COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy: # 6001
Effective Date: 5/7/2025

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this Collection Development and Management Policy is to inform library patrons about Sonoma County Library's collection, the general guidelines used in selection of materials in the collection, and the process for a patron to express concern about an item in the collection. The policy is also designed to guide library staff in their responsibility of selection and maintenance of collections.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Materials: All formats of resources provided by the Library, including but not limited to books, documents, photographs, periodicals, audio-visual recordings, kits, other tangible objects, and electronic resources.

B. Special collections: Materials, analog or digital, curated by the Library on a particular topic that are primarily of long-term historic value, irreplaceable, or rare. The materials may require specialized housing, security, limited access, or a controlled environment.

III. POLICY

A. Scope. This Policy shall apply to all materials in Sonoma County Library's collection except any electronic resources that are preloaded with content.

B. Policy Standards.

i) Library Materials

In support of its mission, Sonoma County Library is committed to providing a variety of library materials and resources to meet the general informational, educational, recreational, and cultural interests of the residents of Sonoma County. To that end, the Library will develop, maintain, and provide free access to collections which reflect the changing needs of the people in its service area, taking into consideration their ages, abilities, education, economic levels, ethnic origins, occupations, religious beliefs, and human conditions.

As a public library, the Sonoma County Library system primarily provides materials of contemporary significance and interest. Popularity and community demand are among the major criteria for selecting material.

Because all items in the circulating collection are available to patrons in any library location of Sonoma County, the collection should be viewed as a whole. It is one unified collection that is housed in multiple public library locations. All items may not always be available at every location. Not all titles will be selected in all available formats.

Sonoma County Library shares an online catalog with Mendocino County Library and Lake County Library, with materials easily requestable among all three library systems. In addition, patrons can request available materials through LINK+, a resource sharing network of numerous public and academic libraries in the state. The Library does not make collection decisions for all materials to which its patrons have access, including some electronic resources that are preloaded with content.

ii) Intellectual Freedom

The Library supports the First Amendment right of every patron to seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. Given the diverse nature of the library's collection, and collections of its affiliates discussed above, not all materials will be suitable for all patrons. Patrons should feel free to explore any and all ideas in order to decide which are meaningful to them.

The Library's selection of materials for the collection does not constitute an endorsement of the content. Public libraries contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable and may lack materials that some patrons feel are important. Sonoma County Library endorses the principles documented in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements, as well as the California Freedom to Read Act (AB 1825), which states:

a. The collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respects both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.
b. The public library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas.
c. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole.
d. The right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences is acknowledged.

Parents or legal guardians have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their own minor children. The Library encourages parents or legal guardians to be involved with their own minor child's use of the Library's collection. The Library does not stand in loco parentis (in the place of parents).

While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor children, they may not restrict the freedom of others to read, view, or inquire. The Library does not restrict access to its materials based on age.

iii) Special Collections

Sonoma County Library is committed to collecting, organizing, preserving, and providing access to historically significant materials related to Sonoma County and, to a lesser

extent, the surrounding regions. To that end, the Library will acquire, develop, and maintain special collections related to and documenting the communities, cultures, and unique characteristics of Sonoma County.

The Library's special collections focus on local history, genealogy, and the wine industry.

Special collections are managed according to principles grounded in responsible and responsive stewardship, developing and maintaining relationships based on mutual respect and proper care of cultural records, as established in the American Library Association Code of Ethics for Special Collections Librarians, Society of American Archivists Core Values and Code of Ethics, and the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials endorsed by the American Association for State and Local History.

iv) Depository

Sonoma County Library is a selective federal depository library through the U.S. Federal Depository Library Program.

v) Responsibility for Selection of Materials

The Library Director is responsible for selecting materials to be included in the Library's collection (*see* First Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement for the County-Wide Provision of Library Services by the Sonoma County Library, section VIII.A). The Library Director delegates this selection responsibility to professionally trained librarians who make data-driven decisions within the context of this policy based on professional expertise, collection analysis, and circulation and use statistics.

vi) General Guidelines for Selection of Materials

Sonoma County Library selects materials for its collections based on the following guidelines and goals. These are general guidelines; the Library is not required to strictly adhere to these.

a. To provide a broad and balanced public library collection covering many subjects, multiple titles on a subject, and a broad range of viewpoints on a subject, consistent with accepted principles of public library management.
b. To provide a diverse collection that contains content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences. This is in alignment with Sonoma County Library's Statement of Inclusivity.
c. To provide materials for all ages and reading levels.
d. To provide titles in a variety of formats.
e. To provide materials suggested for purchase by patrons if consistent with its other collection goals and limitations.
f. To provide specialized collections for matters of local interest including local history, genealogy, and the wine industry.
g. To refrain from excluding any material from its collections merely because it is controversial.
h. To provide materials that are in good physical condition and suitable for library use.

i. To provide textbooks only if they have enduring content value and meet the general needs of the public (the Library will not purchase a particular title solely because it is used as a text in a class offered in the community).

