

DeKalb Public Library Collection Management and Materials Selection Policy

The DeKalb Public Library's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan articulate the broad principles of library programs and services and guide the selection of materials.

The Collection Management and Materials Selection Policy has been adopted by the Board of Trustees of the DeKalb Public Library to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which the selections are made. The policy applies to all types of library materials, print, non-print, and electronic.

The DeKalb Public Library selects materials in accordance with the principles stated by the American Library Association in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements.

The authority and responsibility for the Library's collection rests with the Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees. All professional and selected support staff members participate in the selection of library materials. Gifts of materials and suggestions for purchase from patrons are welcome and will be considered using the same criteria as all other selections.

The Library keeps the collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing essential materials, and by removing, on a systematic and continuous basis, those works that are worn, outdated, superseded, or no longer in demand.

The Director will review and respond to written requests for reconsideration of specific titles made by current DeKalb Public Library cardholders in good standing. Cardholders who disagree with the Director's decision in such cases may appeal the matter to the Board of Trustees for further consideration. Only reconsideration requests from current DeKalb Public Library cardholders in good standing will be considered.

The Board of Trustees authorizes the Library Director to establish reasonable procedures governing collection management and materials selection for the Library.

Approved by the DeKalb Public Library Board of Trustees 07/2025

DeKalb Public Library Collection Management and Materials Selection Procedures

Selection Guidelines:

--Criteria:

There is no single standard that can be applied in all cases when making a selection decision for inclusion in the Library's collection. Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own merit and the intended audience. Selectors should choose materials that will build a well-rounded collection which includes all viewpoints and opinions, and exercise impartiality in all selection activities which will meet community needs. Criteria may include one or more of the following: literary merit; enduring value; accuracy; authoritativeness; social significance; importance of subject matter to the collection; timeliness; popular demand; costs; scarcity of material on the subject and availability elsewhere; and quality and suitability of the format. Other considerations may be applicable in specific subject areas. Criteria for selection of electronic media also may include ease of use of the product; availability of the information to multiple users; equipment needed to provide access to the information; technical support and training; and availability of the physical space needed to house and store the information or equipment.

The Library does not purchase unsolicited materials. The Library accepts donated copies of self-published books for consideration but does not guarantee their inclusion in the collection.

The addition of any item to the Library collection in no way represents an endorsement by the Library of any theory, idea or policy contained in it.

--Scope:

The DeKalb Public Library collects and provides access to a wide range of materials including fiction and non-fiction books, reference materials, audio-visual materials, pamphlets, periodicals, physical objects, and multimedia, and acquires or provides access to a range of electronic reference databases, electronic collections, and the internet with the intention of meeting the informational, cultural, educational and recreational needs of the residents of DeKalb.

The scope of the collection is intended to offer a choice of format, opinion, style and level of difficulty so that most individual library needs can be met and service given to individuals of all ages, within current budget parameters and constraints. The emphasis is on acquiring materials of wide-ranging interest to the general public. The collection is not archival and is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis to meet contemporary needs. The Library seeks to provide resources in languages other than English that reflect the predominant languages spoken and taught in the DeKalb Public Library service area. The Library does not have the budgetary resources to buy multiple copies of every title it owns, but will purchase or lease multiple copies of high-demand materials when warranted and based on budgetary resources.

The Library does not buy textbooks used by local schools or universities unless they are of general interest, regarding it as the responsibility of the school library to provide copies of these course materials for their students. Similarly, in the fields of law and medicine materials are provided for the layman, not for the specialist. The Library does not purchase rare books, although such materials may be accepted as gifts if the Library has space and can provide proper care and access. Such gifts will be accepted only with the understanding that the Library may choose to sell the item or donate it to another institution.

--Tools:

Selection of materials is done from published reviews in professional journals, popular magazines, subject bibliographies, annual lists of recommended titles, publishers' catalogs, and patron suggestions.

--Format:

Resources are purchased in the most appropriate format for patron use.

In order to preserve the original integrity of the text, as well as the author's intent, print and audio abridgements are rarely considered for the collection.

The Library collects formats that are viable and discontinues ordering or phases out formats no longer available or in demand. Other developing types of material will be acquired and made accessible, as they are judged suitable, meaningful, and relevant to the community based on the stated selection criteria.

Special Collections:

DeKalb Public Library maintains several small special collections for reference use. These include a Local History Collection, Philanthropy Center, and Parent-Teacher Resource Center.

Interlibrary Loan:

The Library promotes and facilitates resource sharing through Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and reciprocal borrowing arrangements as a means to provide our users with access to a wider selection of materials than our collections alone can provide. The Library works cooperatively with other local libraries, library systems state-wide and the State Library to provide the broadest access to materials for its patrons while minimizing duplication. Thus, the selection of materials for the Library's collection is influenced by the ability to readily borrow materials from other libraries that can support a limited demand from the Library's patrons.

It is possible that not every title will be available through ILL or purchase, so all requests may not be filled.

