (Attachment 6)*.
- Selection of materials does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content, viewpoint, implications, or presentation of the materials.
- It is the parent(s), and only the parent(s), who may restrict their children, and only their own children, from access to library materials. Responsibility for children's reading rests with their parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s). Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of children.
- The collection does not include pop-up books, coloring books, workbooks, cutout books, or fragile, multipart items that will not withstand circulation.
- Periodicals and newspapers are selected to include current information not available in book format. Back issues are retained in paper, microform, or electronic formats considering reference usefulness, customer interest, and space limitations.

Austin County Library System Policy Manual

January 2023 Revision of November 2009 Court Order# 09-535

Approved by: Austin County Commissioners' Court

The following policies govern how we use our library.

5.1.2. Selection Criteria

Library materials, whether purchased or donated, are subject to the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards to be included in the Library's collection:

- Public interest or demand (Attachment 8: Suggested for Purchase Form)
- Relevance to the community
- Enduring value
- Readability and style
- Treatment of subject for intended audience
- Physical durability, and attractiveness
- Suitability of the format for library use
- Cost
- Availability from our vendors
- Reviews in the professional journals
- Reviews in popular media
- Professional or literary reputation of the author, publisher or producer
- Circulation of similar material
- Relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject
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Objections to items in the collection should be made in writing to the library director by completing the *Request for Reconsideration of Materials* (Attachment 7) form.

5.2. Collection Maintenance

Materials that no longer meet the needs of the community and no longer support the library's collection will be withdrawn and disposed of in accordance with the library's "Weeding of Materials" policy.

5.2.1. Weeding of Materials

In order to maintain the best possible collection of materials, a continual weeding process will take place at both of the Austin County Library System branches. Decisions will be based on accepted professional practice, such as those described in *The CREW: A WEEDING MANUAL FOR MODERN LIBRARIES* and the professional judgment of the library director or designated staff. Additionally, items are discarded if they are outdated, if they no longer circulate, if there are more duplicate copies than needed, or if they are in poor physical condition. A complete weeding of the entire

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collection is accomplished every three years. Items discarded are plainly marked and may be sold in the book sale.

5.2.2. Disposal of Surplus Library Materials

Items withdrawn from the collection will be disposed of in accordance with local law, which permits discarding worn, dirty, or outdated material into the trash, recycling of paper, or transfer to the Friends of the Library book sale.



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AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, we affirm these principles:

1. It is in the public interest to provide the broadest possible access to films and other audiovisual materials because they have proven to be among the most effective means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. It is in the public interest to provide for our audiences, films and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
3. It is our professional responsibility to resist the constraint of labeling or prejudging a film on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or film maker or on the basis of controversial content.

It is our professional responsibility to contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

Adopted February, 1979
American Film and Video Association

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS

The American Library Association supports equal and equitable access to all library resources and services by users of all ages. Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users is in violation of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The right to use a library includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, emancipatory or other legal status of users violates Article V. This includes minors who do not have a parent or guardian available to sign a library card application or permission slip. Unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness should be able to obtain a library card regardless of library policies related to chronological age.

School and public libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and resources to meet the diverse interests and informational needs of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of providing library services and should be determined on an individual basis. Equitable access to all library resources and services should not be abridged based on chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, legal status, or through restrictive scheduling and use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. A library's failure to acquire materials on the grounds that minors may be able to access those materials diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, social media, online applications, games, technologies, programming, and other formats.¹ Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.² Libraries and their library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

Article VII of the Library Bill of Rights states, “All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use.” This includes students and minors, who have a right to be free from any unreasonable intrusion into or surveillance of their lawful library use.³

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize libraries and their governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As “Libraries: An American Value” states, “We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children’s use of the library and its resources and services.”⁴ Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children’s—and only their children’s—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their own children. Libraries and library governing bodies should not use rating systems to inhibit a minor’s access to materials.⁵

Libraries and their governing bodies have a legal and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the communities they serve have free and equitable access to a diverse range of library resources and services that is inclusive, regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Libraries and their governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014; and June 25, 2019.