All guidelines for selection of materials are considered within the limits of space, budget, and industry best practices.

vii) Guidelines for Selection or Acceptance of Materials for Special Collections

Sonoma County Library selects or accepts materials for its special collections based on the following guidelines and goals:

a. To build a representative and inclusive historical record of Sonoma County by documenting a range of voices, experiences, subjects, and time periods. This includes addressing and filling collection gaps that impact the histories of less-privileged peoples, communities, or individuals, including those who are experiencing poverty or homelessness, have a disability, are non-English speakers, are LGBTQIA+, and/or are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color.
b. To provide a variety of formats, including print, photographic, born-digital, audiovisual, maps, and ephemeral materials.
c. To provide primary and secondary sources on local history, genealogy, and the wine industry.
d. To provide materials that are in good physical condition and suitable for library use.
e. To refrain from removing, editing, hiding, or omitting contentious historical materials.
f. To provide digital access (born-digital or digitized) to special collections materials when possible and feasible.

All guidelines for selection or acceptance of materials are considered within the limits of space, budget, and industry best practices.

viii) Review and Withdrawal of Materials from the Collection

Sonoma County Library staff should review the Library's collection on an ongoing and regular basis to maintain its quality, relevancy, and physical condition. Use is of primary importance in deciding whether to retain a title. General criteria for retaining, replacing, repairing, or withdrawing items from the collections include physical condition and appearance of the item; space considerations; superseded materials; inaccurate or out-of-date content; usage statistics; availability of item from reputable library vendors; availability of item in alternative formats; cost; ease of borrowing the item from another library; relation to the existing collection and to other material on the subject; and historical and/or local significance, interest, or value. In addition, materials in the Library's special collections may be reappraised and, in some cases, deaccessioned, based upon the criteria in Section vii above and the Library's Gift Policy.

C. Administrative Procedures.

i) Requests to Reconsider Materials in the Collection

Any patron who has a concern about the suitability of an item in the Library's collection is encouraged to speak with a librarian or complete a *Request to Reconsider Library Materials* form, available on the Library's website and in all library locations. Sonoma County Library only accepts requests for reconsideration from cardholding Sonoma County residents for items owned by Sonoma County Library. The form must be completed in full for each title. Receipt of a completed form facilitates an in-depth review of the material by library staff. A written response will be provided within 30 days and will include an option for an administrative appeal to the Library Director, and thereafter, to the Library Commission. Until a decision is made, the item will remain in the collection. Once a decision is made on a particular title, the Library will not re-evaluate the same title for a period of 12 months. If separate grounds to remove the same title are brought to the Library's attention, the Library, at its sole discretion, may re-evaluate a title sooner.

ii) Requests to Reconsider Digital Access to Special Collections Materials

Sonoma County Library provides digital access to special collections materials when possible, such as when materials are in the public domain; when copyright was transferred to the Library; when donors granted permission; when there are no known restrictions on use; and/or in accordance with legal Fair Use for the purposes of education and research.

Anyone concerned that material in the Library's digital special collections violates their rights under copyright law is encouraged to complete a *Request to Reconsider Digital Access to Special Collections Materials* form, available on the Library's website and in all library locations.

Anyone with concerns regarding sensitive information (e.g., Social Security numbers, personal health information, FERPA protected educational records, etc.) or culturally sensitive materials (e.g., information protected by Native American communities) represented in the Library's digital special collections is encouraged to complete a *Request to Reconsider Digital Access to Special Collections Materials* form.

The form must be completed in full for each digital special collections item. Receipt of a completed form facilitates an in-depth review of the material by library staff. A written response will be provided within 30 days and will include an option for an administrative appeal to the Library Director, and thereafter, to the Library Commission. Until a decision is made, the item will remain in the Library's digital special collections. The Library, at its sole discretion and in consideration of the details in the request, may nonetheless remove the item from the Library's digital special collections while a decision is pending.

D. Library Director Authority. The Library Director, or designee, is expressly authorized to make minor amendments to this Policy, including, but not limited to, imposing additional policies or procedures, that are deemed necessary for the efficient and safe functioning of the Library, so long as in line with the purpose of this Policy.

IV. APPLICABLE LAW AND REGULATIONS.

A. California Freedom to Read Act (AB 1825).

V. REVISION HISTORY.

Effective Date: 5/7/2025
Significant Changes: Add AB 1825 language, updates to conform to new policy template

Effective Date: 1/1/2024
Significant Changes: Strengthen intellectual freedom section, update request for reconsideration process, add request for reconsideration of digital access section

Effective Date: 8/2/2021
Significant Changes: Add definition and more detail about special collections

Effective Date: 10/5/2020
Significant Changes: Add language re: diversity of collection and non-endorsement of content

Effective Date: 3/4/2019
Significant Changes: Reformatted to new policy template, clarified role of special collections, federal depository

Effective Date: 4/2/2018
Significant Changes: Added withdrawal criteria, textbook section, renamed policy