

Denver Public Library Collection Development Policy

Last revised November 2018. Approved by the Library Commission in November 2018.

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Collection Development Policy

1. Mission Statement

The Denver Public Library connects people with information, ideas and experiences to provide enjoyment, enrich lives and strengthen our community.

2. Purpose of Collection Development Policy

The Collection Development Policy, approved by the Library Commission, is one of the Library's fundamental policy documents. It outlines the philosophies that create and shape the Denver Public Library's unique collection, the practices that maintain it over time and the guidelines that help the collection respond to community needs while protecting the collection from societal and political pressures. The Collection Development Policy ensures that over time, the Denver Public Library's collection will remain on course, reflecting the needs of Denver's community, while creating unique experiences of meaning and inspiration for the individual customer.

3. Philosophy and Scope of the Collection

The Denver Public Library collects materials, in a variety of popular formats, which support its function as a major information source for the demanding needs of a metropolitan population. The collection also serves the general educational interest, recreational, and entertainment needs of the public, and reflects the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of the community.

Widespread interest and usage are the most powerful influence on the Library's collection. The other driving force is the Library's strategic plan.

Selections are made to provide depth and diversity of viewpoints to the existing collection and to build the world-class Western History/Genealogy and African American Research Library collections. The Denver Public Library collects to the research level in the following areas: Western History, Genealogy, Federal Government Publications and African American History in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain West.

Inherent in the collection development philosophy is an appreciation for each customer of the Denver Public Library. The Library provides materials to support each individual's journey, and does not place a value on one customer'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.

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 and our world. The reading and viewing activity of children is ultimately the responsibility of parents, who guide and oversee their own children's development. The Denver Public Library does not intrude on that relationship.

4. Scope of the Central Library

The Central Library contains the core fiction and nonfiction collections for the Library system and includes material of an enduring nature as well as current-interest materials.

Central Library collections include information in multiple formats and represent the diverse viewpoints and interests of the community the Library serves. The Reference collection contains current and historical non-circulating publications, including many periodicals, to support extensive and in-depth reference service for the general public, students and businesspeople.

5. Scope of the Branch Libraries

Branch libraries serve the needs of the communities in which they are located. Library staff regularly evaluate the collection to ensure its relevance. Collections of the branch libraries concentrate on materials of high interest and materials that support the Library's strategic goals. Branch collections are shaped, in part, by customer use through the floating collection system, in which items move freely among library locations rather than being owned by a specific location.

6. Scope of the Online Collection

The online collection represents the diverse viewpoints and interests of the entire community the Library serves. The online collection evolves as new formats and products become available. This collection may include research and learning databases, eBooks and other downloadable and streaming media.

7. Scope of Special Collections

Western History and Genealogy

The Western History/Genealogy Department collects to the research level original and secondary materials in a variety of formats in the following subject areas: history of the trans-Mississippi West, genealogy, conservation and the 10th Mountain Division. The Department is also the repository of the Library's institutional archives. Other collections housed in the Western History/Genealogy Department include the Eugene Field Collection, the Ross-Barrett Historical Aeronautics Collection, the Douglas Collection of Fine Printing and Binding and Denver Municipal and Denver Regional Documents.

Federal Government Publications

The Denver Public Library is a selective depository in the Federal Depository Library Program. The government documents collection provides information about the operation and activities of the United States Government and public access to authoritative information from government sources. Collections of historical documents reflecting major historical events and movements are retained. The collection level is aimed at a general audience consisting of engaged citizens and residents, businesspeople and students of all ages.

Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library

The Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library collects materials on the history, literature, art, music, sports, religion and politics of African Americans in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain West. By collecting primary and secondary source materials such as archival papers, photographs, periodicals, artwork, books, and artifacts for the research collection as well as for the museum, the Library documents the African American experience from the Five Points neighborhood to the trans-Mississippi West.

8. Selection Criteria

Collection development staff use their training, knowledge and expertise along with the following general criteria to select materials for the collection:

- Relevance to 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
- Suitability of format to Library circulation and use
- Date of publication
- Price, availability and Library materials budget
- Online resources are also evaluated based on accessibility and the availability of library licensing

9. Customer Recommendations

Customers may request items the Library does not own. Each request is reviewed for inclusion in the collection using the selection criteria.

10. Requests for Reconsideration

The Denver Public Library selects material using established criteria and full consideration of the varying age groups and backgrounds of customers. Requests for removal of items from the collection may be made using a formal procedure outlined in Appendix 5.

11. Collection Management

Philosophy of Collection Management

The Library's collection is a living, changing entity. As items are added, others are reviewed for their ongoing value and sometimes withdrawn from the collection. Great care is taken to retain or replace items that have enduring value to the community. Decisions are influenced by patterns of use, the capacity of each location and the holdings of other libraries that may specialize in a given subject matter. Staff review the collection regularly to maintain its vitality and usefulness to the community.

Responsibility for Collection Management

The final authority for the Library collection rests with the Library Commission. Implementation of collection development policy and management of the collection is assigned to Library staff. The Denver Public Library disposes of materials that have been withdrawn according to the criteria for weeding and withdrawal outlined below. The Friends Foundation serves as an instrument for the Library, reselling and redistributing Library materials that are withdrawn from the collection or donated to the Library and designated by the Library for resale.

