

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY  
HANNIBAL FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Adopted: June 20, 2023

Hannibal Free Public Library pursues the enrichment of the personal lives of its users. To achieve this Vision Statement, the Library functions as a major information resource for the community and provides a broad and relevant collection of books and other materials for informational, educational, and recreational purposes to people of differing ages, ethnic groups, lifestyles, and points of view.

The purpose of Hannibal Free Public Library's Collection Development Policy is to define the philosophies that create and shape Hannibal Free Public Library's unique collection. The Policy describes the practices that maintain the Library's collection over time and the guidelines that help the collection respond to community needs while protecting the collection from societal and political pressures. The Policy ensures that over time, Hannibal Free Public Library's collection will remain on course, reflecting the needs of Hannibal's community, while creating experiences of meaning and inspiration for the individual patron. The final authority for the Library's collection rests with the Hannibal Free Public Library Board of Trustees which delegates much of its authority to the Library Director.

Inherent in the Library's collection development philosophy is an appreciation for each patron of Hannibal Free Public Library. The Library provides materials to support each individual's journey, and does not place a value on one patron's needs or preferences over another's. The Library upholds the right of the individual to access information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox or unacceptable to others.

The Library recognizes that its physical collection cannot provide every title or topic a patron may want, so it offers interlibrary loan (ILL) services to meet many needs and interests beyond the local collection. The Library further recognizes that some materials in its collections may not be suitable for everyone, so it divides its physical collections into age-suitable and interest-related materials in the Children's Room, Teen Zone, Adult Collection, and Missouri Room. In addition to its physical collections, the Library subscribes to electronic materials through consortial arrangements, the collection development of which go beyond local control. Other databases are supplied through the Missouri State Library and MOREnet, for which the content is again beyond local control.

The Library Director and/or Library staff will determine how to effectively post this policy. Depending on the location, the policy may be posted in its entirety, or broken into logical segments and partly posted. In either case, the concepts contained within reflect the decision and will of the Hannibal Free Public Library Board of Trustees. At minimum, the full text of the policy will be posted on the Library's website and provided to each new applicant when the borrower's card is issued.

### **MATERIAL SELECTION CRITERIA**

Widespread interest, usage, and shelf-space are the most powerful influences on the Library's collection. For a well-rounded collection, librarians select materials based on local and national demand, professional and popular media reviews, suggestions from the public and

other Library staff, while also ensuring adequate availability of literary staples. Budget and space limitations require a focus on materials that appeal to a broad range of users, rather than the academic and highly technical works collected by universities and other research institutions.

When developing Hannibal Free Public Library's collections, librarians use their training, knowledge and expertise along with the following general criteria to select materials for the collection. All materials, whether purchased or donated, are subject to the criteria listed below:

- Relevance to current and anticipated interests and needs of the community
- 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
- Space and budgetary limits
- Date of publication
- Physical durability for circulation and use
- Availability in other formats
- Treatment of subject for intended audience
- Quality of the production

An item need not meet all of these standards to be included in the Library's collections. The ultimate responsibility for selecting books and other materials for the Library's collections rests with the Library Director or designee, who operates within the framework of policies established by the Hannibal Free Public Library Board of Trustees.

Hannibal Free Public Library does not purchase or otherwise acquire books or other materials that constitute "child pornography", is "pornographic for minors", and is "obscene", as those terms are defined in RSMO 573.010.

The choice of Library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the reading materials of a child or teen rests with their parents or guardians.

Patrons may suggest books and other materials that the Library does not own. Each Suggestion for Purchase is reviewed for inclusion in the collection using the selection criteria, above. Borrowing through Inter-Library Loan (ILL) is another option for patrons to consider should the Library not own the desired book or other material.

## **COLLECTION MAINTENANCE**

Continuous evaluation is necessary to ensure that the Library's materials are useful and accessible. Items are regularly removed to keep the collection current, accurate, and appealing. Authority of the work and author, quality of the publisher, currency of the material, condition of the item, number of additional copies of the title, relevance to the

needs of the community, and format are all considered when removing materials from the collection. “Last copy” status is not a consideration.

