

Lafayette Public Library (LPL) Collection Development Policy

I. The Policy

The LPL Collection Development Policy (the “Policy”) provides a framework for the growth and development of collections in support of the library’s mission to “enhance the quality of life of our community by providing free and equal access to high-quality, cost-effective library services that meet the needs and expectations of our diverse community for information, life-long learning, recreation, and cultural enrichment.”

The Policy also serves as a guide for the selection, acquisition, maintenance, and retention of materials by establishing roles, responsibilities, and a process for addressing patron concerns.

The library’s goal is to provide a diverse Lafayette Parish community with materials that reflect a wide range of views, expressions, opinions, and interests. Specific acquisitions may include items that are considered controversial, unorthodox, or unpopular. Inclusion of questionable language or attitudes in materials is not in itself a reason to exclude them from the collection. The library’s acquisition of these items does not constitute endorsement of their content but rather makes available its expressions and supports the principle of intellectual freedom.

The LPL provides free access to materials in a number of formats (print, non-print) to all users. Library patrons make their own choices as to what they will use based on individual interests and concerns.

The library recognizes the fundamental right of parents to make decisions as to the care, custody, and control of their children. This fundamental right includes the right to decide the upbringing and education of children under their control. Parents have the right to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their minor children. In furtherance of this fundamental right, the LPL considers the community standards of Lafayette Parish when acquiring library material that would be accessible to a minor through donation or purchase.

II. The Library and Its Community

The LPL serves the citizens of Lafayette Parish. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the parish has a population of 247,866 with 121,389 people residing within the city of Lafayette. The parish includes the cities, towns, and communities of Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Judice, Milton, Ossun, Ridge, Scott, and Youngsville. The largest racial/ethnic groups are White (68.1%), followed by African-American or Black (27.6%), Hispanic or Latino (4.9%), Asian (2.0%), American Indian and Alaska Native (.54%), and Native Hawaiian (.1%).

Lafayette is home to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, the second-largest university in the state. The South Louisiana Community College also has a campus in Lafayette providing academic and vocational training. Lafayette boasts a strong economy, with one quarter of the local workforce employed in the wealth-creating industries of mining (energy), construction, manufacturing, and information. The health care industry is Lafayette’s single largest employing industry. Despite these advantages, the median household income of Lafayette Parish residents was only \$63,311 in

2021. 17.7% of Lafayette Parish residents currently live in poverty. More than 89% of the population have a high school diploma or higher; 33.9% of the population has a bachelor's degree.

A primary goal of the collection is to be accessible to all users throughout the parish and to meet the needs of people of differing ages, ethnic groups, lifestyles, and points of view. The library provides service through the Main Library in downtown Lafayette, the South Regional Library in south Lafayette, the North Regional Library in Carencro, the East Regional Library in Youngsville, the West Regional Library in Scott, and the following small branch libraries: Duson, Milton, Chenier, and Butler Memorial. A bookmobile has been providing parish-wide service since the summer of 2019.

The LPL is funded by dedicated parish-wide property tax millages, which are used for the operation and maintenance of the library system. The annual materials budget is proposed by the Library Director at budget time and submitted for approval by the Lafayette Public Library Board of Control. Final budget approval is given by the Lafayette City-Parish Council.

III. Scope of the Collection

The scope of the collection refers to the range and type of materials selected including the formats offered and the level of reading difficulty. The scope is broad to allow for free expression and free access to ideas. The library's collection provides a wide range of literary, cultural, educational, informational, and recreational materials for people of all ages.

Since the LPL serves as a center for life-long learning, it has materials to support learning through all ages and phases of life, from the youngest child's needs to those of senior citizens. While the library selects materials to support the educational process as much as possible, the library's collection does not substitute for the specialized collections provided by school or college libraries. The library makes no attempt to duplicate materials, such as textbooks, in those collections. Textbooks will, however, be purchased in those subject areas where there is little or no material in any other format or in those instances where they substantially add to the collection.

LPL collections focus on the general reader rather than the researcher. Therefore, budget and space limitations require a focus on materials that appeal to a broad range of users, rather than the academic and highly technical works collected by universities and other research institutions. The collection is not archival. No extraordinary efforts are made to retain or preserve last copies or out of print titles. In general, the library does not collect rare or unusual materials that require special handling.

