

Sutter County Library
Collection Development Policy

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Collection Development Policy

1. Mission Statement

Sutter County Library empowers individuals and enriches the community by providing diverse resources, educational opportunities, and engaging programs. We inspire lifelong learning, foster creativity, and connect people of all ages through a welcoming environment that embraces change and celebrates growth. Through our dedicated services and active community partnerships, we strive to create a space where everyone can learn, grow, and thrive.

2. Purpose of Collection Development Policy

- a. The Collection Development Policy, reviewed by the Sutter County Board of Supervisors in conjunction with Sutter County Counsel, is one of the Library's fundamental policy documents.
- b. The purpose of the Collection Development Policy is to serve as a guide for Sutter County Library staff in regards to collection development, management, and material selection. It defines what comprises the collection, specifies the types of materials that are included, and explains the basis for making collection management decisions. The policy also serves to inform the public about the Library's collection and the principles that govern the selection process.
- c. The goals and objectives stated in this policy will not replace the judgment of Library professionals and are designed to assist Library professionals in the selection process.
- d. Sutter County Library will continuously work to curate a collection representing a wide array of people, cultures, ideas, and experiences. The process of curating, maintaining, and providing a diverse and equitable collection is an ongoing process which is considered during all aspects of collection management. The Collection Development Policy ensures that over time, the Sutter County Library's collection will remain on course and reflect the needs of the Sutter County community, while creating unique experiences of meaning and inspiration for the individual patron.
- e. In support of its mission, the Library endorses and has adopted the following statements used as guidelines for the development of the Library collections: American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights," "Freedom to Read," and "Freedom to View," presented in the Appendix section.

Further, California State Law, AB 1825 passing in 2024, requires the following statements to be included in public library collection development policies:

1. The collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respects both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.
2. The public Library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas.
3. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present varied points of view in the collection as a whole.
4. The right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences is acknowledged.

3. Collection Development Goals and Scope

a. The primary responsibility of Sutter County Library is to provide a broad and diverse choice of materials to meet the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the community. Therefore, the Library's collection is reviewed on an ongoing basis to meet current needs in varying formats to acknowledge the importance of books and newer technology as sources of valuable information. This policy supports the Library's goals as outlined below:

1. Provide popular materials
2. Promote lifelong learning, exploration, discovery, and enrichment
3. Support the richly diverse culture of the community.
4. Provide a space for community gathering

b. Patron use is one of the most powerful influences on the Library's collection. Circulation, patron purchase requests, and hold levels are all closely monitored, influencing the purchase of new items and additional copies of high demand items.

c. Inherent in the collection development process is an appreciation for each patron of Sutter County Library of all age groups. The Library provides materials to support all of our patron's journeys and does not place a value on one patron's needs or preferences over another's. The Library upholds the right of the individual to access information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox or unacceptable to others.

d. Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature, and reflect the varied beliefs and values of the community. The reading and viewing activity of children is ultimately the responsibility of parents, legal guardians, or caregivers who guide and oversee their own child's development. Sutter County Library does not intrude on that relationship and the Library does not serve *in loco parentis*.

e. Selection of Library materials and resources is the responsibility of the professional staff of Sutter County Library. Other staff members and the public may recommend materials for consideration. Library management retains the authority to reject or select any item contrary to the recommendations of the staff.

f. To support an informed public, the collection shall represent diverse points of view, and may include materials that some members of the public consider to be contrary to their personal tastes, beliefs or philosophy. The Library will provide free access of Library collections to all users. In selecting materials, Library staff will use professional reference resources, judgment, knowledge and experience to select these materials, and will proactively solicit advice from, as well as anticipate the needs and interests of, the community.

4. Collection Development Guidelines

a. The selection of any material or resource does not constitute an endorsement by the Library, Sutter County, or its staff.

- b. The Library recognizes that materials and resources held in the collection, may be considered controversial by some.
- c. Selection decisions are guided by the merits of the work, collection needs, and interests of a collection which can support the roles of the Library as a reference center, learning center, educational center, and community center for all.
- d. Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that material may be accessible to children. Responsibility for children's use of library materials and resources lies with their parents, legal guardians, or caretakers.
- e. The Library selects materials of varying complexity, media, and format because it serves a public that includes a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, interests, sensory preferences, and reading skills. When staff review and select materials for purchase, they consider the needs of the entire community.
- f. The Library may select materials that are to be used in the Library only.
- g. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the content and nothing will be sequestered except to protect it from theft or damage.
- h. Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own merits and its intended audience. A single standard does not apply to all acquisition decisions; therefore, some material may be chosen to fulfill recreational needs of the community, while others may be selected because of their artistic merit, scholarship, or value to humanity.
- i. Library materials that experience high demand, may or may not meet the general and specific criteria contained in this policy. Volume and nature of patron requests are a serious consideration for selectors. Additionally, as the community's social and intellectual climate changes, materials not originally recommended for purchase may become of interest.
- k. Materials donated to the Library are not automatically added to the collection. These items are reviewed by Library staff according to the selection criteria. The Library may add works produced by authors, printers, or publishers with Sutter County Library connections that meet the purpose and objectives of this policy.