Deselection of material from the circulating collections is a vital part of successful collection maintenance. Guidelines similar to those used in the selection of Library materials provide the underlying principles for deselection. Lack of space drives collection maintenance at Hannibal Free Public Library. If an item has not circulated recently, in all likelihood, it will need to be deselected to provide space for items that do circulate. Other criteria for weeding and withdrawal include:

- Damaged or poor condition
- No longer relevant to the needs and interest of the community
- Infrequent use and lack of demand
- No longer accurate
- Availability elsewhere including other libraries and online

Additional guidelines for the withdrawal and sale of items from special collections include

- Curatorial or environmental requirements exceeding the resources of the Library
- Legal restrictions, possession of valid title, and the donor’s intent
- Relevance to the scope of the special collections

Library materials are expensive to purchase, process, and house. Damaged items that are found to still have value in our collection will be evaluated for replacement or mending.

#### COLLECTIONS INTENDED FOR ADULTS AND GENERAL USE

Materials in the Adult Collections are intended for adults, aged eighteen and older, and for general use by all ages. They are selected to broaden vision, support recreational reading, supplement educational needs and life-long learning, stimulate and widen interest, and reflect the diversity of the community. The reading and viewing activity of each patron is ultimately the responsibility of that patron, or of the patron’s family in the case of children and teenagers.

Separate collections are available for children and teenagers, but it is not the responsibility of the Library, its Board of Trustees, staff, or volunteers to determine which collection they should use or what item in any collection is suitable for an individual. Anyone may browse any collection in the building with the exception of the Missouri Room and its ancillary collections, which are limited to adult use. Minors shall be allowed check out items from any library collection unless a parent’s or guardian’s written denial of permission has been received.

#### COLLECTIONS IN THE CHILDREN’S ROOM AND TEEN ZONE

Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature and reflect the

diversity of the community. The reading and viewing activity of a child or teenager is ultimately the responsibility of their families, who guide and oversee their own children's development. Hannibal Free Public Library does not seek to intrude on that relationship.

Collections developed for the Children's Room are intended for children from birth through age 12 years. The Children's Room is subdivided into smaller collections by format, content, and/or by age. Call numbers (spine labels) may be used by patrons to determine age and reading level suitability. Staff is trained to assist further should a request be made.

The Parent and Teacher Shelf contains books intended for parents and teachers to use with children to encourage literacy. General parenting and teacher resources may be found in the Adult Non-Fiction Collection.

Collections developed for the Teen Zone are intended for teenagers from age 12 to 18 years of age. The Teen Zone is subdivided into smaller collection by format and content. Call numbers (spine labels) may be used by patrons to determine age and reading level suitability. Staff is trained to assist further should a request be made. While the Teen Zone contains some non-fiction, most non-fiction written for teenagers is shelved in the Adult Non-Fiction Collection, where it receives more use. The YA Audio Collection is not housed in the Teen Zone because of space. Instead it is intershelved with the Adult Audiobook and Music on CD collections.

Collections developed for the Children's Room and the Teen Zone are selected in consideration of the appropriateness for the age of any minor, as defined in 15 CSR 30-200.030(I)(E), who accesses any material in any form.

The choice of Library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the reading materials of a child or teen rests with their parents or guardians. A parent or legal guardian may elect to limit borrowing privileges by his or her minor child, and staff shall comply with parental decisions when practicable. Borrowing privileges may be limited by large collection areas only: Public Use Computers, Children's Room, Teen Zone, and/or Adult Collection. A parent or legal guardian seeking to limit borrowing privileges must do so in writing. Parents are encouraged to participate in their children's use of the Library. Monitoring a child's use of the Library's collection, public use computers, or wireless connectivity is entirely the parent's or guardian's responsibility.

## **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

Hannibal Free Public Library has the responsibility to preserve the informational resources unique to Hannibal and the surrounding area. Hannibal Free Public Library's Special Collections include the Local Collection, the Mark Twain Collection, the Missouri Room and its Ancillary Collections, and on-line publications of the Hannibal Library Press. These collections have their own selection criteria.

### **The Local Collection**

The Local Collection is a circulating collection of books about Missouri or written by Missouri authors. Emphasis is placed on Hannibal and the local area. The Local Collection consists primarily of adult fiction and non-fiction although the Collection also contains some children's books. Self-published works are acceptable in this Collection.

