



MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

The intent of this policy is to guide the Director and staff in the selection, maintenance and withdrawal of materials and to inform the public/community about the principles upon which selection judgments are made. The library endorses the principles laid out by the American Library Association in the [Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement](#). Since both the collection and the community are constantly changing, the policy will be reviewed for possible revision every five (5) years.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Library is to provide a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for all age groups, diverse types of material based on demand of patrons, and materials for the education and recreation of the community.

RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for selection and withdrawal rests with the Library Director, and other designated employees, who operate within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees.

SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES FOR INCLUSION, RESTRICTION, AND WITHDRAWAL

“To fulfill their traditional missions of facilitating learning and cultural enrichment, public libraries must have broad discretion to decide what material to provide to their patrons.” [United States v. Am. Libr. Ass'n, Inc., 539 U.S. 194, 195, 123 S. Ct. 2297, 2298, 156 L. Ed. 2d 221 \(2003\)](#)

In applying this discretion, the Plainfield Public Library will always seek to consider and balance First Amendment concerns against legitimate government interests and make decisions in the least restrictive manner possible.

While curating the collection, the following factors will be used to evaluate all materials for inclusion, restriction, and withdrawal.

- Accuracy and impartiality
- Attention of critics, reviews, and the public
- Subject matter
- Cost
- Timeliness of information
- Local importance and/or historical value
- Reputation of the author or publisher
- Quality of organization, readability, and style
- Uniqueness or special features
- Advance notices and pre-publication announcements supplied by publishers and professional reviewing services
- Physical condition of the item and space limitations
- Duplication of material already in the Library
- Availability of material in nearby libraries, if local interest is limited to small or specialized groups
- Relevant Community Standards
- Relevancy to Community

This applies to all forms of media, gifts/donations, and evaluation requests from the public.

The Library's need to affirmatively select material for inclusion in the collection by making a determination that it has value to the community is a discretionary role that has long been established. Conversely, The Library's discretion to deny the inclusion of material based on these principles also exists.

Although they seek to provide a wide array of information, their goal has never been to provide "universal coverage." *United States v. Am. Libr. Ass'n, Inc.*, 539 U.S. 194 citing [201 F.Supp.2d, at 420](#) 421.

Libraries collect only those materials deemed to have "requisite and appropriate quality." *id* citing [201 F.Supp.2d, at 420](#). "Public libraries pursue the worthy missions of facilitating learning and cultural enrichment. To fulfill their traditional missions, public libraries must have broad discretion to decide what material to provide to their patrons. [United States v. Am. Libr. Ass'n, Inc.](#), 539 U.S. 194, 203–04, 123 S. Ct. 2297, 2303–04, 156 L. Ed. 2d 221 (2003)

DISPOSAL OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

In order to maintain a collection of materials that best serves the community, the Library must periodically withdraw Library materials (books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, etc.) from the collection for a variety of reasons according to Library best practices.

Withdrawn Library materials and gifts/donations that have not been added to the collection will be disposed of accordingly:

Withdrawn books are given to the community, or sent to other organizations for sale and recycling. The proceeds from any sales are used for the benefit of the Library. Books that are not sold will be disposed of at the discretion of the Library Director.

REQUEST FOR EVALUATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS BASED ON OBJECTIONABLE CONTENT

Access to information is a first amendment right.

[T]he State may not, consistently with the spirit of the First Amendment, contract the spectrum of available knowledge. The right of freedom of speech and press includes not only the right to utter or to print, but the right to distribute, the right to receive, the right to read ... and freedom of inquiry, freedom of thought, and freedom to teach.... Without those peripheral rights the specific rights would be less secure. [Lamont v. Postmaster Gen. of U. S., 381 U.S. 301, 308, 85 S. Ct. 1493, 1497, 14 L. Ed. 2d 398 \(1965\) Cited in Kreimer v. Bureau of Police for Town of Morristown, 958 F.2d 1242, 1251 \(3d Cir. 1992\) applying principle to Libraries](#)

No materials are judged on the basis of the author's race, nationality, or political, social, or religious beliefs. Materials are judged as entire works, not on isolated passages or selections.

