

Thomaston Public Library Collection Development Policy

The mission of the Thomaston Public Library is to provide accurate, timely and useful materials in a variety of formats and technologies. Library services and programs are conducted in response to public demand and with reference to the informational, educational, recreational, professional, cultural and other needs of the community. The library supports lifelong learning and the love of reading.

It is the primary objective of the Library to provide accessible materials for people of all ages, making available carefully selected materials that will meet the needs and interests of the Thomaston community. Consideration of all interests, timely responses to user needs, and a wide range of viewpoints are hallmarks of a valuable and successful collection.

The purpose of this policy is to establish the guidelines by which the Library's staff develops and manages its collections and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

Intellectual Freedom

The Thomaston Public Library subscribes to but is not limited to the following fundamental rights relating to intellectual freedom and the freedom to read:

- [First Amendment of the Constitution](#)
- [Library Bill of Rights](#) – Adopted June 19, 1939. Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 23, 1980; January 29, 2019; inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.
- [The Freedom to Read Statement](#) – Adopted June 25, 1953; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

With the exception of certain valuable, fragile, and/or irreplaceable materials, the library's collection will be on open shelves arranged to provide a maximum of self-service and browsing.

Scope of the Collection

The Library provides materials and services that reflect the diverse informational, educational, and recreational needs of its users. In so doing, the Library provides access to content through print, multimedia, and digital resources. The Library recognizes that content and medium should be suitably matched, and that patrons have different learning styles and preferences for how they receive information. Therefore, the Library provides materials in a variety of formats, including but not limited to:

- Print – such as hardcovers, paperbacks, magazines, and newspapers
- Non-print – such as audio and visual formats

- Digital resources – such as online databases, digital and audiobooks, recordings, images, and digital historical archives
- Equipment – such as new technology and specialized hardware

Youth Selection Guidelines

The Children’s Library offers developmentally relevant materials that meet the informational and recreational needs of children ages birth through high school graduation. In addition, the Children’s Library collects materials on child-rearing for parents and caregivers.

The Juvenile collection is relevant, of appropriate size and quality, and represents a diversity of views and expressions. To ensure the collection is appropriate and well-chosen, the children’s librarian consults professional review sources as well as the recommendations of readers, including children, educators, parents, and caregivers. Some materials in the juvenile collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children. Only each child and their parent or caregiver can decide what material is suitable for that child to read.

The Teen collection offers developmentally relevant materials that meet the informational and recreational needs of preteens and teenagers in grades 7 and up. Teen Services maintains a collection that is relevant, of appropriate size and quality, and represents a diversity of views and expressions. Some materials in the Teen Services Collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all teenagers. While some books could be too mature for one teen, other teens may be ready for them. Only each teen and/or with their parent or caregiver can decide what material is suitable for that teen to read.

General Selection Criteria

- Timeliness and/or popularity of a subject, title, or author
- Professional reviews from reputable journals and sources
- Award-winning or award-nominated material
- Patron requests
- Significance of subject matter
- Accuracy of information
- Extent of publicity, critical reviews and current or anticipated demand
- Current or historical significance of the author or subject
- Reputation or authority of the author or publisher, with preference generally given to titles vetted in the editing and publishing industry
- Value of resource in relation to price, availability, and materials budget
- Technical characteristics, e.g., binding, size, quality of paper and typography
- Existing holdings and availability at other libraries through resource sharing

Purchasing decisions are made by the Director and staff members. To facilitate access and satisfy user needs multiple copies of popular titles may be purchased. The Library cannot purchase all materials requested but will attempt to extend its resources through our consortium and interlibrary loan.

The Library will purchase materials in new formats as they arise and become generally available.

The Thomaston Public Library welcomes unrestricted gifts of books and other library materials. Donations added to the collection must meet the aforementioned selection criteria. The Thomaston Public Library does not assess the value of donated materials. The Library welcomes funds to be used for the purchase of material and the wishes of the donor will be considered in selecting materials with monetary gifts. Gift plates with appropriate information will be included if the donor so desires. These items are still subject to the deselection guidelines below.

Deselection

Withdrawals of materials are made so the library can maintain an up-to-date and inviting collection. Lack of demand, obsolete or erroneous information, and poor condition are the main reasons for withdrawals. Items withdrawn for reasons of condition, loss, or damage will be considered for replacement.

Withdrawn materials are marked discarded and may be sold to the public.

Approved by the Thomaston Public Library Board of Trustees, November 3, 2023.