

# **Williamson County Public Library Collection Development Policy**

Policy Approved by the WCPL Board of Trustees, April 28, 2022

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**I. LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT**

Create a diverse and accessible atmosphere that provides windows to the past, pathways to the future, and enrichment to the community in the present.

**II. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT GOAL**

To provide a current, relevant, and focused collection of physical materials and electronic resources, reflecting diversity in both content and form, for the communities served countywide and at each location.

**III. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS**

The population of Williamson County, according to the 2020 federal census, is 247,726. The official service population for Williamson County Public Library System (“WCPL”) is 153,135. Residents are served by WCPL in six locations: the Main Library in Franklin, the County seat; and branches in Fairview, Nolensville, Leiper’s Fork, Bethesda, and College Grove.

When examined as a single entity, there appears to be little diversity in the County. 89.2% of the population is white, 5.2 % is Asian, 4.7% is Hispanic and Latino, and 4.1% is Black and African American. 59.9% of the population is between the ages of 18-64. The County as a whole is fairly wealthy and educated, with a median household income of \$109,102 and 61.40% of the population between the ages of 25-64 holding a Bachelor’s Degree or higher.

However, when individual communities served by the various WCPL branches are examined in finer grain detail, significant diversity emerges. For example, while countywide, only 4.1% of residents are Black and African American, it is important to note that almost the entirety of that segment of our population lives in Franklin, where there is an historically important African American presence. Conversely, while the majority of County residents are highly educated and comparatively wealthy, this does not reflect the significant number of patrons who reside in more rural areas of the County. Many of these residents, whose income falls below the median, utilize WCPL branch locations.

As the demographics of our County continue to change, the WCPL’s collections should reflect the interests of the physical communities our branches serve.

**IV. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION, LEGAL AND DELEGATED**

The ultimate responsibility for materials selection is the duly appointed Library Director’s within the parameters of the Williamson County Public Library Collection Development Policy. Staff in each department, and managers at the branches, have designated responsibility for collections at their respective locations.

## **V. LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM, AND PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS**

WCPL generally adheres to precedents set by the Constitution of the United States and guidance provided by the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association in order to observe the principles of intellectual freedom, which favor liberty of thought and an opposition to censorship. The WCPL supports patrons' access to a wide variety of materials even if the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others.

Library users of all ages can access the WCPL collections. Parents and guardians are responsible for supervising and assisting their children in selecting resources that keep with their values. While patrons are free to choose materials for themselves and their minor children, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to choose or access library materials. However, WCPL staff can assist in finding materials appropriate for each family.

### **A. LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, ABRIDGED**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. 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.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use the library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019. Inclusion of 'age' reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

### **B. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM STATEMENT**

The Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution declares certain fundamental freedoms to be essential to our form of government. Primary among these is the freedom of expression, specifically the right to publish diverse opinions and access to those opinions. WCPL is committed to the full and free use of all communications media and is responsible for making the content of those media accessible to all. The WCPL asserts the public interest in the preservation of freedom of expression.

In accordance with judicial interpretations of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, freedom of expression is guaranteed. Every American who aspires to the success of our experiment in democracy – who has faith in the political and social integrity of a free society – must stand firm on those Constitutional guarantees of essential rights. Such Americans can be expected to fulfill the responsibilities implicit in those rights.

### **C. FREEDOM TO VIEW**

The freedom to view, along with the freedom to speak, to exchange, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression.

### **D. DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

WCPL System strives to reflect the needs of our community and our national landscape. Library collections have the ability to promote understanding and education among diverse groups, and the Library will continuously work to curate a collection representing a wide array of people, cultures, ideas, and experiences. The process of curating, maintaining, and providing a diverse and equitable collection is an ongoing process which may be considered during all aspects of collection development.

### **E. CONTESTED LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Materials available in the WCPL present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy. The WCPL also selects a wide variety of materials that satisfy the diverse interests of our community. The WCPL provides access to individuals to secure these resources, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to some. The varied collection may be available to all; however, it is not expected that all of the collection will appeal to everyone.

Patrons who wish to request the withdrawal or reclassification of materials currently owned by the WCPL are encouraged to discuss their concerns with a manager or the WCPL Director. If the patron is not satisfied with the response to their request, or does not wish to discuss their concerns, they will be provided with information and a form to

request formal reconsideration of the resource. Once the form is fully completed it shall be provided to the WCPL Director for consideration in accordance with this policy. The item at issue will not be removed from access during the reconsideration period.

The form entitled "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" is appended to this policy.

## **VI. POLICIES BY COLLECTION**

- A. Fiction – In selecting fiction for all ages, in all formats, the WCPL uses no arbitrary standard of literary quality. An attempt is made to satisfy a public varying in education, interest, taste, and reading skills.

The WCPL purchases and receives current, popular, and bestselling fiction, plus works by notable authors in all genres based on popular demand and local reader interest. Selections are made from review tools as well as vendors' curated lists.

- B. Nonfiction – The following standards may be considered for purchase and receipt of nonfiction material, for all ages in all formats:

- Date of publication
- Cost
- Physical qualities
- Relationship to existing collection
- Scope
- Organization and accuracy of content that has been vetted in the editing and publishing process
- Readability
- Relevance to the interest and needs of the community
- Reputation and qualification of a publisher
- Social significance
- Timeliness or permanent value
- Qualifications of author in subject field
- Current professional library standards and guidelines

- C. Reference – In selecting reference materials, the WCPL uses the same standards as previously stated for nonfiction (see VI-B). Emphasis should be placed on maintaining the most current sources available.

Reference collections are maintained at each branch and in both the adult and juvenile departments of the Main Library. There must necessarily be some duplication of materials in adult and juvenile reference, i.e., encyclopedias and dictionaries. Other than these basic tools, materials in these two departments will not be duplicated.

D. Special Collections – The Special Collections librarian at the Main Library will curate a collection of materials of all formats that are important to the history of the entire County, while each branch manager collects materials of interest to their local community. Due to the nature of historical and genealogical research, formats that are not acquired for other areas of the collection are actively collected, such as:

- Maps
- Manuscripts
- Rare books
- Microfilm
- Scrapbooks
- Photographs
- Ephemera

The scope of the collections includes:

- Genealogy
- Local History
- Local Authors
- Civil War Collection
- Family Histories

## **VII. WEEDING AND DISCARDING**

Library materials will be evaluated on an ongoing basis according to current standards.

## **VIII. RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY SYSTEMS IN REGARD TO COLLECTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Main Library is the resource center of materials for the WCPL System. This collection is, therefore, both comprehensive and inclusive. Branch holdings are selected with regard to the needs and interests of their respective communities.

Proximity to numerous academic libraries in the region obviates in-depth collecting in such professional fields as business, education, law, and medicine. Interlibrary loan service allows the borrowing of materials from these libraries and others throughout the United States.

## **IX. APPENDIX**

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

Standards for Collection, Tennessee Standards for Public Libraries in the Regional Library System, Revised 2018, Page 7