



Collection Development Policy

Approved February 13, 2023

Updated October 13, 2025

formerly Materials Selection Policy and Collection Maintenance and Weeding Policy

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Harlan Community Library is to promote the love of reading and the joy of learning to the people of Harlan, members of contracting cities as well as rural residents of Shelby County, Iowa. Due to the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a selection policy with which to meet community interests and needs.

SCOPE:

The materials selection/collection development policy is used by the library staff in the selection of materials and serves to acquaint the public with the principles of selection. [The Library Bill of Rights](#) and [The Freedom to Read Statement](#) have been endorsed by the Harlan Community Library Board of Trustees and are integral parts of the policy.

POLICY:

- Responsibility for Selection
 - Ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Director, or designee, who will operate within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees. Selection guides used include the ALA Booklist, Library Journal, School Library Journal, recommendations from the State Library of Iowa, and reviews in current magazines, newspapers and websites.
 - The library encourages suggestions for purchase from the general public and will attempt to obtain these materials either by purchase or through interlibrary loan.
- General Principles
 - As guidelines for materials selection, the Harlan Community Library uses the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement which have been adopted by the Council of the American Library Association. One or more of the following standards will be applied in selecting the material best suited for the Harlan Community Library:
 - Popular appeal/patron interest
 - Importance of subject matter to collection
 - Permanent or timely value
 - Reputation and significance of author or illustrator
 - Budgetary and space constraints

- Selection must meet not just the needs of those who use the library regularly but also anticipate the needs of non-users. The library collection should contain opposing views on controversial topics of interest and should represent an honest presentation of both sides of public questions.
- To satisfy the needs of children and young people, uses of adult library materials is not restricted by staff according to the patron's age. Limitation is considered a parental responsibility and not a function of the library.
- Collection Evaluation and Maintenance
 - Materials are managed through an assessment and evaluation process to ensure that the Harlan Community Library's ongoing collection priorities are met.
 - The collection is to remain up to date, balanced and ensure that space limitations are met.
 - The library's collection should be evaluated on a continuing basis for retention, replacement, or withdrawal by the library staff to improve the accessibility of the remaining materials, enhance the appearance of the collection and help improve the overall circulation and turnover rates of materials.
 - The library will use the **CREW** (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding) method for assisting the library director and staff in maintaining a collection of material that is well balanced and fits with the mission of the Harlan Community Library. The CREW method is a system that is used by many libraries across the country to help them determine what to keep in their collections and when to remove items to make room for new material.
 - One or more of the following standards will be used for retaining, replacing or weeding library materials:
 - Availability of the item in alternative format
 - Feasibility of cost of repair
 - Historical significance, interest or value
 - Physical condition
 - Relative usefulness of item
 - Space considerations
 - Superseded, inaccurate or out of date content
 - Usage
- Donations as Gifts and Memorials
 - The Harlan Community Library welcomes donations as outright gifts or memorials. Over the years, many generous donations from individuals, clubs and civic organizations have helped the library bring new services to Harlan and to improve existing ones.
 - The library reserves the right to refuse and discard gifts due to content or physical condition.
 - The library can provide acknowledgement of a gift or donation, however, any appraisal of value is the responsibility of the contributor.
 - Items donated to the Harlan Community Library are covered specifically by the Gifts and Memorials Policy.
- Requests for Reconsideration of Materials

- Because of the rich diversity of human experience and opinion, it is inevitable that some materials in the library's collections will be objectionable to some people in the community. However, the library belongs to the whole community, to the minority as well as the majority. It has a responsibility to serve all members of the community. A great effort is made to provide a balanced collection. The library attempts to represent all sides of an issue and does not take an official stand on any public question. The function of the library is to provide information, not to advocate specific points of view.
- The Library Director and Board of Trustees are aware that customers may take issue with the inclusion of specific items, programs, or practices, and they welcome the expression of concern by customers. If your discussion with members of staff has not alleviated your concern, please complete the Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form which can be obtained at the library. The professional staff and the Library Trustees will review the challenge(s) at their next regular board meeting. Please note: the board meetings will be conducted in open session, as required by Iowa law, and the Request will be made public. The requestor will be informed of the Trustee's decision. Their decision will be final.
- Only those living or owning property in the City of Harlan, Rural Shelby County or a contracting community may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form.
- Repeat or duplicated requests will NOT be reconsidered for three (3) years unless there is a significant change in law or library policy.
- A Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form can also be used if requested materials, programs, or activities are NOT provided by the library.