

CAPITAL AREA DISTRICT LIBRARIES
SER 101 MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY
MAY 27, 2026

I. Selection of Library Materials

I.1 Mission Statement

Empowering our diverse communities to learn, imagine and connect.

CADL achieves its mission by providing free and unrestricted access to informational, educational, cultural, and recreational library materials and services.

I.2 Purpose

CADL subscribes to the selection principles for books and other library resources contained in the Library Bill of Rights adopted by the American Library Association, and the Freedom to Read Statement endorsed by the American Library Association Council and the American Book Publisher's Council.

Written collection development guidelines enhance our service to patrons by:

- providing specific guidance for selection of library materials
- assigning the responsibility for selection
- determining levels of access for library materials
- providing criteria for accepting gift titles
- defining the basis for collection maintenance decisions

To implement these goals, CADL recognizes that American democracy functions only if the full range of human ideas is accessible to all people regardless of age, ethnic background, religious, or personal beliefs. Capital Area District Libraries will aim to provide a general collection of materials embracing a wide range of knowledge and recreation. The collection will include books, media, technology, and other items to aid in meeting the needs of its communities.

Thus the library collection, protected by the First Amendment and embodied in the Library Bill of Rights, is a marketplace of ideas which are contained in varied and divergent materials and formats.

I.3 Objectives Of Selection

The objectives of selection are to meet the educational, recreational and cultural needs of the library's service areas. All materials added to the collection shall be judged on the content as a whole, not by detached excerpts or portions thereof.

Demand and use are key factors in the development of the general collection, with due regard for variations in educational level, reading interest, and users' special needs. Every effort is made to represent all sides of controversial issues.

Materials will be selected on the basis of anticipated or expressed popular demand, educational or literary merit, and/or cultural value.

Within the framework of these broad objectives, selection is based more specifically on the particular needs and interests of the children and adults in the individual communities the library serves. In order to determine these interests, periodically the staff will analyze circulation and usage information which may include patron needs assessment, focus groups, and community demographics.

I.4 Responsibility For Selection

Material selection is accomplished under the policies adopted by the Board. The authority for selection of all print and non-print materials lies with the Executive Director who may delegate the responsibility to staff members who are qualified by education, training, or experience.

I.5 Selection Criteria

Selection is an interpretive process, involving knowledge of the materials in the collection, an awareness of current materials available on the subject, use of reviews, and recognition of the needs of the community. Materials will be selected by applying the selection criteria herein. The Library recognizes the importance of both basic items of permanent value and timely materials in which the public expresses interest. In providing the latter, CADL may purchase materials in quantity for mass use.

It is not possible for any library to acquire all the materials that the public would need or want. No single criterion is applicable to all selection decisions. Factors to be considered in adding adult and children's materials to CADL's library collection include the following:

- Present and planned collection composition
- Present and anticipated relevance to community needs and/or demand
- Collection development objectives
- Scarcity of material on the subject, both in the collection and in publication generally
- Reputation and significance of the author, title, subject, or publisher.
- Materials by popular authors or creators
- Currency and accuracy
- Timeliness or permanence of the material
- Intended audience
- Literary significance and merit of subject, author, or title
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Quality and reliability of the information
- Skill, competence, and purpose of the author
- Effectiveness of the format in conveying information
- Space and budget considerations
- Availability of special materials in other library collections in the area
- Attention from professional journals or other reliable reviewing sources
- The anticipated long-term use for an item

- The number of similar items already in the collection
- Physical quality
- Cost of material

All requests from patrons for specific titles or subjects will be considered. Materials which are requested infrequently may be supplied through other means such as MeLCat.

Titles published by a small press or self-published by the author are subject to the same selection criteria used for evaluating all items for the library's collection.

Selection of digital content can vary among the vendors who supply digital content to the library. In instances when individual title selection is not available, selection of the service will be based upon the reputation and overall content offerings of the vendor.

No materials shall be excluded because of the origin, background, race, nationality, religion, or the political or social views of the author or anyone contributing to the creation of the material.

Due to the unique nature and limited size and scope of the Library of Things collection, application of selection criteria may vary from other parts of the collection. Factors such as cost, circumstances of use and technical criteria may take precedence.

1.6 Policy On Controversial Materials

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Since the Library does not promote particular beliefs or views, the collection inevitably will contain various positions, including unpopular or unorthodox positions. The presence of an item in the library does not indicate any endorsement of its content by the Library. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but on principles stated in this policy. Selections will be made solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collections and serving the interests of readers in the Library's service area and not on the basis of any anticipated or actual approval or disapproval by individuals or groups.

The Library distinguishes between materials that are controversial and those that may be illegal such as materials which are obscene. CADL will abide by the Constitutions of the United States, and the State of Michigan, the laws of the United States, State of Michigan and the communities which the library serves. Compliance with these laws will also guide staff in the selection of all materials.

CADL considers reading, listening, and viewing materials to be individual, private matters and believes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for all patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. Responsibility for choosing what materials an individual will view, read, or consume rests with the individual. Although the staff exercises professional judgment in the selection of all

materials, the responsibility for a minor child's use of library materials rests with their parents and/or legal guardians as more fully set forth in SER 102.

1.7 Request for Re-evaluation of Library Materials

Patrons who wish to register a formal complaint about a particular item in the library, may do so by submitting a "Request for Re-evaluation of Library Materials" form to branch staff who will forward the request to the Selection Specialist. The Selection Specialist will respond in writing.

