

Harford County Public Library Selection Procedures

Selection

Each item selected or donated, regardless of format, is evaluated by Materials Management staff in order to build collections of merit and significance reflecting community needs.

The criteria listed below are intended to be inclusive rather than exclusive and are deliberately flexible. This supports an evaluation of the entire set of criteria and demonstrates material fits within our material selection policy.

The evaluation of materials is characterized by flexibility and responsiveness to the changing needs and interests of Harford County. These changing needs and interests require materials to be evaluated on a continual basis. As a result, materials which may not have been recommended for purchase initially may later be purchased, or materials considered for purchase initially may not be later purchased.

Selection decisions are made by evaluating review and other selection tools and criteria, based on staff judgement and expertise and a knowledge of the existing collection. The criteria used apply to materials of all ages and formats. The criteria used apply to materials for all age levels, and may not apply equally to any single item, but should be flexibly applied according to the individual title, format, and specific population being served

Criteria

- Interest in the material driven by public demand or anticipated demand
- Reputation, authority, popularity, or significance of the author, publisher, director, composer, performer, and/or producer
- Accuracy and timeliness/currency of information
- Clarity of presentation, including suitability of format, ease of use, and quality of production.
- Readability, style, and presentation of concepts and issues at the appropriate level of the intended audience
- Significance of subject matter and its relationship to other materials in the collection which contributes to the diversity of the collection including differing points of view. Fear of offending certain groups, or of challenge or reprisal, does not influence selection decisions
- Literary, artistic, or other recognized merit
- Evaluations in review media with special consideration for favorable reviews which point to particular significance
- Price and availability including the need to balance cost/accessibility between print and digital materials
- Space limitations
- The library generally purchases films that carry up to an “R” MPAA rating.
- The library generally does not purchase materials professionally reviewed as pornographic.

Selection Sources

Materials Management staff use a variety of selection tools that includes professional reviews in journals and media resources to select materials to create a diverse and well-balanced collection. Major library review journals may include, but are not limited to: *Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Horn*

Book, School Library Journal, Booklist, and Billboard. Additional review and media sources will be added and/or referred to as needed.

Other sources include customer requests, gifts, library-generated replacement lists, vendor-generated lists, standing orders, publisher approval plans, trade and association catalogs, publisher catalogs, etc. Materials Management recognizes that not all popular items are regularly professionally reviewed and will use other sources to determine selection.

Website Selection

Harford County Public Library considers the authority, accuracy, relevance, and usability of websites when recommending them via library materials.

- Where possible, we recommend sites that come from a known and authoritative source. When such a resource is not available, we consider the credentials of any site included.
- Sites should be regularly maintained and contain accurate information
- Resources are only included if they contain substantive information of relevance to our users
- Unless they have exceptionally valuable information that is difficult to locate elsewhere, we will generally exclude:
 - Sites that require registration or service fees
 - Sites where the content is predominantly designed to sell merchandise or market services
 - Sites whose information is obscured or compromised by advertising, pop-up boxes, confusing design, etc.
 - Sites that are inaccessible to those using adaptive technology
 - Sites that are for-profit and give customer information to third parties.

Digital Materials

Harford County Public Library recognizes the value of providing online access to curated collections and information. The Harford County Public Library Materials Selection Policy provides the same guidance in choosing and selecting content that is provided digitally to our community.

Digital content may be donated to the library according to Materials Selection Policy. Projects, partnerships and collaborations will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the library using the Materials Selection Policy as a guideline. Harford County Public Library requires all materials considered for selection by this partnership to be owned by the submitters and proof of ownership will be required indicating all rights and permissions. The library retains all rights to curate, add, and deselect content donated in accordance with the Collection Maintenance: De-selection procedures. Donors will be required to submit a completed Digital Content Donation Release form for the project to proceed which can be obtained from the Materials Management Director.

Limited space and the possibilities of simultaneous and remote users make electronic access an attractive alternative to some print sources. The growth and popularity of digital resources requires the library to balance print and digital purchases to meet the needs of county residents.

Cooperation with Other Agencies

Harford County Public Library recognizes the wealth of resources available through other libraries, agencies, and consortia, and may not duplicate material that can be borrowed from these organizations.

Collection Maintenance: Duplication

Duplication of titles is essential to meet public demand for popular titles.

Collection Maintenance: De-selection

Materials within the library collection are continually evaluated. Systematic withdrawal of materials which are no longer relevant in maintaining a collection is necessary. Items may be withdrawn if they contain outdated or inaccurate information; superseded by newer editions; become worn, badly marked, or damaged; or are unneeded duplicates or seldom-used materials. Space, replacement cost, and the quality and appearance of the collection are factors in this decision. De-selection is an integral part of collection development and maintenance.

Collection Maintenance: Gifts and Memorials

Harford County Public Library accepts books and other materials with the understanding they may be used in the collection or disposed of according to the library's needs. All materials are evaluated using the same selection criteria used for the purchase of new materials. If the material is not added to the library due to the criteria, the library reserves the right to discard, sell, or refer such material to another institution or to the Friends of the Library. The library accepts gifts of money for the purchase of materials, from individuals and organizations. Such gifts may be in memory of an individual which can contain a memorial plate.

Materials Management

July 2022