Gifts of Materials:

The DeKalb Public Library encourages and accepts donations of materials, with the understanding that the decision whether to add gifts to the collection will be based on the same criteria that govern purchased materials. The Library reserves the right to sell or otherwise dispose of gift materials not added to the collection, and gift materials cannot be returned to the donor. Generally, gifts not added to the collection will be donated to the Friends of the Library for their book sale.

When a patron offers to give books, magazines, or audiovisual materials to the Library, the following guidelines apply. The Library will accept hardcover and/or paperback books and may accept audiovisual materials if they are in good condition. Magazines, encyclopedias, and text books will not be accepted. If the patron wishes to receive an acknowledgement, one should be requested at the time of donation. Library staff will not appraise the books or indicate a value in the acknowledgement.

The Library will not accept any materials which are not outright gifts, nor will the Library accept any materials that attach the condition of periodic or permanent display. Personal property, art objects, memorials, or commemorative objects, displays or plaques, portraits, artifacts, antiques, museum objects and similar materials are generally not accepted as gifts by the Library. Under certain circumstances, the Library may accept such a gift if all conditions are approved by the Board of Trustees.

De-selection of material:

Ongoing evaluation and review of library materials is necessary to maintain a viable collection that meets the Library's needs and is of current interest to patrons. Physically deteriorated, duplicate, superseded and/or obsolete materials may be replaced or removed ("weeded") at the Library's discretion. Materials that have not circulated in more than 1 year may also be removed. Updated versions may be purchased when indicated.

No materials will be held or given to individuals after de-selection. Materials may be sold, donated, or discarded by the Library.

Library Cardholder Requests:

The Library encourages requests for purchase of specific titles or subject areas with the understanding that not all such requests can be accommodated. Current DeKalb Public Library cardholders in good standing may make requests, which will be considered using the same factors that govern all selection decisions. Such cardholders should submit requests using the Library Cardholder Request for Material Purchase form, or through the "Suggest a Purchase" form on the Library's website.

Reconsideration of Library Materials:

A singular obligation of the public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view. The DeKalb Public Library does not endorse particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item express or imply an endorsement of the author's viewpoint. The Library welcomes expression of opinion by patrons but will be governed by this Collection Management and Materials Selection Policy in making additions to or removing items from the collection.

Current DeKalb Public Library cardholders in good standing may request the reconsideration of specific titles by submitting a completed and signed Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form. Only reconsideration requests from current DeKalb Public Library cardholders in good standing will be considered.

Upon receipt of a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form, a decision will be made by the Director regarding the disposition of the material in a timely manner. The Director's decision and the reasons for it will be communicated in writing to the person who initiated the request for reconsideration. The Director will inform the Board of Trustees of the reconsideration and disposition of library materials. Until such an examination has taken place, and a decision is reached, no removal or restriction of the item in question will take place.

In the event that the person who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision of the Director, they may appeal for a hearing before the Board of Trustees by making a written request to the President of the Board. The Board reserves the right to limit the length of presentation and number of speakers at the hearing. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the DeKalb Public Library. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision of the Director. Once a decision has been made regarding a specific title, no further considerations regarding its inclusion in the collection or lack thereof will be undertaken for a duration of 5 years from the date of the final decision.

DeKalb Public Library Cardholder Request for Material Purchase

Thank you for your suggestions! The Library encourages requests from DKPL Cardholders for purchase of specific titles or subject areas with the understanding that not all such requests can be accommodated. DKPL Cardholder requests will be considered using the same factors that govern all selection decisions. The selection criteria can be found in the Collection Management and Materials Selection Policy.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email Address _____

Are you a registered cardholder of the DeKalb Public Library? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Suggested Purchase:

Author _____

Title _____

Type of material (book/dvd/cd/other) _____

Audience: ☐ Children ☐ Adults ☐ Teens

Where did you hear about this title? _____

Additional Comments _____

DeKalb Public Library Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

Please complete this form in its entirety and submit to the Director for consideration. Please be specific in your answers—you may use additional paper if more space is required. Upon receipt of this completed form the Director will consider your request for reconsideration and communicate a decision to you in a timely manner. Until a decision has been reached, no removal or restriction of the item in question will take place. Please note that only requests for reconsideration made by current DKPL cardholders in good standing will be accepted.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email Address _____

Are you a registered cardholder of the DeKalb Public Library? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you representing: ☐ Yourself ☐ Organization: _____

Material for Reconsideration:

Author _____

Title _____

Type of material _____

☐ I have read/viewed the material in its entirety. ☐ I have not read/viewed the material in its entirety.

What do you believe is the purpose of this material? _____

What is your objection to the material? _____

In its place, what material on this subject would you recommend? _____

☐ A copy of the DeKalb Public Library Collection Development and Material Selection Policy has been made available to me.

☐ I agree that this material meets criteria currently established, but I would like the policy modified to exclude such material because: _____

Signature of Patron _____ Date _____

Received by Staff Member _____ Date _____