A significant part of the library's collection is popular materials for recreational use. Popular materials may be in a variety of formats. Librarians select for a wide range of interests using evidence-based software and statistics. Circulation, patron requests, and title hold levels are all carefully monitored, triggering the purchase of new items and additional copies of high demand titles.

Materials are purchased in the most appropriate, and available, format. Examples of the variety of formats collected include: print (books, magazines, newspapers); audiovisual (DVDs, Blurays,

books on CD, music CDs, video games); digital content (online databases, electronic books and magazines, and downloadable audio books, videos, and music); and other materials (microforms, puzzles, etc.). New formats will be considered for the collection when a significant portion of the community has the necessary technology to make use of the new format. Other factors to be considered when deciding whether to add a new format include: availability of titles in the format, cost, and the library's ability to acquire, process, and circulate the items in the specific format.

IV. Responsibility for Selection

The LPL Board of Control delegates the development of the collection to the Library Director. Responsibility for the initial selection of library resources rests with the library's professional staff, which involves a wide variety of individuals including collection development specialists, librarians, and branch managers. The responsibility for selection ultimately rests with the Library Director, operating within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Control. Among the selection tools used by library staff members are professional journals, trade journals, subject bibliographies, publishers' promotional materials, and reviews from reputable sources. Individual subject expertise of the staff, requests from library patrons, coverage in local bookstores and newspapers, publishers' catalogs, bestseller lists, and reviews all influence selectors' decisions.

V. Criteria for Selection

General criteria for selecting library materials are listed below. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acquired.

- Public demand, interest, or need
- Contemporary significance or popular interest
- Attention of critics and reviewers
- Creative, literary, or technical quality/merit
- Prominence, authority, and/or competence of author, creator, or publisher
- Timeliness of material
- Relation to existing collections and other materials on the subject
- Statement of challenging, original, or alternative point of view
- Cost, availability, and library materials budget
- Date of publication
- Physical durability and suitability of the format for library use

Self-publishing and publishing on demand has become easier, and therefore there are more requests to purchase these titles. Self-published books must meet the same selection criteria as books from mainstream publishers. In general, the library will not purchase self-published items unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Items should have valuable local content, have high local interest, have received positive professional reviews, or have been examined and found to be of merit.

Additional criteria for selection for digital formats:

- Ease of use
- Accessibility for multiple, concurrent users, and/or remote users

- Comparison of content and price with other available formats
- Accuracy and frequency of updating
- Technical requirements and compatibility with existing equipment and systems
- Technical support and training
- Licensing fees and requirements

VI. Collections

Print collections

At this time, materials are selected for collections in:

- Adult fiction and non-fiction in various genre, Dewey, and BISAC subjects
- Teen fiction and non-fiction in various genre, Dewey, and BISAC subjects
- Children's fiction and non-fiction in various genre, Dewey, and BISAC subjects
- Children's picture books, easy readers, and board books
- Large Print, which refers to books printed in large type or font to make reading materials accessible to patrons with visual impairments. The library provides a variety of titles in this format, with an emphasis on popular fiction and non-fiction. Most titles are of adult interest and reading level; however, some children's and teen titles are purchased as demand warrants if available.
- Graphic novels for adults, teens, and children

Material physically in the library which has been identified as containing sexually explicit materials shall be included/shelved in the adult collection.

Non-print Collections

At this time, materials are selected for collections in:

- DVD/Blu-ray: This collection includes instructional and educational programs, foreign films, current and classic feature films, and TV series for adults, teens, and children.
- Music: The collection of musical recordings on CD represents a wide range of music genres for adults and children.
- Audiobooks: Current formats purchased are CD, Playaway and MP3 recordings. The collection of spoken word recordings consists primarily of popular and classic fiction and nonfiction titles for adults, teens, and children.
- Games: Popular and educational electronic and board/table games for adults, teens, and children are part of the collection.
- Other items: Following the lead of many libraries across the nation, the library purchases a wide variety of materials to circulate. Our collection currently has bike locks, fishing poles, musical instruments, etc.

Special Collections

The LPL has several special collections. Materials selected for these collections are judged by the same standards of content and format that apply to other items purchased by the library.

A. Leased Books and DVDs

The leased book and movie collection is comprised primarily of popular fiction and non-fiction titles of interest to adults. Titles are chosen based on popularity and anticipated high patron demand. Every title acquired for the leased collection must also have been purchased for the regular circulating collection. Once the demand for a rental title eases, the item is removed from circulation and returned to the vendor.