Decisions on removal of works based on objectionable content will be analyzed through the established legal framework and balancing tests to be applied to potential acts of government censorship.

"To fulfill their traditional missions of facilitating learning and cultural enrichment, public libraries must have broad discretion to decide what material to provide to their patrons. " [United States v. Am. Libr. Ass'n, Inc., 539 U.S. 194, 195, 123 S. Ct. 2297, 2298, 156 L. Ed. 2d 221 \(2003\)](#) In applying this discretion, the Plainfield Public Library will always seek to consider and balance first amendment concerns against legitimate government interests and make decisions in the least restrictive manner possible where a valid interest is being harmed.

Procedures for Handling Formal Complaints

Plainfield residents with a valid (non-expired) Plainfield Library card who want to file a complaint regarding Library materials will be asked to fill out the Request for Evaluation of Library Materials form (see below). Requests for Evaluation may be placed only by individual Plainfield residents with valid Plainfield Public Library cards. Organizations or groups are not eligible to file Request for Evaluation of Library Materials forms on behalf of their members.

The Director, or a member of the staff designated by the Director, will review the Request for

Evaluation of Library Materials form(s) taking into consideration the Library Materials Selection Policy and review sources. The Director will respond to the patron in writing within thirty days of the date of receipt of the completed Request for Evaluation of Library Materials form(s). Accompanying the decision will be copies of any materials cited/referenced in the decision. The Director will provide the Library Board with a copy of the completed Request for Evaluation of Library Materials form(s) and the written response(s).

The decision of the Director may be appealed by the person submitting the Request for Evaluation of Library Materials form(s) in writing to the Library Board within thirty (30) days after initial receipt of the Director's decision. The Board will evaluate in an open meeting the work according to criteria in the Library Materials Selection Policy within three Board meetings from the date the appeal is received. After the evaluation, the Library Board will notify the patron by mail of its decision. All decisions by the Board are final.

Until such review takes place and a decision is made, no removal or restriction of the item(s) in question shall take place. Additional challenges to a title the Board of Trustees has made an appeal decision on will not be accepted for thirty-six months from the date of initial Board review.

Applicants must view, listen, or read the disputed item in its entirety. Forms submitted without a complete examination of the disputed item will not be accepted.

Forms must be filled out in its entirety. Incomplete or duplicated forms will not be accepted.

Contact information is required for the Library to provide responses as well as notice of defects or deficiencies that prevent processing.

Adopted by Plainfield Public Library Board of Trustees 25 May 2023

REQUEST FOR EVALUATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS FORM

Title of work: _____

Author: _____

Item Type: ___ Book ___ Periodical ___ Audiobook ___ Video ___ CD ___ Manuscript

Evaluation Requested By:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone (___) _____

Library Card # _____

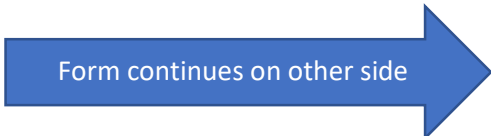
Do you represent Yourself An organization (name) _____

An organization wishing to file an objection must have a member who meets the eligibility requirements file on their behalf.

Contact information is required for the Library to provide responses as well as notice of defects or deficiencies that prevent processing.

To help the library fully and fairly consider your objection, the following information is required. (Answers may be attached in separate page if necessary)

1. Have you read/viewed/listened to the item in its entirety? Yes___ No___
2. To what in the work do you object? Please be specific and cite examples. Cited examples should include page numbers/time markers, or other information reasonably required to locate them.



3. Have you seen/heard professional reviews on the work in question? Please include appropriate citations to the work.

4. What would you like the library to do about the work?

5. In its place, what work of equal literary quality would you recommend the Library to purchase that would cover the same subject or content?

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Employee's Initials: _____

Copy provided upon request