

Collection Development Policy

The Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library is committed to providing a diverse, current, and relevant collection of materials to meet the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of our community. This policy guides the selection, maintenance, and reconsideration of library materials and reflects the library's dedication to intellectual freedom, access to information, and serving all individuals within our service area.

The Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library staff and Board of Trustees affirm the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to View, and Freedom to Read statement, in support of acquiring and managing collections.

The Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in accordance with this policy. Qualified staff may be assigned selection responsibilities under the Director's supervision. Selection decisions are guided by professional judgment, community needs, and this policy.

Selection Criteria:

Materials are selected based on:

- Relevance to the interests and needs of the community
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Current or historical significance, or permanent value
- Accuracy and authoritativeness
- Local significance of the author or subject
- Price, format, durability, and ease of use
- Evaluations in professional review sources
- Popular demand and community requests
- Relationship to the existing collection's strengths and gaps
- Availability through other libraries or networks

A selected item need not meet all criteria.

Acquisition Methods:

Materials are acquired from reputable library vendors, publishers, and distributors. Self-published works are evaluated using the same criteria as other materials.

Gifts & Donations:

The library gratefully accepts donations in accordance with its Donation Policy. All donations are evaluated using the same selection criteria as purchased materials. The library retains the right to decide the final disposition of donated items. Memorial book plates may be added upon request. The library does not evaluate or appraise gift/donation materials for tax purposes.

Collection Maintenance & Weeding:

To ensure a current, relevant, and accessible collection, materials are regularly evaluated and withdrawn based on:

- Physical condition
- Currency of information
- Relevance to community interests
- Circulation and usage statistics
- Availability elsewhere

Weeding is conducted in accordance with professional standards, including the CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries. Withdrawn materials may be sold, donated, recycled, or discarded.

Access & Parental Responsibility:

The library provides unrestricted access to materials for all users. Parents and guardians are responsible for monitoring their children's library use. Library staff do not serve in loco parentis (in place of parents) and will not restrict access based on age or content.

Requests for Reconsideration:

Residents within the library's service area may request the reconsideration of library materials. Requests must be submitted in writing using the Library's Request for Reconsideration Form. Materials under review will remain in the collection during the reconsideration process.

Policy Review:

This policy is reviewed periodically by the Library Director and Board of Trustees to ensure it remains current and responsive to community needs.

Approved: February 2025