### **The Twain Collection**

The Twain Collection is a non-circulating collection of books by Mark Twain, about Mark Twain, and spin-offs of Mark Twain's works. Self-published works are acceptable in this Collection. Books may be considered even when their bindings may be less durable. The philosophy behind the Twain Collection is to collect widely even when the subject matter of the work is controversial or unorthodox. A comprehensive collection of works by and about Mark Twain written in languages other than English is not a collection development goal. Neither is a collection of rare first editions although they will be added to the Twain Collection should they be donated or otherwise acquired at reasonable expense.

Circulating books by and about Mark Twain are housed in the Adult Non-Fiction Collection. They are duplicates of some of the books in the Twain Collection, but circulating copies must continue to be used to be retained.

### **The Missouri Room and Ancillary Collections**

The Missouri Room and its ancillary collections focus on Northeast Missouri and more specifically on Hannibal. The Room and its ancillary collections house non-circulating books, serials, manuscripts, photos, negatives, scrapbooks, microfilm, memorabilia, etc. Self-published works are acceptable in this Collection. Books and other materials may be considered even when their bindings may be less durable. The philosophy behind the Missouri Room is to collect widely even when the subject matter of the work is controversial or unorthodox. These collections are limited to use by adults unless special arrangements are made. Depending on the nature of the material sought, use may be further limited with Library staff looking up and providing information rather than allowing hands-on access.

### **On-line Publications of the Hannibal Library Press**

Hannibal Free Public Library owns and operates Hannibal Library Press. The purpose of the Press is to make local information available through physical reprints and electronic publications.

## **REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION (CHALLENGES)**

All individuals and their families have the right to choose which library materials they will use. However, no one has the right to restrict the freedom of others to read, hear, or view whatever they wish. Hannibal Free Public Library recognizes that patrons may object from time to time to content in the Library's collections, displays, and programming. A Request for Reconsideration is the formal process that allows patrons to lodge complaints about

particular books or other materials, programs, or displays. It begins with a patron completing and returning the Library's Request for Reconsideration form. No book or other material in question is automatically removed from the collection because of an objection to it.

Patrons often just want to express strong likes or dislikes about books and other materials they have just read, heard, or viewed. Staff is encouraged to listen but not to interject their opinions about the reconsideration, whether they agree or disagree. Usually being able to express an opinion is all the patron wants to do. Staff is trained to offer to assist the patron in selecting books or other materials that will be more appealing.

After listening to the patron's expression of opinion, when it becomes obvious that being heard is not what the patron wants, then staff should offer the patron a Request for Reconsideration Form to complete and return with the book or other material in question. The Form is appended to this Policy. The Library accepts Requests for Reconsideration only from registered borrowers of Hannibal Free Public Library who reside within the service district and are in good standing. Non-Resident borrowers may not file Requests for Reconsideration. Requests for Reconsideration filed by or on behalf of groups shall not be accepted. Challenges are limited to one item per Request for Reconsideration Form. Repeated challenges on the same title, program, or display from the same patron shall not be accepted.

When Hannibal Free Public Library receives a Request for Reconsideration, it must be on the Library's Request for Reconsideration Form, and the Form must be complete including personal information of the person filling out the Form. If it is not, the individual is sent a letter.

Should the Request for Reconsideration concern materials found on MOLib2Go, the patron's Request for Reconsideration will be referred to the consortium. Likewise, should the Request for Reconsideration concern materials found in one of the state-wide databases provided by MOREnet or the Missouri State Library, the patron's Request for Reconsideration will be referred to the State Library or MOREnet.

Once a completed Request for Reconsideration Form is received, the book or other item is checked out to a staff account. The individual is written a letter that describes the process for reviewing a Request for Reconsideration at the staff level. Typically, the Director and Assistant Director form a committee to consider the Request for Reconsideration. They read and discuss the book, the comments on the Form, and the reviews in *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Kirkus*, etc. These journals are standards that librarians use when evaluating materials for inclusion in collections. They also do a Google search for title to see what the general public might have to say about the title. They arrive at a conclusion about the material under consideration. Sometimes the decision is to retain it where it is located, sometimes to move it to another location, and sometimes to remove it entirely from the collection. The goal is to balance the individual's concerns with the need to provide a wide variety of age-appropriate materials representing a diversity of viewpoints. This process takes time and the patron is requested to allow Library staff four to six weeks to respond.

