

# COCHISE COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The mission of the Cochise County Library District is to promote and share the joy of reading, the discovery of ideas, and the power of information. A balanced, thoughtfully selected, and well-maintained library collection is critical to fulfilling that mission.

The Cochise County Library District follows the public library tradition set forth in the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* (attachment A).

A public library with finite resources has the challenge of providing access to information on every topic a patron might want or need to learn about. The Cochise County Library District works to meet that goal by learning about the community and considering the wide range of information available when making collection decisions.

The Cochise County Library District consists of five rural branch libraries operated by the Library District (Bowie, Elfrida, Portal, Sunizona, and Sunsites), and seven municipal libraries that are independently operated by their respective cities or towns (Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Huachuca City, Sierra Vista, Tombstone, and Willcox). The Library District is the primary source of current titles and retrospective collections for the branch libraries, and a secondary source for the city libraries, providing long-term loans of supplementary materials to round out the collections which each municipality purchases on its own.

## **Selection Criteria**

Most library materials purchased by the Library District are selected at the local level, according to standard public library selection criteria:

- Public demand and interest;
- Author's reputation and significance as a writer, without regard to political, racial, religious, or other affiliation;
- Present and potential relevance to community needs;
- Critical reviews;
- Presentation and readability, including suitability of subject, style, and reading level for the intended audience;
- Relationship to existing materials in the collection covering like subject matter, and availability of the material or information elsewhere;
- Reflection of all sides of issues;
- Quality of the physical format;
- Self-published materials and works by local authors are evaluated according to the same criteria listed above.

In addition to nonfiction works on a wide variety of topics, the Library District strives to offer a balanced and vibrant collection of fiction and popular materials in a range of formats including audiobooks, DVDs, CD music, ebooks, downloadable audiobooks, and digital magazines.

Libraries frequently purchase materials requested by library users. Requests are evaluated according to the standard selection criteria, and an item may not be selected if it is of limited interest, scholarly, has received unfavorable reviews, or can be borrowed through Interlibrary Loan.

While individual selection decisions are made locally, ultimate responsibility for the Library District's collection rests with the Library District Director, who operates within the framework of this collection development policy.

## **Collection Management**

Just as the Library District selects items for purchase, it can also withdraw an item if it provides outdated or incorrect information, is in poor physical condition, has not been borrowed in an extended period, and is not considered a core or classic work related to its subject matter. Items may also be withdrawn if the number of copies exceeds demand. The purpose of withdrawing items from the collection is to make sure the collection is relevant, reliable, and meets community needs and interests.

Withdrawn materials may be sold by the Cochise County Procurement Department, or by the Friends of the Cochise County Library District, a nonprofit group which works to support library programs and services. Withdrawn items may also be used to stock community bookshelves, Free Book Boxes, or other sites that make books available to the public at no charge.

## **Controversial Materials**

Because the library strives to present a wide variety of viewpoints, some library materials may be offensive to individual library users or groups. The Library District does not promote or endorse any particular view or belief represented in its collection. Instead, it provides a variety of resources so that an individual may freely examine issues and make their own decisions.

The choice of library materials by a user is an individual matter. Responsibility for the selection of reading and viewing material for children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians, who must sign the application of a minor for a library card. While a person may reject materials for him or herself and his or her children, they may not restrict access to the materials by others.

## **Reconsideration Procedure**

The Library District recognizes the right of individuals to question library materials in the District's collection. The procedures outlined in this section will be followed for complaints originating in a branch library (Bowie, Elfrida, Portal, Sunizona, or Sunsites) or relating to materials held at Library District headquarters. Complaints about Library District materials which are housed at any of the municipal libraries will normally be handled according to the individual library's approved procedure; the Library District will provide assistance as requested.

A library customer questioning a title held at the Library District or one of the branches is encouraged to contact the Library District Director to discuss their concerns. If the customer wishes to formally state his or her opinion and receive a written response, they may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form (attachment B), which is available through the Library District office, at any

branch library, and on the Library District website. Completed Request for Reconsideration forms should be returned to the Library District Director.

Upon receiving a Request for Reconsideration, the Library Director will appoint a three-member committee to evaluate the material in question. The committee will consist of the branch manager, if the complaint originates at a branch, or a professional member of the Library District staff, if the item is housed at the Library District; a representative from the Library District's Citizen Liaison Council; and a professional librarian from one of the city libraries. The committee will consider the complaint in the light of the customer's request and the Library District's Collection Development Policy.

Evaluators will submit their recommendations to the Library District Director, who will make a decision concerning the material. The Library District Director will notify the customer of the decision in writing. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision, he or she may appeal to the Cochise County Library Board. The Cochise County Library Board is made up of the members of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors.

## **Gifts and Donations**

The Cochise County Library District accepts donations of books and other library materials. Library District staff and Branch Managers retain the authority to accept or decline gifts. Library staff evaluate donated items for possible inclusion in the library collection, using the selection criteria described above.

Materials that are not added to the collection may be sold by the Cochise County Procurement Department or the Friends of the Cochise County Library District, or may be donated to community organizations that offer books to the public. Some branch libraries have independent Friends of the Library groups, which support library services in their communities. Items donated to individual branches may be sold by their Friends groups.

The Library District does not evaluate or appraise donated materials for tax purposes.

## 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.

*Adopted June 19, 1939 by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980; 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.

To assist libraries, the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association has designated a number of documents as "Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights." Those documents have been adopted by the ALA Council and represent the policies of the American Library Association:

"Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, July 30, 2007.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations> (Accessed January 24, 2018)

Document ID: 066677f2-3938-cbb4-7dba-2edff70d279b

## Cochise County Library District Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Cochise County Library District welcomes the opinions of its customers concerning items in its collection. The policy on selecting materials has been attached for your review. To help us understand your concerns, please answer each question as completely as possible. A written response will be sent to you.

Your name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Library Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Material on which you are commenting:

Book       Movie       Music       Other \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author / Artist \_\_\_\_\_

1. What brought this item to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you read the book (or reviewed the material) in its entirety?     Yes     No

3. Why would you like this material to be reconsidered? Please be specific about your concerns or objections, including page numbers or specific passages. Use the back of this form if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What action do you recommend the library take on this material?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What items would you recommend in place of or in addition to the title in question?

\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to:

Director, Cochise County Library District, P.O. Drawer AK, Bisbee, AZ 85603