5. Selection Criteria

Collection development decisions are based on staff judgment, training, knowledge, and expertise. Materials are available in a variety of formats, quantities, and titles. Selection criteria includes but is not limited to the following general criteria to select new and donated materials for the collection:

- a. Relevance to interests and needs of the community
- b. Extent of publicity, critical review, and current or anticipated demand
- c. Current or historical significance of the author or subject
- d. Local significance of the author or subject
- e. Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses

f. Reputation and qualifications of the author, publisher, or producer, with preference generally given to titles vetted through examination of professional reviews (ex. Library Journal, Publishers Weekly, Booklist, Kirkus, etc.).

g. Suitability of format to Library circulation and use

h. Date of publication

i. Depth of collections with a focus on being representative of a wide variety of subjects, authors, and protagonists.

j. Price, availability, space available in the Library and Library materials budget

The Library does not customarily purchase the following types of material: costly books of little demand, collectibles, used books or items, textbooks, or family genealogies. Abridged, expurgated or condensed materials are also generally not acquired.

6. Patron Recommendations and Requests

Patrons may request items the Library does not presently own. Each request is reviewed for inclusion in the collection and will follow the collection maintenance guidelines and selection criteria listed in this policy. Requests can be made in person, over the phone, or online.

7. Maintenance of Library Materials

a. Most library materials are processed in such a way as to ensure their maximum use under normal circumstances.

b. Damaged but still usable materials are mended according to an established set of procedures.

c. Titles and items may be withdrawn from the collection through periodic, systematic review by librarians. Materials may be withdrawn because they are worn, obsolete, or seldom used; superseded by a newer edition or better work on the subject; or physically damaged or in poor condition as further addressed in Section 10.

8. Collection Management Overview

The Library's collection is a living, changing entity. As items are added, others are reviewed for their ongoing value and sometimes are withdrawn from the collection. Great care is taken to retain or replace items that have enduring value to the community. Decisions are influenced by patterns of use, the capacity of each location and the holdings of other libraries that may specialize in a given subject matter. Staff review the collection regularly to maintain its vitality and usefulness to the community.

9. Responsibility for Collection Management

The final authority for the Library collection rests with the Library management. Implementation of collection development policy and management of the collection is assigned to Library staff. Sutter County Library disposes of materials that have been withdrawn according to the criteria for weeding and withdrawal outlined below.

10. Criteria for Weeding and Withdrawal

a. The following criteria are used in selecting materials for withdrawal:

1. Damage or poor condition
2. Number of copies in the collection
3. Relevance to the needs and interest of the community
4. Current demand and frequency of use
5. Accuracy and timeliness
6. Lack of local interest
7. Availability elsewhere including other libraries and online
8. Deemed to be of an enduring nature
9. Availability of improved or newer editions
10. Space availability
11. Outdated or harmful representations of groups of people

b. In addition, staff use the following guidelines for the withdrawal of items from special collections:

1. Curatorial or environmental requirements exceed the resources of the Library
2. Legal restrictions, possession of valid title and the donor's intent
3. Relevance to the scope of the special collections

c. Replacement of materials that are withdrawn is not automatic. The following criteria are considered when determining the need for replacement:

1. Number of copies in area libraries
2. Existence of adequate coverage of the subject
3. Demand for the specific title or for material in that subject area
4. Existence of a newer format as a replacement

d. Withdrawn items are donated to The Friends of the Sutter County Library for reuse and recycling. Materials unsuitable for transfer are discarded or recycled. The Library will not accept requests to hold weeded materials for individuals. Donated items not added to the Library collection may be disposed of or given to the Friends of the Sutter County Library who sell them to fund donations that benefit the library.

e. For an item withdrawn from special collections the Library will document its disposition.

f. Daily newspapers are typically held for up to 3 months.