Criteria for Weeding and Withdrawal

The following criteria are used in selecting materials for withdrawal:

- Damage 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

In addition, staff use the following guidelines for the withdrawal and sale of items from special collections:

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

When a statement of a donor's preferences accompanies an acquisition, any departure from it is carefully considered and negotiated with the donor or the donor's heirs or settled by appropriate legal procedures. For an item withdrawn from special collections including rare books, artwork, photographs, antiquarian maps, and archival materials, the Library will document its disposition.

Sale of withdrawn items will be carried out in the manner most advantageous to the Library. This may entail a relationship with a dealer, auction house or other institution. Staff will deposit the proceeds from the sale of items back into a special revenue fund of the City for development and maintenance of special collections. In accordance with Denver City rules regarding the sale of municipal property, Library employees cannot privately acquire materials from a special collection.

Gifts

The Denver Public Library accepts donations of books and other materials. The Library retains the authority to accept or reject gifts. Library staff and/or representatives of the Friends Foundation make all decisions as to the use, housing and final disposition of donations. The Library does not evaluate or appraise gift materials for tax purposes.

Appendix 1:

Statements Endorsed by the Library Commission

In August 2012, the Denver Public Library Commission reaffirmed its endorsement of the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights.

Appendix 2:

Western History and Genealogy Collections

Western History

The Western History Collection encompasses primary and secondary source material of the trans-Mississippi West with special focus on the Rocky Mountain region.

Primary sources include:

- Archival Collection – original personal papers, family papers, records of organizations including architectural records, electronic records, and unpublished audio/visual media
- Maps – 22 contiguous states west of the Mississippi River, plus Alaska and Hawaii
- Photography Collection – original negatives, photographic and digital images
- Art Collection – works of original art and other illustrative materials of the Rocky Mountain Region, and artwork by Colorado artists.
- Denver Municipal and Regional Documents – publications produced by Denver City and County agencies along with RTD and DRCOG

Secondary sources include books, pamphlets and other published material covering historical and contemporary subjects.

Genealogy

The Genealogy Collection focuses on United States source and research materials and international how-to guidebooks. The Library collects regional, state, county and local histories, and primary and secondary source materials such as maps, family charts, cemetery, mortuary, tax, probate, census, vital records and passenger and immigration lists.

Conservation

The Library collects conservation materials as they relate to the politics and preservation of natural resources. This includes archival collections, and also photographs, books and ephemera. The Conservation collection is national in scope.

10th Mountain Division

In association with History Colorado, the Library acquires the personal papers and records of the men and units of the World War II United States ski troops. This relationship is called the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center.

Ross-Barrett Historical Aeronautics Collection

Focusing on commercial and military aviation, the library collects books and other materials that document the history of aeronautics through 1970.

Douglas Collection of Fine Printing and Binding

The library obtains examples of craftsmanship in the art of bookmaking, including books

representing typography, papermaking and decoration, unique binding and artists' books.

History of the Book

The library collects examples demonstrating the history of writing and printing. This includes representative examples of papyrus, incunabula, vellum and historical first editions.

Appendix 3:

African American Research Library Collections

The research collection at the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library encompasses primary and secondary source material of the African-American experience in the trans-Mississippi West.

Primary sources include:

- Archival collection - original personal papers, family papers and organizational records
- Photography collection - original negatives, photographs and digital images
- Artwork and Museum collection - art and artifacts that document and illustrate the history and contributions of African Americans

Secondary sources include books, pamphlets, maps, government publications, and periodicals that support African American research and scholarship

Appendix 4:

Federal Government Documents

The Denver Public Library has been a selective depository in the Federal Depository Library Program since 2009. Before that date, the Library was a regional depository for many years and has collected federal documents since the nineteenth century.

The base of the Library's selection profile is the Suggested Core Collection (Federal Depository Library Manual, Appendix A). Beyond these, item selections support the Library's general collection and fill the current and future needs of the community in formats that the Library can sustain. Priority is given to print and electronic formats in selection and retention decisions.

The Library selects items with documents in the following subject areas:

- Executive and legislative activities of the federal government, including hearings and annual reports
- Consumer protection
- Health
- Criminal justice
- Recreation, with an emphasis on Colorado and the Rocky Mountain West
- Historical monographs, with special emphasis on subjects included in the Western History and Genealogy collection
- Arts
- Energy
- Water issues
- Materials supporting the K-12 curriculum
- Materials about and of use to small business

Item categories that are not selected:

- Newsletters
- Directories
- Catalogs and bibliographies
- Forms (except IRS)
- Announcements
- Technical reports, notes, bulletins
- State-specific publications for states outside the Rocky Mountain West

Appendix 5:

Procedure for Request for Reconsideration

Library customers requesting reconsideration and removal of items in the collection may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form, which is available at any Library location. Staff review the request in relation to the Library's mission and selection criteria. The City Librarian reviews the request and replies within thirty days of receipt of the request. The item in question will not be removed from the shelf during the reconsideration process.