



## **Library Collections Policy**

### **1. Purpose of Library Collections**

The Geneva Public Library (“the Library”) develops collections to promote literacy, support education, encourage lifelong learning, and to meet the diverse cultural, informational, and recreational interests of the community.

The Library purchases items and materials that meet specific community needs, such as materials in Spanish, large print format, workforce training, and local history. The Library strives to develop collections for all members of the community, including children, teens, and adults. Materials for all age groups may be borrowed by any patron, but some collections, such as local history, are available for use only in the Library.

Careful consideration is given by Library employees when selecting each new item. Factors considered include: expected frequency of use; popularity of the author or title; professional and reader reviews; accuracy and relevance of information, cost; and an item’s availability within the OWWL Library System.

A wide variety of materials and formats is considered for the collection, such as hardcover and paperback editions of books, periodicals, audio and video recordings, toys and games, and online and electronic media devices.

### **2. Collections for Children**

Collections for children include materials designed to serve the educational benefits, varied interests, and the general needs of all children, as well as parents and caregivers. Quality, accuracy, relevance, appropriateness for the intended audience, design, format, and illustration are important criteria when evaluating children’s materials.

### **3. Collections for Teens**

Collections for teens include materials designed to serve the educational benefits, varied interests, and the general needs of teens. Collections for teens are separately identified to provide a transition between the collections for children and adults.

#### **4. Local Author & Local History Collection**

The Library actively maintains a Local History and Local Authors collection, which contains works from authors from Geneva, or documentation of the history and culture of Geneva and the Finger Lakes region. The collections will primarily consist of books and other published items, the papers and manuscripts of regionally significant writers, and local genealogical resources. Books and other items that are very rare, expensive, unique, or in delicate condition will be considered for transfer to Historic Geneva or housed at the Library in a more secure setting with limited access.

To the extent possible, based on condition, rarity, and value, items in the collections will be available for circulation and/or viewing in publicly accessible areas of the Library.

##### **4.1 Additions to the Local History and Local Author Collections**

The Library reserves sole discretion in deciding what materials will be accepted and housed in its Local History and Local Author collections. Selection criteria will include, but may not be limited to:

- How the material fits into the existing collection;
- What kind of information the material offers;
- Relevance to non-duplication of materials;
- Cost to preserve and store;
- Security requirements; and
- Available copies at Historic Geneva and other archives.

All materials donated to the Library intended for addition to the Local Author or Local History Collections should be accompanied by the Library's Deed of Gift form. All material donations become subject to the Library's Records Retention and Removal policy. Items without Deed of Gift documentation waive the rights of previous ownership and are subject to the Library's policies.

##### **4.2 Discarding Local History and Local Author Collections**

The Library reserves the right to periodically reevaluate materials in the Local History and Local Author collections, and discard certain items from the collections in a manner consistent with professionally accepted standards and in conjunction with advice from Historic Geneva and other trusted agencies.

The Library may decide to discard an item if any of the following conditions are present:

- The item is not relevant to the Library's mission and purpose;
- The item would be more appropriately housed in a different archival repository;
- The item has deteriorated beyond its usefulness;
- The item is void of inherent exhibition, research, or educational value;
- The item is a duplicate of materials already in collections;
- The item is made of hazardous materials or is actively decomposing in a manner that directly affects the condition of other items and/or the health and safety of the employees and/or patrons;
- The Library is unable to continue to provide care and storage for the object in keeping with professionally accepted standards;
- The item is subject to legal and ethical standards requiring its removal.

Where appropriate, preference will be given to Historic Geneva or other local institutions.

## **5. Suggestions for Additions to the Collection**

To help ensure the Library collection reflects the Geneva community, patron suggestions are always considered. Patrons can request that specific items be purchased by filling out the [Suggest A Purchase Form](#) online or by speaking with a Library employee.

## **6. Collection Maintenance, Replacement, and Discard**

Library employees regularly review the collection to ensure that they continue to meet the Library's mission.

The Library may decide to discard an item if any of the following conditions are present:

- The item is not relevant to the Library's mission and purpose;
- The item has deteriorated beyond its usefulness;
- The item is void of inherent exhibition, research, or educational value;
- The item is a duplicate of materials already in collections;
- The item is made of hazardous materials or is actively decomposing in a manner that directly affects the condition of other items and/or the health and safety of the employees and/or patrons;
- The Library is unable to continue to provide care and storage for the object in keeping with professionally accepted standards;
- The item is subject to legal, informational, and ethical standards requiring its removal.

