



Collection Development & Management Policy Pembroke Public Library

General Principles and Purpose

In keeping with the Pembroke Public Library mission to “provide a welcoming physical and virtual space for the inspiration, education, and empowerment of community members by giving people access to resources, ideas, information, and experiences” this Collection Development & Management Policy provides a framework for Library staff in the development and management of the Library’s physical and digital collections. Specifically, this policy defines collection development and management practices and serves as a guide to selection, acquisition, maintenance, display, preservation, and retention of materials to continue to ensure the Pembroke Public Library meets the needs of the Pembroke community.

Intellectual Freedom

Consistent with its ongoing commitment to the principles of intellectual freedom as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the Pembroke Public Library supports every individual’s fundamental right of access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity, and intellectual activity. The Library affirms the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements in support of acquiring and managing collections.

A diverse collection should contain content by and about a wide array of peoples and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences. Therefore, diverse materials, including those on controversial subjects, are available to patrons. Language, situations, or subjects that may be offensive to some do not disqualify a title from inclusion in the Library collection. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents and no Library materials will be sequestered, except to protect them from damage or theft. Inclusion in the collection does not imply Library approval of or agreement with the contents. The Library does not label controversial material or restrict use in any way.

The Library recognizes its role in the freedom of information, as stated above, but also recognizes its role in fostering media and information literacy for lifelong learners. The Library supports this by providing the community access to a collection and resources that are accurate, according to experts in their fields, with complete information in context. Items may not be included due to inaccurate information, lack of integrity, sensationalism, intent to promote hatred or intolerance, or content that is too limited or specialized.

Collection Scope

The Library collects materials in a broad range of topics and views in its function as a major information source for the community. A wide variety of formats are collected to serve the

varied needs of the community. Widespread interest and usage are the most powerful influences on the Library's collection. The other driving force guiding the scope of the collection is the Library's current Strategic Plan.

The Library collection includes popular and in-demand materials, large print books, business resources, local government documents, world language materials, medical and health guides, school and career information, and titles of interest to all ages. The variety of formats collected include but are not limited to:

- Print: books, documents, magazines, newspapers, and maps
- Audiovisual Media: DVDs, Blu-Rays, audiobooks, music CDs, and video games
- Electronic Media: databases, software, electronic books, downloadable audiobooks, videos, and music
- Other: multimedia kits, educational toys, games, puzzles, and equipment

The Library also provides access to additional material formats through special collections. These collections include:

- Perkins School for the Blind: The Library has a standing arrangement with the Perkins School for the Blind to provide materials in Braille and audio. These materials may be borrowed by the Library and made available to the public.
- Local History: Items of historical significance serve as a valuable resource for the research, study, and understanding of Pembroke and its history. Local history items include but are not limited to books, pamphlets, manuscripts, reports, newspapers, maps, and photographs. Items for the historical collection are generally acquired by donation rather than purchased by the Library.
- Non-Traditional Collections: The Library has two non-traditional collections, the Library of Things and Education Kits, with the purpose of providing diverse opportunities for education and engagement.

Material Selection Process

Library staff utilize professional judgment and expertise in making collection development decisions. Staff evaluates material for inclusion in the collection on the total effect of the work rather than specific illustrations, words, passages, or scenes. Anticipated demand, community interests, strengths and weaknesses of the existing collections, system-wide availability, physical space limitations, acquisitions procedures, and available budgets are factors taken into consideration. A more complete list of criteria for physical and digital materials is below; an item need not meet all of these standards to be included in the Library's collection.

Criteria for materials selection include but are not limited to:

- Current and anticipated needs of the community
- Attention of critics and reviewers, award winners, or inclusion in bibliographies
- Funding available for purchase
- Cost, value, and physical quality
- Relevance to the Library's mission, the current collection, and the community
- Support for formal and informal study
- Authority and accuracy of material

- Local interest and demand
- Availability in the Library system
- Available space
- Literary quality
- Readability
- Format, durability, and ease of use
- Contribution to the diversity and scope of the collection
- Contemporary relevance or significance

Additional criteria for digital, online, and/or electronic resources specifically include:

- Ease of use and remote access potential
- Hardware, software, networking, and storage requirements
- Licensing requirements
- Comparison of content and cost with other available formats
- Long term availability and perpetual access rights

Sources for selection decisions include, but are not limited to, professional and popular media reviews, publisher and vendor catalogs, and patron requests and recommendations. Self-published and independently published titles are subject to the same selection criteria as all other materials. Local authors' works, if accepted, are integrated into the general collection. Patron and staff requests are considered, but all materials are evaluated with the same criteria.

Youth Collections

Youth have access to the entire Pembroke Public Library collection. Any limitations placed upon the reading materials of youth are left to the discretion of parents, guardians, and caregivers. The Library recognizes these parties as those responsible for the reading and viewing habits of their children – and only their children. At no time will Library staff act in loco parentis. Selection of Library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that they may come into the possession of children.