Patrons who are not satisfied with the response may request that the Executive Director review their request. The Executive Director or designee will respond in writing.

Patrons who are still not satisfied with the response may request that the Board review their request. The decision of the Board is final.

2. **Procedures for Selection of Library Materials**

2.1 Selection Aids

The primary sources of information about potential library materials are the lists, selections and reviews found in library journals and authoritative online resources. The Capital Area District Libraries' Librarians rely on such resources as Library Journal, School Library Journal, Booklist, Publisher's Weekly, and Billboard to assist with selecting print, electronic, and audio-visual materials. Other selection resources may be used for specific subject areas, such as publishers' catalogs, popular periodicals, format specific review periodicals, newspaper reviews, bibliographies and web-based review sources.

2.2 Outside Recommendation Procedures

All requests from patrons or staff for specific materials, titles or subjects will be seriously considered. A form is available for this purpose. All purchases will be within the selection guidelines of Capital Area District Libraries' Materials Selection Policy.

2.3 Gifts

The Library will encourage and accept gifts with the explicit understanding that all materials donated to CADL become the property of the library without restrictions.

The Library makes the final decision on the use, display, housing, withdrawal, and other disposition of all donated materials. All materials, whether purchased or donated, may be integrated into the CADL collection if they meet the selection criteria outlined in this policy. Donations which cannot be added to the collection may be given to the Friends of the Library for sale to the public.

The Library does not assess the value of donations for tax purposes. However, a form can be completed by the library staff verifying the donation.

Gifts of money are accepted by Capital Area District Libraries. The materials acquired with these funds must meet the selection guidelines. The donor, or in the case of memorial money, the family, may be consulted for suggestions or recommendations of purchased materials. Memorial gifts are acknowledged, and materials are identified with a book plate.

2.4 Special Collections And Concerns

Specialized materials of limited community interest will not ordinarily be purchased. Referral to MeLCat or other library collections will be used to supply patrons with these materials. Supplementary materials for students and information for specialists are provided in a limited number of fields, but the library takes cognizance of and avoids unnecessary duplication in subject areas which are the special prerogative of other community resources.

2.5 Reference Collection

The Capital Area District Libraries' collection of reference books and databases contains material representative of all fields of knowledge and both serve as the foundation for our reference service. Special emphasis is placed upon a few particular areas in response to strong usage and demand such as business-related information, consumer health, demographics, literature, and multi-cultural materials. Currency of materials is of primary concern in this collection, although much historical material is also retained for balance and for retrospective searching.

2.6 Local History

Each branch of Capital Area District Libraries houses some local history material for their area.

The Local History collection housed at the Local History Center serves as a major source of historical materials about Lansing and Ingham County. The collection contains reference sources encompassing both published and unpublished works, some of them rare, that record, interpret or portray the history and development of the Greater Lansing community. Special attention has been given to acquiring materials about the communities this library serves including materials about the automobile industry, architectural and family histories, and some materials about the tri-county region, surrounding communities, the Great Lakes, the Old Northwest Territory, and selected works about Michigan as a territory and state.

This collection, much of which has been donated, contains books, pamphlets, reports, documents, periodicals, maps, photographs, architectural drawings, archives, manuscripts, and ephemera. All formats are represented – digital, microform, audio, video, and a limited number of three-dimensional artifacts.

3. **Collection Maintenance: Evaluation and Review of Existing Materials**

3.1 Withdrawal Of Library Materials

Materials purchased and placed in the library collection may over time lose their value to the collection and library users. CADL staff must consider CADL's Statement of Purpose and these guidelines before withdrawing any material from the collection that is not in poor physical condition or obviously out of date. Library materials need to be continually evaluated for their usefulness and may be "de-selected" under the following guidelines:

1. Materials are physically damaged or worn out.
2. Information contained in materials may be inaccurate or outdated.
3. Duplicate copies of titles may no longer be needed.
4. Materials have not circulated for a designated period of time.
5. Materials that have been superseded by a new edition or better work on the same subject.
6. Physical limitations of space available.

All library materials withdrawn will be removed from the library's records and clearly marked as withdrawn.

3.2 Replacement of Library Materials

Worn out or outdated materials may be replaced by new materials, either in the same format or in a different format. Different titles may be substituted if exact replacement is not possible. Not all withdrawn materials are replaced.

4. **Disposal of Withdrawn Materials**

4.1 Withdrawn materials will be disposed of as follows:

1. Inaccurate or Outdated Materials - These materials will be disposed of in a manner that precludes their future use. They may be recycled, shredded, put in the garbage, taken to a landfill, etc. Some items, such as newspapers, are recycled if possible.
2. Poor Physical Condition - Depending on the condition of the item, these materials may be recycled, put in the garbage, sold, or donated to qualified organizations. Materials damaged in the circulation process will become the property of the patron if the patron pays for the item.
3. Duplicate copies of materials or materials that are not being used - Materials withdrawn for these reasons may be sold, donated to qualified organizations or recycled.

Withdrawn materials may be donated to Library Friends organizations for sale in Friends Book Sales. They may also be donated to other libraries or to non-profit or governmental organizations such as childcare centers, senior centers, detention facilities, etc. Materials will not be donated to individuals or for-profit organizations.