

Collection Management Policy of the Smithfield Public Library



Purpose of this Policy

The Collection Management Policy, approved by the Smithfield Library Board, is one of the Smithfield Library's fundamental policy documents. It outlines the philosophies that create and shape the Smithfield Library's particular collection, the practices that maintain it over time, and the guidelines that help the collection respond to community needs while protecting the collection from societal and political pressures. The Collection Management Policy ensures that over time, the Smithfield Library's collection will develop according to a plan which reflects the needs of Smithfield's whole community, while creating unique experiences of meaning, information, and enrichment for the individual patrons who make up this community.

Philosophy and Scope of the Collection

The Smithfield Library collects materials in a variety of formats, to serve the general educational, recreational, cultural, and entertainment needs of a growing, increasingly diverse population. Special effort is made to reflect the multicultural span of the community.

Inherent in the collection management philosophy is an appreciation for each patron of the Smithfield Library. The Smithfield Library provides materials supporting the individual's journey and does not place a value on one customer's needs or preferences over those of another.

The Smithfield Library contains fiction and nonfiction collections which include material of an enduring nature as well as current-interest materials. Library collections include information and tools in multiple formats and represent the diverse viewpoints and interests of the community the library serves.

The Smithfield Library upholds the right of the individual to access information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Access to the collection will not be limited or denied because of origin, race, religion, age, background, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or views. These factors shall also not be cause to exclude any materials, authors, artists, or other creators from the collection.

Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support their recreational reading, facilitate their reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, add to their recognition and appreciation of literature, and reflect the diversity of their community and their world. The reading and viewing activity of children is ultimately the responsibility of parents, who guide and oversee their own children's development. The Smithfield Library does not intrude on that relationship. Selection of library materials will not be restricted by the possibility that materials could come into a child's possession.

Selection Criteria

Collection management staff use their training, knowledge, and expertise along with the following general criteria to select materials for the collection:

- Relevance to interests and needs of the community we serve
- Extent of publicity, critical review and current or anticipated demand
- Current or historical significance of the author or subject
- Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses

- Reputation and qualifications of the author, publisher or producer, with preference generally given to titles vetted in the editing and publishing industry
- Suitability of format to Library circulation and use
- Date of publication
- Price, availability, and Library materials budget
- Online resources are also evaluated based on accessibility and the availability of library licensing agreements.

Additionally:

- Not all selection criteria may apply equally to all content or formats.
- Selection of materials does not imply agreement with, or approval of, the viewpoints expressed.
- Materials are evaluated as a whole work and not by selected passages or scenes.
- Individual items which may be considered controversial or offensive by some may be selected if it will contribute to the overall variety and balance of the collection.
- The Smithfield Library does not offer textbooks or other school curriculum and in general does not duplicate resources already provided at local schools, academic, or special libraries.
- Staff use a wide variety of selection resources including, but not limited to, professional journals, popular media, publishing trends, local interests, patron recommendations, and circulation data.
- Staff are unable to review in its entirety each item that is selected, acquired, or donated.

Patron Recommendations

Patron recommendations for collection are welcomed and evaluated by the criteria listed above.

Accessibility

The Smithfield Library will not restrict access to any library materials in public areas.

- All library cardholders may check out materials in accordance with circulation policies and procedures.
- Materials are labeled only by classification or as a directional aid.
- Children, tween, teen, young adult, and adult collections are differentiated based on reading level, language comprehension, and audience. These collections may be housed in designated areas to aid in discovery.
- Determining the appropriateness of materials for minors is the sole responsibility of that minor's parent or guardian. The Smithfield Library does not intrude on that relationship.
- Some materials are designated for use in the library only.

Requests for Review of Library Materials

The Smithfield Library selects material using established criteria and full consideration of the varied age groups and backgrounds of its patrons. Libraries are a vital part of our democratic fabric and provide knowledge access for all. The Smithfield Library supports the freedom to read and opposes book banning and other attempts to impinge or reduce patrons' access to information, as stated by the American Library Association in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement and protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The Smithfield Library recognizes that full information about issues of public concern requires access to resources that represent multiple viewpoints. The Library also recognizes the right of individuals to question both materials selected by the Library and those that are not.

The Smithfield Library accepts feedback on items across all collections and welcomes civil discussions about these items. Patrons who are concerned about items they have encountered can schedule a meeting with the Library Director in order to discuss their concerns and the Library's policies and

procedures. If they are unsatisfied with the outcome of this meeting, they can fill out the Library's Statement of Concern about Library Resources form, which is available at the Library Service Desk and online. The Director will review the item with staff assistance and will send a written response within fifteen (15) business days.

If the cardholder wishes to carry their objections further, they may submit a written appeal to the Smithfield Library Board of Trustees within ten (10) business days. The Board will review the request and respond within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the request. Material under review will remain in the circulating collection until a determination is made. An item can only undergo the review process once in a 12-month period, and the decision of the Board is final.

Managing Our Collection

The Smithfield Library's collection is a dynamic, evolving entity. As items are added, others are reviewed for their ongoing value and are sometimes withdrawn from the collection. Great care is taken to retain or replace items that have enduring value to the community. Decisions are influenced by patterns of use, the capacity of our building, and the holdings of other libraries that may specialize in given subjects. Staff review the collection regularly to maintain its vitality and usefulness to the community.

Criteria for Weeding and Withdrawal

The following criteria are used in selecting materials for withdrawal:

- Damage or poor condition
- Relevance to the needs and interest of the community
- Infrequent use and lack of demand
- Inaccuracy or outdated information
- Availability - including other libraries and online resources

Disposal of withdrawn items will be carried out following current city and state guidelines.

Gifts

The Smithfield Library accepts gifts to enhance library services through library materials. Monetary gifts are the responsibility of the Library Director. Material gifts are subject to the evaluation criteria stated in this policy. Processing costs and shelving limits are also considered before adding materials. Once donated, items become the property of Smithfield City and follow the rules and guidelines set by Smithfield City. Donations are accepted with the understanding that the Smithfield Library has the right to determine the disposition of gift items. For more information, please refer to the Library's Gifts and Donations Policy.

Associated Documents

- The Library Bill of Rights: www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill
- The Freedom to Read Statement: www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement
- ARSL Access to Information Statement:
drive.google.com/file/d/1SJx9HGMvgTAcAtacXv1Nc2KBT_RqkofO/view
- The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: constitution.congress.gov/constitution/

Policy History

Approved by the Smithfield Library Board: April 24, 2024

Revised October 23, 2024