

Hamburg Public Library Collection Development Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles guiding the selection, maintenance, and removal of materials in order to provide a balanced, high-quality collection that meets the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community.

Community

The Hamburg Public Library serves the residents of Hamburg Borough, Perry Township, Tilden Township, Upper Bern Township, Upper Tulpehocken Township, and Windsor Township—an area that aligns with the Hamburg Area School District. While our primary service area is defined by this district, the library also serves all residents of Berks County through its membership in the Berks County Public Library System and its access to statewide resources via AccessPA.

The library offers a wide range of materials including books, periodicals, audiobooks, DVDs, music CDs, and online databases to support lifelong learning and community enrichment. The library also provides access to digital materials, including eBooks, and audiobooks. These digital collections are maintained by the Reading Library District, and all questions or concerns regarding them should be directed to district staff.

Selection Responsibility

The Library Director is responsible for the selection of all library materials and may delegate this responsibility to qualified staff. The Director has full authority to interpret and apply this Collection Development Policy and must ensure that personal bias—particularly regarding race, national origin, religion, or political views—does not influence selection decisions.

Criteria for Selection

Material selection, whether through purchase or donation, is guided by community needs and is subject to budgetary, spatial, and availability constraints. The library prioritizes a general-interest, well-rounded collection focused on broad community appeal.

Essential collection components include:

- General adult nonfiction
- Children’s nonfiction to support public and homeschooling curricula
- Popular adult fiction, including current bestsellers
- Children’s fiction and read-along materials
- Large print books
- DVDs including classics, educational nonfiction, and popular films
- Audiobooks
- General interest magazines and periodicals

Criteria for materials acquisition include:

1. Content quality and individual merit
2. Popular appeal or patron demand
3. Local or regional relevance
4. Appropriateness for the library's patron base
5. Existing collection holdings
6. Cost and available budget

The librarian is guided in selection by consulting reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared aids, such as *Booklist* or *Library Journal*. The library is open to patrons' suggestions of books for purchase, keeping in mind selection criteria.

Gifts

The Library Director may accept or decline donations based on this policy. The library does not accept materials that are outdated, in poor condition, or that violate copyright laws. Items such as old textbooks, VHS tapes, Reader's Digest Condensed Books, and old magazines are not accepted.

Collection Maintenance (Weeding)

To maintain a relevant and high-quality collection, materials are routinely evaluated and removed according to the guidelines outlined in *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries*.

Criteria for removal include:

1. Outdated or inaccurate information
2. Poor physical condition
3. Lack of use
4. Space limitations

Materials with enduring literary value or significant local content are retained unless condition requires removal.

Statement of Concern about Library Resources

The Hamburg Public Library upholds the principles outlined in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, which is included as an appendix to this policy.

If a patron who is a resident of the Hamburg Public Library service area has concerns about the inclusion of an item in the library collection, the library patron must complete the Statement of Concern about Library Materials Form and submit it to the Library. Once submitted, the request will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at their next regular meeting. Their decision is final, and a written response will be sent to the requester.

Approved by the Board of Trustees May 11, 2022
Revised by the Board of Trustees, May 14, 2025

Appendix 1: American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights

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

I. 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.

II. 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.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

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.

Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights.



Statement of Concern about Library Materials Form

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Do you reside within the Hamburg Public Library service area? Yes No

Do you represent a group? Yes No

If yes, please identify: _____

Have you read the Hamburg Public Library's Collection Development Policy? Yes No

Type of Material: _____

Title: _____

Author/Editor: _____

Publisher: _____

Have you examined the entire resource? Yes No

If not, what portions have you examined?

What concerns you about the resource? Why? (Please be specific)

Have you checked reviews of the work? Yes No

If yes, please cite which reviews?

How could your concerns about the resource be resolved?

Patron Signature: _____ Date: _____

Library Director Signature: _____ Date Received: _____

Only signed forms will be considered. The Library Director will acknowledge receipt of the form within two weeks.

For Office Use Only:

Board Meeting: _____ Board Decision: _____ Response Sent: _____