B. Foreign Language Materials

Fiction and non-fiction books in print and digital format published in languages other than English are purchased for the collection in response to local demographics, demonstrated need, and popular demand. Specific consideration is given to adult and children's titles in Spanish and French, which are spoken in the Lafayette area, and the needs of LPSS language immersion programs.

C. Genealogy and Local History

Genealogy and local history materials can be found at the Main Library, with smaller collections of resources available at the regional branch libraries. Although the Main Library houses most of the genealogy and local history materials (books, periodicals, and microfilm), users have free access to genealogical databases through various library online resources. Genealogical and local history materials, whether purchased or donated, will be evaluated according to the library's criteria for selection outlined in this Policy, with an emphasis on local interest and the relationship of the item to the existing collection. The library's collection focuses on Louisiana, the Acadiana area, Francophone genealogy, and individual family histories of local interest. The library subscribes to several genealogical periodicals and also houses current and historical Lafayette telephone books and city directories. The library's microfilm holdings consist of U.S. Census records, Louisiana birth and death indices, Sanborn fire insurance maps, and issues of the Lafayette Gazette and the Lafayette Daily Advertiser. Both the genealogy and local history collections include both circulating and non-circulating titles.

D. Reference

Reference materials, whether in print or digital format, are those designed by the arrangement and treatment of their subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information rather than to be read consecutively. They can provide quick, concise, and current information, or they may serve as an index to other materials. Since they are typically used daily to answer specific questions, reference books are designated for use within the library. In selecting reference materials, the primary criteria are the users' information needs and the format in which it is available. These decisions will be based upon cost, content, currency, and ease of use. Reference materials are purchased for use by adults, teens, and children.

E. Magazines and Newspapers

- Magazines, periodicals, and serial publications: The library subscribes to a wide range of

popular magazines, periodicals, and serials such as comic books in both print and digital format to support a variety of patron interests. The library subscribes to adult, teen, and children's titles. Technical, trade, or professional journals (except those used by library staff) are not purchased.

- Newspapers: Major national, state, and local newspapers are subscribed to in print and digital format as available.

F. Digital Resources

The digital resources collection includes downloadable electronic books (e-Books), e-audiobooks, e-magazines and downloadable videos, as well as a large variety of online subscription databases.

E-Books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, and streaming videos are purchased for patrons to download to a wide range of personal electronic devices. Titles selected reflect print and audio media acquisitions guidelines with emphasis on bestsellers and popular materials for all age groups.

The library offers access to a wide range of databases selected, purchased, and made available through the State Library of Louisiana. The Lafayette Public Library supplements this collection with additional databases chosen with its patrons' needs in mind. Online databases extend the collection outside library walls by providing ready access to information in digital format. Many of the databases contain specialized information beyond the scope of the library's print collections; other databases contain information that does not exist in print format.

The library focuses on selecting educational databases which have broad appeal to the entire community. Some of the current databases include genealogy resources, magazine and newspaper articles, business and legal information, and job training and testing.

VII. Suggestions for Additions to the Collection

To facilitate the acquisition of resources desired by library users, patron suggestions are always considered for addition to the collection. Users can request that specific items be purchased by filing out a Request Title Not Currently at LPL form available online or by filling out a Comments and Suggestions form at any Lafayette Public Library location. If the library does not acquire the item for the collection, or if the item is no longer in print, the library will try to obtain the item through interlibrary loan (ILL). Interlibrary loan involves borrowing materials from in-state and out-of-state libraries. Interlibrary loan is a service that supports the library's mission by providing enhanced access to library materials and information. Interlibrary loan is both a public service and an important element in the collection development process.

VIII. Collection Maintenance, Replacement, and Weeding

The goal of the Lafayette Public Library is to provide timely and relevant library materials and resources in good condition for users. Professional library staff regularly review items in the collection to ensure that they continue to meet patron needs. In accordance with the Standards for Louisiana Public Libraries (2010), the library's goal is to evaluate every item in the collection for retention, replacement, or withdrawal at least every five years. In general, the library follows the

weeding guidelines established by the CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding) method. When evaluating items for replacement and/or discard, the following factors will be considered: misleading, obsolete, inaccurate, or superseded information; poor physical condition; irrelevant or trivial information; unused or unnecessarily duplicated; in-print status of title; and current circulation statistics. It is the responsibility of professional staff to assess the need for replacing materials that are damaged, destroyed, lost, or discarded. Items are not automatically replaced. Decisions are based on need, demand, and budget.