All youth collections are developed for the purpose of meeting the recreational reading and informational needs of children, teenagers, and caregivers of youth. Material selected for youth collections are evaluated with the same criteria stated in the Material Selection Process section of this policy.

Resource Sharing

Pembroke Public Library is a member of the SAILS Library Network, a system of over 70 public, school, and academic libraries from 39 communities in Southeastern Massachusetts that offers additional depth and variety of collections to which Library users have access. Selection of materials for the Library collection is done with an eye to the special strengths and the immediate availability of these other Library collections. In the case of expensive electronic collections, group cooperative purchasing allows economically feasible access to these products for all member libraries and their users.

The Library does not have control over the content of certain electronic collections, including those administered by SAILS, or over materials that may be available through interlibrary loan from other SAILS and Massachusetts libraries.

Gifts and Donations

Donation of materials is encouraged with the understanding that all donations are subject to the same selection process as materials that are purchased, guided by the Library's Collection Development Policy. Donated items become the property of the Pembroke Public Library, and are not accepted with any usage conditions. The Library is not able to notify donors of the final disposition of their donations, nor return items not added to our collection. The Library reserves the right to keep, refuse, discard, donate, sell, or give to the Friends of the Pembroke Library to sell any donated materials. The Library can provide a donation acknowledgement letter, but cannot assign a monetary value to donated items. Please see the Donations, Gifts, & Fundraising Policy for more information.

Suggestions for Purchase

The Library strongly encourages input from Pembroke Public Library patrons regarding the collection. Patrons can request that a particular item be purchased by the Library. All purchase requests are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials, but every reasonable effort will be made to purchase the requested item. Please see the "Request to Purchase" form on the Library's website.

Collection Maintenance

Continuous evaluation is necessary for a healthy collection. The Library's credibility is enhanced when the books and other materials are found by patrons to be up to date and relevant, and when the Library's bibliographic records, such as the online catalog, accurately reflect the Library's holdings. With the exception of the Local History collection, the Library does not serve an archival function. Materials are regularly withdrawn to maintain a current, accurate, and appealing collection and to facilitate its ease of use.

Removal of materials requires judgements as important as those used in original selections. Materials are removed from the collection for several reasons. These include but are not limited to:

- Space
- Popularity
- Outdated or inaccurate information
- Superseded by a new edition or a better source
- Lack of relevance to the needs and interests of the community
- Accessibility in another format or availability through another source
- Appearance and condition
- No longer within the scope of the collection

Materials discarded because of loss, vandalism, poor condition, or outdated content may or may not be replaced. Patrons who damage or fail to return items accidentally or intentionally are responsible for the cost of the item. All materials are evaluated for possible repair,

mending, or cleaning using techniques available in-house. Materials deemed beyond repair, or repaired multiple times, are discarded. Replacement is considered as needed. Materials that are withdrawn are placed in the Library book sale, donated to local schools or educators, or recycled or disposed of in accordance with Town guidelines.

Collection maintenance also includes periodic reconsideration of how areas of the collection are cataloged, with the goal of identifying any sections in which the arrangement could be made more equitable and accessible. Library materials may be relocated at the discretion of Library staff.

Reader's Advisory

Readers' Advisory is the act of library staff assisting a patron to find materials that they are interested in. This can be done through the creation of displays, book lists, and other resources or through conversation with a patron. The Library recognizes that readers' advisory is important in enhancing the library experience for the community. The final responsibility for reader's advisory is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by staff throughout the Library.

The purpose of Pembroke Public Library in creating displays and other resources is to highlight new materials; educate the public about the variety of subjects, genres, and formats offered; and stimulate interest in the Library collections, services, and resources. Displays and other resources are curated with the goal of encouraging a love of reading, promoting lifelong learning, fostering inspiration, and highlighting our physical and digital collections while being responsive to the diverse interests of our community.

Library staff use the following criteria in making decisions about display and resource topics, materials, and accompanying resources:

- Community needs and interest.
- Availability of display space.
- Historical, cultural, informational, or educational significance.
- Connection to other community or national programs, exhibits, events, trends, or observations.
- Relation to Library collections, resources, exhibits, services, and programs.
- Recency of publication or acquisition; new items will be displayed on dedicated shelves, largely in areas near their respective collections.
- In addition, the Library draws upon other community resources in developing displays and exhibits, and may partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored displays and exhibits.

The Library will create displays and resources that appeal to a range of ages, interests, and information needs and will strive to include a wide and balanced spectrum of opinions and viewpoints in Library-initiated displays. Displays will be rotated regularly to ensure that patrons have access to a variety of materials. The duration of displays will be determined based on the theme or topic and the availability of materials. Displays will not be kept up for an extended period, as this may limit access to other materials. Displays will be located in areas of the

Library that are accessible to all patrons, regardless of their age or beliefs. Specific displays will be located in areas that are intended for specific age groups, such as the Children's Room or the adult section, dependent upon the collections the materials being used are from. Inclusion in a display does not constitute an endorsement by the Pembroke Public Library of the views expressed in the materials on display.