It is the responsibility of employees to assess the need for replacing materials that are damaged, destroyed, or lost. Not all discarded items are deemed for replacement.

Decisions are based on need, demand, space constraints, and budget.

Discarded items may be distributed to other libraries, gifted to the Foundation for the Geneva Public Library, donated, or recycled. Concerns about the discarding of Library materials should be addressed to the Executive Director.

## **7. Freedom to Read, See, and Hear**

The Library believes that it is essential in a free society that all citizens have access to a variety of Library materials and that no restrictions are placed on what anyone may read, see, or hear in a public library's collections, including the digital collections.

The Library agrees with the principles articulated in the American Library Association's [Freedom to View](#); [Library Bill of Rights](#); [Free Access to Library Materials for Minors](#); [Freedom to Read](#); and [Statement on Labeling](#).

Well-intentioned persons or groups occasionally question the appropriateness of specific items in library collections, or the effects some materials may have on impressionable persons. Suggestions are sometimes made regarding the restriction, removal, or labeling of certain library materials. The Library understands and appreciates these suggestions and concerns but believes the risk of not providing free access to information and ideas is greater than the risk of providing it. The Library, therefore, enunciates the following principles:

### **7.1 Controversial Materials**

In an effort to provide patrons with diverse sources of information and the widest possible range of ideas and viewpoints, the Library acquires materials that may be controversial because of profanity, social, economic, or political ideas, religious viewpoints, authors, the kinds of information provided, or other reasons known or unforeseen. Acquisition or use of any item does not imply Library approval or endorsement of its contents.

### **7.2 Ages**

A patron's age will not be the sole determining factor in the collection development or location of Library materials. It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to monitor and limit their children's access to specific materials, if they choose to do so; this is not the responsibility of the Library.

### **7.3 Labeling**

It is sometimes suggested that a label be affixed to library materials indicating a

political or social point of view or indicating that such an item is questionable or controversial. Such labeling suggests that people are incapable of making up their own minds about controversial subjects. The Library does not subscribe to this practice.

#### **7.4 Review of Library Selections**

The Library is willing to review its selection of items in its collections on a case by case basis. Individuals who question the appropriateness of specific items may initiate such a review by submitting their concerns to the Executive Director in writing using the Materials Complaint form (*Appendix A*). This form may only be used once per item per individual. The review process includes a full reading, listening, or viewing of the item by the Executive Director, selected professional librarians, and the individual requesting the review. The Executive Director will meet with the individual, and then report his or her findings to the Library Board of Trustees (“the Board”). No item is to be removed or restricted because of a complaint until after the Board has examined the individual’s request and the findings of the Executive Director.

**Adopted by the Board of Trustees:** December 20, 2007

**Amended by the Board of Trustees:** 5/3/2008, 8/26/2009, 9/28/2011, 3/27/2013, 3/30/2016, 3/29/2017, 3/28/2018, 5/30/2018, 3/27/2019, 11/18/2020, 11/17/2021, 11/30/2022, 10/25/2023, 10/30/24

**Reviewed by the Policy Review Committee:** 10/10/24

## **Appendix A Materials Complaint Form**

The Geneva Public Library Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility of selection and evaluation of the Library collection to the professional librarians employed by the Geneva Public Library. The established procedure is to address patron concerns about a library implementation of this form.

Please tell us about the library item you believe was selected for our collection in error.

**Author:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Publication Date:** \_\_\_\_\_      **Format (Book, DVD, CD, etc.):** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. What brought this material to your attention?**

**2. What concerns you about this material? Please be as specific as possible.**

**3. Have you read, listened to, or viewed the material in its entirety?**    Yes    No

If **No**, what parts have you examined?

**4. Do you see any value in the material?**

**5. What would you like the Library to do about this material?**

If you wish to remain anonymous, please do not fill in the following section. Instead, submit the form as directed below. Please note that anonymous complaints cannot receive a follow-up response from the Executive Director.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization you represent (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit your completed form in a sealed envelope addressed to:

Geneva Public Library  
c/o ExecutiveDirector  
244 Main St.  
Geneva, NY 14456