

West Haven Public Library
Collection Development Policy

West Haven Library Mission

Our mission is to provide timely and efficient public access to resources for the education, entertainment and enrichment to everyone in the West Haven community. The Board and staff provide physical settings, materials and staff talent to guide patrons to the best resources to meet their needs.

General Selection Objectives

The library's materials collection is developed and managed meet the cultural, informational, educational and recreational needs of West Haven. The Library selects materials by anticipating and responding to user needs and expectations in accordance with guidelines stated by the American Library Association in the *Library Bill of Rights and The Freedom to Read Statement*.

Responsibility for selection

The Library Board of Directors delegates authority and responsibility for the selection of materials to the Director. Within the library, the responsibility for making the final decisions of materials is the Administration and the Heads of the Departments.

Selection Criteria

West Haven's population is diverse and represents a broad demographic. Selection criteria is accomplished by the knowledge of the interests and needs of the patrons the library serves. Criteria for selection of materials are based on WHPL's goals and mission.

WHPL provides collections containing a wide variety of material formats, including print, audio-visual, and electronic.

In selecting materials and developing collections for adults, children and teens, library staff include materials that represent the broad range of human experience, reflecting the ethnic, religious, racial, and socio-economic diversity not only of the region it serves but also the larger global perspective. WHPL collections will provide a broad range of opinion on current issues.

WHPL's collection contains popular works, classic works that have withstood the test of time, and other materials of general interest. In building collections, library staff are guided by the principle of selection, rather than censorship or as an endorsement of a particular viewpoint.

Important Considerations for Selection

The communication of patron requests is a vital part of the materials selection process. Communication among library staff is also essential to patron-oriented collections. Materials are evaluated according to one or more of the following standards. An item need not meet all of these criteria in order to be acceptable.

- 1) Present and potential relevance to West Haven community needs.
- 2) Suitability of physical form for library use.
- 3) A variety of materials that offer a wide variety of formats. Physical and/or digital, devices are made available to the public for listening or viewing materials.
- 4) Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- 5) Cost is taken into account to create the best value for the least amount.
- 6) Importance as a document of the times.
- 7) Relation to the existing collection and to other materials on the subject.
- 8) Attention by critics and reviewers.
- 9) Requests by library patrons.
- 10) Currency.
- 11) The reputation, skill, competency and talent of the author.

Special Considerations for Electronic Information Sources:

1. Ease of use of the product
2. Availability of the information to multiple, simultaneous users
3. Equipment needed to provide access to the content
4. Technical support and training
5. Availability of the physical space needed to house and store the information and/or equipment
6. Is a full text search available? Or just bibliographic information.

Recommended Public Library Reviewing Sources:

Booklist, Goodreads, New York Times Book Review, Publishers Weekly, Shelf Awareness

Acquisitions Structure

The Director and Assistant Director monitors the heads of the departments' selections.

- Head of Circulation and Reference and outreach departments.
- Head of the Children's and Teen Department.
- Head of the Ora Mason Branch.
- Head of the Allingtown Branch. (when established again)

Head of Departments have responsibility for the overall selection and maintenance of all materials and formats within the collection of their departments.

Selectors report to Head of Departments who are responsible for material selection for assigned collections that they are qualified to select by reason of education, training, experience, knowledge of subject area and job classification.

Acquisitions Staff responsibilities

- Engaging in open, continuous two-way communication with library patrons and using good customer service skills to interact with individuals who have different ways of expressing their needs based on age, language, economic status, culture, or other characteristics
- Understanding and responding to rapidly changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes
- Recognizing that materials of varying complexities and formats are necessary to satisfy diverse needs of library users
- Balancing individual needs and broader community needs in determining the best allocation of collection budget for acquiring or providing access to materials and information
- Seeking continuous improvement through ongoing use of measurement methods.
- Reviewing the collection on a regular basis to identify areas in need of change due to current community interests.

Special Collections

West Haven Public Library Special Collections:

- 1) Connecticut Collection
- 2) West Haven Collection
- 3) Microfilm Collection
- 4) Local Author Collection
- 5) Business Collection
- 6) Education Collection
- 7) 3d items
- 8) Materials older than 1920
- 9) Digital collection stored off site in the Connecticut Digital Archive.

These materials have many formats and have intrinsic value to WHPL.

Circulating Special Collections shall be shelved in the general library stack areas, making them available for perusal and checkout.

Non-Circulating Special Collections shall be kept in a secured area(s) in the library. Available by appointment with the approval of the Director or Assistant Director.

Some materials may be also scanned and transferred to the Connecticut Digital Archive.

Selecting Controversial Topics

A balanced collection attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues as far as availability of materials, space, and budget allow. Selection is based upon criteria stated in this policy. The race, religion, nationality, or political views of an author or creator; offensive language; depictions or descriptions of violence or sexually explicit activity; controversial content of an item; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community does not cause an item automatically to be included or excluded from the library's collection.

All public libraries contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable. Libraries may omit from the collection materials that some patrons feel are important. In either case, the library has procedures that patrons may use in requesting the reconsideration of materials.

Library Gifts and Donations

The West Haven Library accepts gifts and donations from the generosity of the community. Gifts and donations of materials are reviewed using the same criteria as purchases. The library determines how to best incorporate such materials into the existing collections. Materials that are not added to library collections may be used for programs, given to other local organizations such as schools, senior centers, forwarded to the Friends of the West Haven Library for a future sale. Any items unsold by the Friends of the Library may then be donated to another organization, discarded or sold to a business.

The complete proceeds from this sale shall go directly to the benefit of the library, and approved by the Board, may be given for the purpose of acquiring materials recommended by library staff as prescribed in this policy, or for purchase of specific items. When the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, the library staff must make the selection with the general selection principles set forth in this policy.

To put this in perspective, all public libraries contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable or omit from the collection materials that some patrons feel are important. In either case, the library has procedures that patrons may use in requesting the reconsideration of materials.

Maintenance and Weeding Policy

The library continually withdraws items from the collection, basing its decisions on a number of factors, including publishing date, frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer or more valid materials. Items dealing with local history are an exception, as are certain classics and award-winning materials. Fiction that was once popular but no longer in demand and non-fiction books that are no longer useful are withdrawn from the collection,

Withdrawn books are donated to the Friends of the Library for book sales.