

Collection Development Policy

Cariboo Regional District Library

Introduction

The Cariboo Regional District Library (CRDL) is committed to developing a diverse collection which anticipates the needs of our users. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to staff and inform the public about the process for evaluating and selecting materials for the CRDL system.

Statement on Intellectual Freedom

Intellectual freedom is crucial to any democratic society. That is why this belief is highlighted in documents like the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 19, see Appendix) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Section 2(b), see Appendix). These texts emphasize the right of every individual to freely form and express their thoughts, opinions, and beliefs without interference. The Canadian Federation of Library Associations extends this principle to the realm of public libraries, affirming that all individuals in Canada have the fundamental right to access a diverse range of knowledge, ideas, and opinions (see Appendix). This “right to know” is subject only to constitutional and legal limitations (only the federal and provincial laws have the authority to curtail freedom of expression rights in Canada).

Thus, public libraries play a vital role in safeguarding intellectual freedom, a responsibility deeply embedded in librarians' professional principles. Their core duty to facilitate access to a wide variety of knowledge and expression is in complete alignment with the values and standards of their profession. Emphasizing their commitment to intellectual freedom, libraries actively resist calls for censorship and tirelessly work towards providing equitable access to diverse content, even materials that might be considered unconventional or unpopular by certain individuals or groups.

Guided by established policies and procedures, library professionals ensure that efforts to limit their responsibility to uphold intellectual freedom are steadfastly resisted. It is crucial to recognize that, in fulfilling this austere responsibility, libraries acknowledge the right of individuals and groups to criticize, contributing to a dynamic and open exchange of ideas within the boundaries of established processes. In essence, this dedication remains a cornerstone of the librarians' professional responsibility, creating a space where a broad range of perspectives and ideas can thrive without undue restriction.

Children may be granted a library card at any age with the appropriate documentation and, if necessary, the consent from their parent/guardian, and will have access to our full collection

with their card, except when prohibited by law. Parents and guardians are the best judges on what children should or should not borrow from the library.

Each family may have their own viewpoints and needs; however, staff will not intervene with the borrowing of items by any patron. All library staff and volunteers have a responsibility to uphold the protection of Intellectual Freedom while it is a parent or guardian's sole responsibility to supervise the use and safe return of library materials by their children.

Nevertheless, libraries also acknowledge the diversity of their communities and understand that what may be acceptable to one person might be objectionable to another. Therefore, established library policies include mechanisms for patrons to voice concerns about materials they find inappropriate. These challenges typically follow a well-defined process, involving the submission of a form and the careful review of the challenged materials by a committee composed of library professionals. It is important for patrons to be aware of these procedures, ensuring a balanced approach that respects both the individual's concerns and the broader community's interests.

Selection Guidelines

Library collections may vary between branches to reflect the diverse community needs and to represent multiple viewpoints. If an item is not available at one branch, we easily borrow between all of our locations. If the CRDL does not have the item in our collection, patrons may borrow from other libraries through our InterLibrary Connect and InterLibrary Loan agreements. Patrons may also suggest a purchase for their local branch if it is not already on order. Patron suggestions for purchase to the collection are subject to the same guidelines our librarians follow, as listed below. Suggestions can be made through the [library's website](#) or in person at any branch. Donated materials must meet the guidelines set out by the [Regional Board Policy F2.3 Donations of Library Materials](#). New purchases are made by Area and Community Librarians for their respective locations. The following guidelines are used when considering materials for purchase at each location:

- Popularity or demand of an author or series
- Relevance to community needs and/or growth
- Suitability of reading level, format, style, and intended audience
- Relationship to the current collection
- Quality of scholarship, writing and/or created work
- Purchase price and/or availability in the marketplace

Electronic resources and databases are selected by the Library Management Team under the additional following guidelines:

- Accessibility features
- Easy to navigate and availability of devices
- Remote access and/or multiple users

- Reduction of space requirements over print materials

All our branches aim to offer accessible formats, such as Large Print books and Audiobooks for print disabilities. New formats may be considered for the collection after consideration is made to the budget. New formats may replace outdated or underused sections of the library to accommodate trends, community demands, and/or changes in technology. Library staff will assist patrons with borrowing items outside of the CRDL system if deselected formats or other formats are not available locally.

Collection Maintenance

Maintenance of the CRDL's collection through constant re-evaluation by library staff (at the direction of the Area Librarian) ensures its usefulness, relevancy, and condition. Evaluation depends heavily on Librarians' professional expertise, and the long-term needs of the user community. Materials determined to no longer be of value are withdrawn from the collection. Removal of items through active weeding is an important step of the collection maintenance cycle.

Materials are withdrawn for one or more of the following reasons:

- Obsolescence: subject matter is outdated, inaccurate, or no longer relevant to the needs of the community
- Damaged or in poor condition
- Insufficient use
- Library space limitations or priorities
- Changes in availability of certain formats or titles
- Technological accessibility to available devices or formats

Materials of historical significance may be retained in contradiction to the above guidelines as the importance and interest in said materials are of enduring value for the broader community.

Materials which have been withdrawn from the collection may be requested from other library systems across the Province of British Columbia using InterLibrary Loan Agreement. The CRDL reserves the right to limit InterLibrary loan requests.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Right to Challenge

Library patrons have the right to challenge materials they find objectionable, recognizing the importance of diverse perspectives and individual values. This process is integral to the principles of intellectual freedom and free expression within libraries. Such challenges allow for a thoughtful examination of differing viewpoints, contributing to a dynamic and inclusive collection that reflects the diverse needs of the community. For that reason, the Cariboo Regional District Library has established procedures in place for patrons to voice concerns about specific materials, ensuring a fair and transparent review.

Challenged Materials Review Process

In order to request a review of challenged material(s), the patron is required to submit a form ("Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials") to the library management team. The forms are available at any CRDL branch. Once submitted, a committee of library managers will evaluate the merits of the challenge and will draft a response, which will be delivered to the complainant (if provided with contact information).

Appendix

The United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 19

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Section 2(b) – Freedom of Expression

"Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms: freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication."

Canadian Federation of Library Association's

Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries

"The Canadian Federation of Library Associations supports and promotes the universal principles of intellectual freedom as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which include the interlocking freedoms to hold opinions and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

"In accordance with these principles, the Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms that all persons in Canada have a fundamental right, subject only to the Constitution and the law, to have access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, and to express their thoughts publicly. Only the courts may abridge free expression rights in Canada."

"Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some individuals and groups consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, in accordance with their mandates and professional values and standards, libraries provide, defend and promote equitable access to the widest possible variety of expressive content and resist calls for censorship and the adoption of systems that deny or restrict access to resources."

"Furthermore, in accordance with established library policies, procedures and due process, libraries resist efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups."