# Georgetown Peabody Library
# Collection Development Policy

## Purpose

The Georgetown Peabody Library's collection exists to serve the informational and recreational needs of the entire Georgetown community and to support and supplement educational programs within Georgetown. The Collection Development Policy provides guidelines for the selection and acquisition of library materials.

Decisions concerning the development of the collection take into account the scope and strengths of the Library's existing collection; the availability of materials through regional libraries and shared collections; Georgetown school curricula and educational needs; individual patron requests; available financial and physical resources; and the interests and needs of the community.

## Scope of the Collection

The Library provides materials that address the informational, educational, recreational, and cultural needs of its users. Materials are provided in a variety of formats, including:

- Print – such as hardcover books, paperbacks, magazines, and newspapers
- Audiovisual Media – videodiscs, audiobooks, and music CDs
- Electronic Media – databases, software, electronic books, research tools, and downloadable audio books, videos, and music. The Library also provides internet access. Selected websites are linked to the library's website.
- Other – multimedia kits, educational toys, selected audiovisual and other equipment, tools, and other miscellaneous items of interest to the community.

Georgetown patrons have access to the digital collection largely by virtue of our Library's membership in the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC). These items are provided for the use of patrons who have access to a playing device with the ability to install a software management console and then download the borrowed item.

## Responsibility

The Library Director and designated staff members select new material for the collection using their best judgment, research skills, and professional expertise. It is the function of librarians to select new items and to withdraw outdated materials; however they must out of necessity work within limitations of space and budget. Recognizing that sensitivity to the needs and interests of the community is essential to the development of library collections, the Georgetown Peabody Library actively welcomes patron suggestions and recommendations.

## Collections

***CHILDREN'S COLLECTION:*** The children's collection serves children from birth through grade six, parents, teachers, and others who work with children. The collection focuses on materials that develop reading ability, inform children about the world around them, stimulate the imagination, and entertain. The collection is balanced between popular titles and core materials suitable for the varied interests and reading levels of their audience.

***TEEN COLLECTION:*** The teen collection serves teens in grades seven through twelve. The main purpose of this collection is to serve the educational, developmental and recreational needs of this population while serving as a stepping stone from the children's collection to the adult collection.

***ADULT COLLECTION:*** The general collection is a browsing collection geared toward the recreational and educational needs of the general adult population in Georgetown.

## Selection Criteria

The Library considers all acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, in terms of one or more of the following:

- Local demand
- Level of funding for materials
- Authority and accuracy
- Contemporary significance or permanent value of the material
- Recommendations from library users and general public
- Availability through other sources, particularly the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium
- Availability of shelf space
- Relative importance in comparison to existing materials on the same subject
- Historical importance

## Selection Aid

The following sources are representative of the many aids used for selection of materials:

**PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS:** Booklist, Library Journal, New York Times Book Review, Publishers Weekly, Boston Globe, Hornbook, Kirkus, and School Library Journal.

**OTHER:** Bestseller lists, Amazon, Ingram, and other popular print and broadcast media sources.

## Reconsideration

The Library subscribes to the principles of intellectual freedom, which allows for every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. The Library provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive, and disseminate ideas.

The Library also subscribes to the ALA's Library Bill of Rights (see Appendix I). Included in this statement is the commitment to honor the rights of an individual to use the Library regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, or social or political views. Accordingly, the Library staff provides equal service to all Library users.

Georgetown residents with serious objections to specific items in the Library should direct their complaints to a librarian. If the complaint is not resolved, the resident may file a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form (see Appendix II) to the Director's attention. Consistent with G.L. c. 78, § 33, as amended, the Library and the Board of Library Trustees will only consider a Request for Reconsideration, or an appeal of a decision on a Request for Reconsideration, from an individual who is a resident of the Town of Georgetown.

Consistent with G.L. c. 78, § 33, as amended by the Freedom to Read Act (St. 2026, c. 189, "An Act Regarding Free Expression"), no Library employee shall lose librarian licensure or certification, or be dismissed, disciplined, placed on probation, involuntarily transferred, otherwise subjected to an adverse employment action, fined, or imprisoned, for the selection of library materials made in good faith and in accordance with this Policy.

## Donations
The Library currently does not accept book or media donations.

## Self-Published Materials
In terms of self-published materials for our collection, a few things are taken into consideration. Generally speaking, self-published materials are not reviewed by professional sources, which makes it difficult to ascertain whether or not they are the right fit for our community. We hand select all of our materials, so we rely heavily on reviews. That does not mean we never purchase self-published materials or that we do not recognize their value. Self-published books or other materials created by local authors or producers who wish to donate a copy will undergo the same evaluation process as all other library materials. There is no guarantee that any book would not be removed from the collection over time.

We are unable to:
- Acquire self-published books in electronic form
- Accept more than one copy of any title
- Accept review copies
- Meet with individual authors
- Notify authors if a book is not selected. If a book is selected, we will strive to add it to the catalog within two months.

## Memorial Gifts
A memorial gift is created when money or material is donated to add books or other materials to the collection, usually in memory or honor of an individual or group. The Library welcomes suggestions for purchases, but reserves the right to the final decision regarding all materials. A memorial may be placed in the library collection, either for reference or circulating use. The Library will insert a memorial bookplate for memorial items.

## Collection Maintenance
In order to maintain a vital, current collection which meets the needs of the community, the examination of materials is an ongoing process. An item is considered for removal when it is any of the following:
- Obsolete or outdated
- Worn or damaged
- No longer circulating or used for reference purposes
- One of many copies of a formerly popular title

A work chosen to be withdrawn may be replaced with another copy of the same title or another work on the same subject.

## Policy Review and Revision
This Collection Development Policy will be reviewed periodically by staff and the Board of Trustees.

APPENDIX I: American Library Association Library Bill of Rights

APPENDIX II: Request for Reconsideration of Materials Process and Form

*Policy amended and approved by the Georgetown Peabody Library Board of Trustees on 3/9/2016; 5/11/2022, 10/26/2026.*

# Appendix I

## American Library Association Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights.

# Appendix II

## Request for Reconsideration of Materials Process and Form

Georgetown residents with serious objections to specific items in the Library's collection should direct their complaints to a librarian. The resident may file a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form to the Director's attention. This process is serious and can take time. The item in question shall remain available during this process.

The Library Director will assess the material using qualitative and quantitative data and assessments, in accordance with the Collection Development Policy. If the material meets the selection criteria, it will not be removed from the collection because of pressure by any individual or group. The Library will send the resident a copy of the decision within 10 business days after the decision is issued.

The resident may appeal the decision to the Board of Library Trustees. To appeal, the resident must resubmit the Request for Reconsideration form either in print form at the main library desk: Attention Board of Library Trustees, or email a copy to info@georgetownpl.org. The Board will add consideration of the appeal to the agenda of a scheduled general business meeting.

After issuing a decision on the Reconsideration, the Library will not review additional Requests for Reconsideration of the title in question for three years.

Pursuant to state law, all documents and emails received by a public employee or board are considered a public record unless the content falls within one of the stated exemptions under the Massachusetts Public Records Law.

## Intellectual Freedom and Controversial Materials

The Library endorses the Library Bill of Rights. The Library recognizes its right and responsibility to provide worthwhile materials of interest to its readers, including those on all sides of controversial issues. The criteria used by the professional staff when selecting materials are listed in the Collection Development Policy.

The Library does not advocate particular beliefs or views. The selection of any given item is not an endorsement of the viewpoint expressed. Library materials will not be marked in such a way as to show approval or disapproval. Access to library materials shall be controlled only to the extent necessary to protect them from danger or theft.

It is deemed the responsibility of parents and caregivers to determine what their children may read, watch or listen to, and selection of materials is not restricted by the possibility that young people may obtain material their parents and caregivers consider inappropriate. The great diversity of the library's customers means that the library must do more than provide materials for the common denominator in order to be effective.

# Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form

Staff use only
Date received: _____
Staff initials: _____

Date: _____
Full Name: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Telephone: _____

I certify that I am a resident of the Town of Georgetown: ☐ Yes ☐ No

*(Note: Per G.L. c. 78, § 33, as amended by the Freedom to Read Act, the Library and Board of Library Trustees may only consider a Request for Reconsideration, or an appeal of a decision on one, from a resident of the Town of Georgetown.)*

I represent: ☐ Self ☐ Organization: (Please Name) _____

MATERIAL FOR RECONSIDERATION

Format: _____
Title/Author: _____
Call #: _____

1. What brought this material to your attention?

2. Have you examined or read the entire item? If not, why?

3. What concerns you about the material? Please be specific.

4. Are there materials you suggest that provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

5. What action are you requesting the Library to consider?

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return the completed form to a staff member at any service desk or email to info@georgetownpl.org. The Library will send you a copy of the decision within ten business days.

*Pursuant to state law, all documents and emails received by a public employee or board are considered a public record unless the content falls within one of the stated exemptions under the Massachusetts Public Records Law. As required by G.L. c. 78, § 35, the Library will provide data on this challenge to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for its annual report to the Legislature.*