THE TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM STATEMENT

A. PREAMBLE

The Texas Library Association holds that the freedom to read is a corollary of the constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press. Freedom of choice in selecting materials is a necessary safeguard to the freedom to read, and shall be protected against extra-legal, irresponsible attempts by self-appointed censors to abridge it. The Association believes that citizens shall have the right of free inquiry and the equally important right of forming their own opinions, and that it is of the utmost importance to the continued existence of democracy that freedom of the press in all forms of public communication be defended and preserved. The Texas Library Association subscribes in full to the principles set forth in the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS of the American Library Association, Freedom to Read Statement, and interpretative statements adopted thereto.

B. AREAS OF CONCERN

1. LEGISLATION. The Texas Library Association is concerned with legislation at the federal, state, local and school district level which tends to strengthen the position of libraries and other media of communication as instruments of knowledge and culture in a free society. The Association is also concerned with monitoring proposed legislation at the federal, state, local and school district level which might restrict, prejudice or otherwise interfere with the selection, acquisition, or other professional activities of libraries, as expressed in the American Library Association's LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and the Freedom to Read Statement.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee works with the Legislative Committee to watch proposed legislation, at the various levels, which would restrict or interfere with the selection, acquisition, or other professional activities of libraries.

2. INTERFERENCE. The Association is concerned with the proposed or actual restrictions imposed by individuals, voluntary committees, or administrative authority on library materials or on the selection judgment, or on the procedures or practices of librarians. The Intellectual Freedom Committee attempts to eliminate restrictions which are imposed on the use or selection of library materials or selection judgment or on the procedures or practices of librarians; receives requests for advice and assistance where freedom has been threatened or curtailed; and recommends action to the Executive Board where it appears necessary.

3. MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY. The Texas Library Association believes that every library, in order to strengthen its own selection process, and to provide an objective basis for evaluation of

that process, should develop a written official statement of policy for the selection of library materials.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee encourages all libraries to develop a written statement of policy for the selection of library materials which includes an endorsement of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

4. EDUCATION. The Texas Library Association is concerned with the continuing education of librarians and the general public in understanding and implementing the philosophy inherent in the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and the ALA Freedom to Read Statement. The Intellectual Freedom Committee supports an active education program for librarians, trustees, and the general public.

5. LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. The Texas Library Association, in order to encourage a united front in defending the rights to read, shall cooperate with other organizations concerned with intellectual freedom.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee advises on TLA positions and cooperates with other organizations.

Adopted September 15, 1972 by the TLA Council
Reaffirmed April 7, 1995 by the TLA Council

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIAL FORM

The Austin County Library System have established a materials selection policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to the library director, West End Library, PO Box 179, Industry, TX 78944.

Initiated by _____
Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Do you represent Self? Organization?
Name of Organization: _____

Resource on which you are commenting:

Book Movie Magazine
Digital Resource Game Newspaper

Title _____
Author/Producer _____

Please respond to the following questions. If sufficient space is not provided, please us an additional sheet of paper.

What brought this resource to your attention?

Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?

What concerns you about the resource?

Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

What action are you requesting the library consider?

SUGGESTED FOR PURCHASE

You are a fabulous resource for new books, DVDs, and series!

Enter the book title you think would be great for the West End Library.

Author (if you know them)

Is this part of a series?

If so enter the series name and number in series if you know it.

Do we already have other books in this series? (optional)

If so, which ones do we have in the library?

Genre (optional)

Select all the genres you think apply to your title suggestion.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Science fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Mystery fiction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fantasy fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Romance fiction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Horror fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Novels/Manga | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports fiction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inspirational fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> NON-FICTION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Realistic fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Humor fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Enter your name so you can read it first when it arrives!
