



GROTON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Collection Development Policy

### Collection Development Policy

The Groton Free Public Library's Collection Development Policy reflects the diverse needs of the Groton community and the Library's mission to facilitate education, enlightenment, and recreation.

Through our collections – books, digital content, online resources, and other library materials – we work to facilitate equitable experiences for education, enlightenment, and recreation. It is our intention that collections have a measurable impact on the community.

### Principles

The Library upholds the American Library Association's Freedom to View, Freedom to Read, and Library Bill of Rights. The Library's collections reflect a commitment to intellectual freedom. Compliance with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Vermont laws prohibiting discrimination in places of public accommodation shall underpin the practices and practical processes of maintaining the Library's collections.

The following statements from the [Library Bill of Rights](#) pertain specifically to materials and information.

- 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.
- Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

The Library advocates for broad and meaningful participation in all the Library has to offer. It does not necessarily promote all of the ideas found in its collections or the discussions those ideas may inspire, but provides the spaces and opportunities for those ideas and discussions.

### Scope

The Library develops a meaningful collection that is positioned to meet the needs of the community and supports equity, diversity, and inclusion. We recognize and celebrate Groton, and we curate collections that reflect the unique history, characteristics, and interests of our community.

Our Collection Development strategy includes considerations such as frequency of use, accuracy and condition of the materials, patron feedback, and less formal inputs via conversations with the community. We use software to assist in data collection, analysis, and reporting, as required for the Vermont Department of Libraries Public Library Annual Report.

### Selection

The Library's professional staff looks to vetted review resources and trusted publishers to inform our selection process. Community recommendations are welcomed and are subject to the same criteria as any other material. The Library does not collect textbooks, or academic or technical materials unless they are considered useful generally or supportive of the Library's mission.

As stewards of content, we carefully consider materials relative to cost, space, maintenance, safety, and customer interest. We ask such questions as: "Does the item have proven or potential interest to our community? Does it meet known or potential demand? Has it earned the attention of critics, reviewers, and the public to an extent that has created that demand? Are there similar materials already in the collection? To what extent are the materials available elsewhere in the community and library consortium? Can we anticipate, based on our ongoing conversations and engagement with the community, those items and experiences that delight and inspire our community members?"

Digital content curation also takes into account the lifespan of the item, the product, and the product version to maintain currency, relevance, and sustainability.

## Deselection

To maintain relevant collections and content in all formats, the Library must continuously evaluate and retire materials. Criteria for retiring items include, but are not limited to: declining interest, poor condition, unnecessary duplication, or inaccurate or outdated information. Deselected materials may be donated to non-profit organizations, educational institutions, or discarded. These decisions are made to align with the Library's strategic priorities of education, enlightenment, recreation.

Final decisions are the responsibility of the Library Director.

## Gifts and Donations

The Library, at its discretion, accepts donations of materials or monetary gifts for purchase of items, equipment, or digital content for the Library's collection. Any material donations become the property of the Library and may or may not be accepted into the Library collection, based on Library selection criteria. For more on Gifts & Donations, please view our full [Gifts & Donation Policy](#).

## Materials Reconsideration

The Library offers a wide range of materials to meet the diverse needs of patrons throughout the community. We are committed to maintaining equitable experiences for education, enlightenment, and recreation and a collection that serves the varying interests, needs, concerns, and perspectives of our wide range of patrons.

Library patrons with concerns about a particular item are asked to discuss their concerns with the Library Director. A concerned patron who is dissatisfied with informal discussions will be offered a packet of materials that includes the Library's Mission Statement, Collections Development Policy, Reconsideration Request Form, and the Library Bill of Rights. The following steps will be used when an individual feels that further action is necessary to address concerns about a library resource.

1. Patrons are required to complete and submit a [Materials Reconsideration Request Form](#) to the Library Director.
2. The Director, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, will review the reconsideration form and the material in question, to consider whether its selection follows the criteria stated in the collection policy.
3. Within 15 business days, the Director will make a decision and send a letter to the concerned patron who requested the reconsideration, stating the reasons for the decision.
4. The decision of the Director is final.

For the duration of this process, the material in question will remain in circulation in the library collection.

Once the material, regardless of format, has been evaluated under the reconsideration process, it may not be reconsidered again for one calendar year. Reconsideration Request Forms will be retained as required by the Library's Records Retention Policy.

| Date Adopted by Board | Summary of Action   |
|-----------------------|---|
| September 11, 2025    | Updated to include suggested language from the Vermont Department of Libraries.   |
| July 11, 2024         | Policy significantly updated to reflect practice and establish a process and form for reconsideration requests. Policy renamed from Collections Guidelines to Collection Development. |
| December 2021         | Updated "Appendix H: Statement of Concerns"   |
| June 8, 2021          | Updated Policies and Procedures Manual; Topic covered there in "Introduction; Collection Guidelines"  |