IX. Gifts

The library accepts monetary donations to purchase library materials in memory or in honor of someone. Specific recommendations from the donor are honored as far as the suggestions enhance subject areas of need within the collection and are in accordance with the Policy's selection guidelines. The library acknowledges monetary donations with a letter to the donor and a book plate placed in the items purchased. See Monetary Gift/Memorial form for more information.

In certain circumstances, material may be donated directly. The library accepts unrestricted, irrevocable gifts of new items only or used items of value to the genealogy/local history collection. For an item to be added to the collection, it must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. All donations are accepted with the understanding that they may or may not be placed in any location and that they may be sold or discarded as their physical condition and usefulness may warrant. Donated materials which have been added to the collection will not automatically be replaced if worn out, damaged, or lost. Items that are not added to the collections are given to the Friends of the Lafayette Public Library. The library reserves the right to sell or otherwise dispose of gifts and donated materials through Friends book sales, recycling, or disposal services. The library does not acknowledge non-monetary gifts.

X. Request for Reconsideration of Materials

The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials is not made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the basis of the principles set forth in this Policy. One objective of the public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view. The library does not endorse particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item imply endorsement of the viewpoint of the author. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents.

The library welcomes citizens' expressions of opinion concerning purchased materials. Requests to remove materials or have materials identified as containing sexually explicit materials as defined by La. R.S. 25:225* will be considered within the context of this Policy. A library card holder who wishes to request that a specific item be considered for reclassification or for removal from inclusion in the collection is asked to complete and sign the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form. This form is available online or at any library location at any service desk. The questioned material and information provided on the form will be reviewed in its entirety at each step of the reconsideration process.

The form is sent to the Library Director for consideration. If the Director does not grant the request, the Director then gives the form to the library's Reconsideration Committee**. If the Reconsideration Committee does not grant the request, the Request for Reconsideration will be placed as an agenda item at a regularly scheduled board meeting. The Library Board shall determine whether the Request for Reconsideration should be granted by a majority vote in an open meeting. The Library Board's decision will be final.

Once a decision has been made regarding the retention, reclassification, or removal of the material, a letter will be sent by the Library Director to the person via email and first class mail at each step of the reconsideration process. If a Request for Reconsideration will be considered at a Board meeting, the notification letter shall issue at least 10 days prior to the Board meeting.

The Library Director, at his discretion, may identify any physical or digital material in the library as containing sexually explicit material without the receipt of a Request for Reconsideration form. Similarly, the Library Board may identify any physical or digital material in the library as containing sexually explicit material without the receipt of a Request for Reconsideration form, by majority vote in an open meeting.

The Library Director will inform the Board when and of the results of all reconsiderations made.

*La. R.S. 25:225

3. "Sexual conduct" means any of the following:

- Masturbation or lewd exhibition, actual, simulated, or animated, of the genitals, pubic hair, anus, vulva, or female breast nipples.
- Sadomasochistic abuse, meaning actual, simulated, or animated, flagellation, or torture by or upon a person who is nude or clad in undergarments or in a costume that reveals the pubic hair, anus, vulva, genitals, or female breast nipples, or in the condition of being fettered, bound, or otherwise physically restrained, on the part of one so clothed.
- Actual, simulated, or animated touching, caressing, or fondling of, or other similar physical contact with, a pubic area, anus, female breast nipple, covered or exposed, whether alone or between humans, animals, or a human and an animal, of the same or opposite sex, in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification.
- Actual, simulated, or animated stimulation of a human genital organ by any device whether or not the device is designed, manufactured, or marketed for that purpose.
- Actual, simulated, or animated ultimate sexual acts, whether between human beings, animals, or a human being and an animal.

4. "Sexually explicit material" means textual, visual, or audio material, produced in any medium that depicts or describes sexual conduct.

**The Reconsideration Committee is an ad hoc committee that conducts business in a closed meeting. It is composed of two library staff members appointed by the Library Director and one Library Board member.

Policy Approved by the LPL Board of Control August 19, 2019

Amended by the LPL Board of Control on February 15, 2023 to define sexually explicit material and to have such materials shelved outside the children's areas.

Amended by the LPL Board of Control on December 18, 2023 to comply with La. R.S. 25:225.