Once Library staff arrive at a conclusion, another letter is written to the individual that describes the process we used in considering the book and the concerns listed on the Form. The letter outlines the reasons behind the decision to retain, move, or remove the book. And, it provides recourse should the individual disagree after considering the Library Director's reasoning, which is requesting that the Library Board review the decision.

The Request for Reconsideration is referred to the Library Board's Library Personnel & Services Committee. Per the Library Board's By-Laws, this Committee serves as a review committee to hear complaints about materials and/or services that have not been resolved by the Library Director. The Committee concludes its review by making a recommendation to the full Library Board for consideration. This process also takes time and the Committee requests that the patron allow four to six weeks for a response. The final authority regarding removal or retention of Library materials ultimately resides with the Library Board of Trustees.

Should a second challenge be received to a specific title from a different patron, the process of reconsideration may be shortened at the Library Director's discretion, and the response to the previous Request for Reconsideration may be modified and used.

The Library Board will be kept informed of the staff committee's consideration of the material in questions. The Request for Reconsideration will be reported in the Director's Monthly Report and Annual Narrative Report although no information to identify the individual making the complaint is included. The results of any such dispute or challenge shall be disclosed to the public through publication on the library's website, typically in Library Board minutes.

Requests for Reconsideration are considered library records, the disclosure of which is prohibited by RSMO 182.817. Personally identifiable information shall be redacted from published results and/or from information provided under Sunshine Law or Freedom of Information requests.

## **BEQUESTS, GIFTS, AND DONATIONS**

Hannibal Free Public Library accepts donations of books and other materials with no strings attached. Donated materials may be cataloged for the collection, placed in the book sale, donated to another library or institution, or recycled. Because of the amount of donations received, the Library generally cannot agree to look at the items prior to accepting them, nor can the Library accept donations tentative to a collection development decision being made. The Library Director or designee may grant an exception depending on the circumstances of the donation.

The Library accepts cash donations to purchase books and other materials as memorials or other purposes. The donor may specify the subject matter of the items to be purchased, but the Library Director or designee may find it necessary to insist that the donor widen or change the topic based on what is currently available for purchase.

The Library accepts cash donations to its Designated Reserves. Most donations come in the form of bequests in which the donor has left instructions in his or her will as to how the interest will be used. Other donations are made as memorials by family members and/or friends. The Library Board must accept the bequest or donation before it is added to the Library's Designated Reserves.

### **THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION'S LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT, FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT, AND INTERPRETATIONS**

Hannibal Free Public Library subscribes to the provisions of the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, the Freedom to View Statement, and Labeling Systems, An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association. These documents are considered a part of this policy. The Library Bill of Rights may be found at <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>. The Freedom to Read Statement may be found at <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>. The Freedom to View Statement may be found at <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement>. Labeling Systems, An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights may be found at <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretation/labeling-systems>.

### **DISPLAYS AND PROGRAMS**

No age-inappropriate materials in any form, as defined in this Collection Development policy, shall be knowingly displayed in the library in areas designated by the Library as containing materials predominantly for minors.

No event or presentation shall be held at the library without an age-appropriate designation affixed to any publication, website, or advertisement for such event or presentation.

### **AUTHORITY**

The Missouri Revised Statutes (RSMO) 182.230 (1955) provides that

Every library and reading room established under sections 182.140 to 182.301 shall be forever free to the use of the inhabitants of the city where located, always subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the library board may adopt in order to render the use of the library and reading room of the greatest benefit to the greatest number. The board may exclude from the use of the library and reading room any and all persons who willfully violate such rules. The board may extend the privileges and use of the library and reading room to persons residing outside of the city in this state, upon such terms and conditions as the board, from time to time, by its regulations, may prescribe.

This policy has been adopted by the Hannibal Free Public Library Board of Trustees under its statutory authority to determine and govern the use of the Library's facilities.



This policy complies with the Secretary of State's 15 CSR 30-200.015 Library Certification Requirement for the Protection of Minors, dated February 8, 2023.