While displays and other resources are curated to reach large groups of patrons, another aspect of reader's advisory is working with patrons individually to provide more targeted recommendations. When conversing with a patron to assist in finding materials that they are interested in, library staff will ask many questions to help discern what might be a good recommendation. Consideration will be given but not limited to a patron's:

- Age or grade level
- Reading level
- Stated interests and or topics requested
- Type of material
- Stated limitations (such as only nonfiction, mystery, large print, etc.)

When providing recommendations, the library staff will offer options that align with the patron's requests. However, the ultimate decision on which materials to check out lies with an individual patron or patron's guardian if they are a minor. Items suggested to patrons through readers' advisory do not constitute an endorsement by Pembroke Public Library or staff of the content or views expressed in those items.

Responsibility for Collection Development & Management

It is the responsibility of the Board of Library Trustees to establish policies for the selection of library materials consistent with state and federal law. The actual selection of materials is delegated to the Library's professional staff and based on the criteria cited above. The Assistant Director/Head of Adult Services and the Youth Services Librarian/Head of Youth Services have primary responsibility for material selection and removal. The responsibility for selection ultimately rests with the Library Director within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees of the Pembroke Public Library.

The Town of Pembroke provides support for the collection through annual tax revenues. Additional funds include trust funds and donations. Some funds are restricted in their use.

Requests for Reconsideration

The choice of library materials by a library user is an individual matter. Responsibility for the reading choices of minors rests with their parents or legal guardians. While a person may reject materials for themselves or their children, they cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to library materials by others.

Comments from members of the community about the collection or individual items in the collection frequently provide librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. The Library welcomes expression of opinion by

patrons, but will be governed by this policy in making additions to or removing items from the collection.

Any Pembroke residents with an active SAILS library card requesting that an item be withdrawn from the collection may complete a “Request for Reconsideration of Materials” form or “Request for Reconsideration of Digital SAILS Materials” form (see Appendices). Once the form has been fully completed and returned to the Library, the Library Director and/or collection development staff will review the submission to consider whether the material’s selection follows the criteria stated in this Collection Development & Management Policy. The Library Director and/or collection development staff will decide whether the library material remains on the shelf or is removed and will notify the patron of said decision. A written response stating the reasons for the decision will be mailed by the Library Director to the patron within 21 days of receiving the “Request for Reconsideration” form. If the patron is not satisfied with the decision, a written letter of appeal may be submitted to the Board of Library Trustees within 14 days of the date on the Director’s letter. If the Board plans to address the appeal at their Board meeting, the patron will be notified of the time and date of the meeting. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of public comments. The decision of the Board is final.

Once a formal challenge to a title in the Library’s collection has been reviewed and resolved, no subsequent challenge to the same title will be accepted for a period of one year. This moratorium applies to challenges submitted by the same individual, group, or any other party, whether or not they were involved in the original challenge. This will ensure a balanced and fair reconsideration process, prevent the undue repetition of reviews for the same title, and allow Library staff to focus on serving the diverse needs of the community. The Library reserves the right to review a previously challenged title within the moratorium period if significant new information or context arises that materially affects the evaluation of the title.

Titles undergoing a formal review will remain available on Library shelves and accessible to patrons throughout the review process. Keeping materials available during review ensures that all patrons retain the freedom to access and borrow items, regardless of the status of a challenge. In extraordinary circumstances, where the physical integrity or security of the material is at risk, the Library Director may temporarily restrict access to the item while ensuring that the review is completed as promptly as possible.

The “Request for Reconsideration of Materials” form is to be used by patrons seeking to file a request regarding materials in Pembroke Public Library’s physical and digital collection. The Library’s digital collection encompasses all titles available for downloading and streaming that are not purchased by the SAILS Network or another library. The “Request for Reconsideration of Digital SAILS Materials” form is to be used by patrons seeking to file a request regarding materials in the SAILS digital collection in OverDrive and Libby. Patrons unsure of which form to use may consult with a Library staff member.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees on September 21, 2022. Revised and approved on February 18, 2026.

Pembroke Public Library - Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

I represent: Myself Group/Organization: _____

Do you have an active SAILS library card? Yes No

Have you read the Library's Collection Development & Management Policy? Yes No

Media Type: Audiobook Book Digital Resource Display/Exhibit DVD

Game Magazine Other: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Call Number: _____ Copyright Date: _____

1. What brought this item to your attention?

2. Have you examined (read/viewed/listened to) the entire work or resource? Yes No
If no, which sections have you reviewed? Please attach additional pages if necessary.

3. What concerns you about this item? Please be specific (If possible cite a page number, time stamp, etc.) and attach additional pages if necessary.

4. What action are you requesting the Library consider with regard to this item?

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

Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you. Please present your request to the Pembroke Public Library to be reviewed by collection development staff for action.



The SAILS Board of Directors has established a Digital Content Collection policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please submit this form.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Do you represent self? Or an organization? Name of Organization _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

Format _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

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

4. What concerns you about the resource?

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

6. What action are you requesting the committee consider?