11. Collection Audits

The Library routinely performs an audit of the collection to identify gaps in subjects and equitable representation of voices. The results of the collection audit are used by Library staff to purchase titles

that fill in gaps of the collection. The budget for these purchases is the standard annual collection budget unless a grant or other one-time funds are infused.

12. Gifts, Donations, and Memorials

Sutter County Library accepts donations of books and other materials with the understanding that the same selection guidelines are applied to gifts and donations as are applied to materials purchased by the Library. The Library retains the authority to accept or reject gifts. Library staff make all decisions as to the use, housing, and final disposition of donations.

Acceptance of donated items are subject to the discretion of the unit head in conformity with Library selection standards. Gift materials that are not added to the collection are not returned to the donor. Unused gifts may be offered to the Friends of Sutter County Library for public sale, discarded, or disposed of in some other way. Collections of donated materials may not necessarily be kept together as a group, and the Library may not be able to accept gifts with this requirement. The Library does not evaluate or appraise gift materials for tax purposes.

13. Scope of the Main Library

The Main Library contains the Library's core fiction and nonfiction collections in multiple formats including but not limited to print, audio, and video formats for the Library system and includes materials of an enduring nature as well as current-interest materials. The Main Library collections represent the diverse viewpoints and interests of the community the Library serves.

14. Scope of the Branch Libraries

Branch libraries serve the needs of the communities in which they are located. Library staff regularly evaluate the collection to ensure its relevance. Collections of the branch libraries concentrate on materials of high interest and materials that support the Library's overall goals. Branch collections are generally shaped, in part, by patron use.

15. Scope of the Online Collection

The online collection represents the varied viewpoints and interests of the entire community the Library serves. This collection may include citation and full-text databases; eBooks, learning resources, other downloadable and streaming media, and instructional platforms.

16. Requests for Reconsideration

Sutter County Library selects collection materials using established criteria and full consideration of the varying age groups and backgrounds of patrons. Requests for removal of items from the collection may be made by Sutter County residents using a formal procedure outlined below and with the "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form in the Appendix section.

- a. Sutter County Library recognizes that at any given time some materials may be deemed inappropriate or offensive by patrons. Selection of materials are based on the principles stated in this policy. Materials will not be identified to show approval or disapproval. No materials will be sequestered except to protect it from damage or theft.
- b. The Library believes that censorship is purely an individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject for themselves, books and other materials that they do not approve of, they cannot exercise this right of censorship to other persons to read or use other library materials. Sutter County

Library adheres to and supports the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement. (See Appendix.)

c. Responsibility for supervising children's use of the Library and Library materials rests with parents or legal guardians. At no time will the Library staff act in loco parentis. Selection of Library material will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

d. Patrons requesting that an item be moved or withdrawn from the Sutter County Library collection must complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form, a sample of which is included in the Appendix of this policy. Patrons must reside in the County of Sutter to have their request considered and only one request per patron will be considered at a time. The request for reconsideration will be acknowledged in writing by the Library Director within ten (10) business days. The Library Director will assign a panel of staff members to evaluate the item in question. Review will be completed in no more than thirty (30) business days of the initial request for reconsideration. The panel's recommendations will be considered, and the Library Director's final decision will be mailed or emailed to the patron. Once a title has been considered, it will not be reviewed again for a period of two (2) years.

17. Appendix

"Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form

American Library Association "Freedom to Read Statement"

American Library Association "Freedom to View"

American Library Association "Library Bill of Rights"

This policy replaces any previous policy regarding collection development.

Reviewed by Sutter County Counsel 5/27/2025

Approved by Sutter County Board of Supervisors 5/27/2025

Implemented 5/27/2025

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Sutter County Library

Your Name: _____ Date _____ / _____ / _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Author/Artist: _____

Title: _____

Please briefly answer the following questions about the item that you would like to have reconsidered.

1. How did you learn of this item?
2. What are your objections to the item?
3. What harm do you feel might result from reading/listening to/viewing this work?
4. Did you read/listen to/view the work in its entirety? If not, what parts did you read/listen to/view?
5. Have you read any professional reviews of the work? If so, please list the names of critics and sources of reviews.
6. What do you think are the main ideas of the work or what was the author's/artist's purpose in creating this work?
7. What suggestion do you have for a work with a similar purpose to replace this item?
8. What would you like the library to do with this material?

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form. The Library Director will respond to your concerns within 10 business days of the receipt of this form.

Signature and Date

American Library Association – Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses
The Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
National Association of College Stores
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Council of Teachers of English
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

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 these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, 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.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

American Library Association – Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).