



# Collection Development Policy

Originally Adopted: February 2008   Revised: 2/2013, 2/2019, 3/2022, 01/2025  
By the Alhambra Board of Library Trustees

## **PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY**

This policy serves as a guide for those involved and interested in Collection Management for the Alhambra Library including: the Board of Library Trustees, the Library Staff, and the community. The collection management policy's purpose is to: Inform the library's internal staff and the external customers--the people of the City of Alhambra--of the scope and nature of the collection, of the philosophy underlying collection decisions, and the plans for the continuing development of the library's resources; to provide guidelines for evaluating the collection on an ongoing basis; and to enable selectors and others involved in collection development to work toward defined goals, which strengthens the collection and makes the best use of available funds.

## **MISSION AND BACKGROUND**

### **Alhambra Library Mission Statement**

The Library provides dynamic staff, timely services, and relevant resources to support the education, business cultivation, workforce development, personal growth, and community engagement needs of its users. The Library is responsive to the diversity of the community, committed to ease of use and equitable access, and dedicated to public service.

### **Alhambra Library's Vision Statement**

We see the Alhambra Library becoming "a welcoming and engaging environment dedicated to providing resources to support the lifelong learning needs and interests of all members of the community."

### **Departmental Service Priorities**

- Provide *access* to library services through reliable resources and engaging programming.
- Provide *resources* that empowers a richly diverse community.
- Provide *service* that is knowledgeable, effective, and personal.
- Provide *support* for learners of all ages.
- Provide *technology* that maximizes efficiencies in information searching and organizational operations.
- Provide *community support* through partnership building and mobile outreach services.

**Collection Development Mission Statement:** To provide current information, formal education support, independent learning opportunities, and recreational and life enrichment materials from diverse content creators.

**Collection Development Vision Statement:** To cultivate a dynamic collection of resources that are available in a variety of electronic and print formats, which are accessible to all members of the community both in the library and from personal devices, and that support the lifelong learning needs and interests of all members of the community.

## **SELECTION PHILOSOPHY OF ALHAMBRA LIBRARY**

In support of our mission, library materials and resources are selected in response to assessed needs, data-driven community demand, and expressed interests. Consideration is given to expanding knowledge, technological advances, and societal change.

As prescribed by the California State Library and authorized under the California Freedom to Read Act (AB-1825), material selection and curation is centered on the following guiding principles:

- The collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respects both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.
- The public library serves a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas.
- Library materials should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole.
- The right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences is acknowledged.

Additionally, selection reflects the professional principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the *American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights* and the *Freedom to Read Intellectual Freedom Statement*. The Library makes available a wide diversity of ideas and viewpoints in support of an informed citizenry and a democratic society. The Library supports the individual choice and judgment of its users in seeking information. The collection does not serve the purpose of promoting a particular point of view.

Decisions to select or retain an item are based on the merits of each work or information source as it relates to the mission of the Library and coverage of the collection. The Library considers the value of each item in its entirety and within the context of the collection, not on specific passages or sections in the item itself. Materials are not marked, labeled, or sequestered to show approval, disapproval, or judgment as to suitability of content for particular audiences. Materials are not excluded, removed, proscribed, or suppressed because of their creators' origin, background, or views, or because they represent a particular aspect of life, frankness of expression, or controversial subject matter. Inclusion of an item does not constitute endorsement of its content by the City of Alhambra, the Library or Board of Library Trustees. Selection of materials for adults is not constrained by exposure to children or young adults. Responsibility for children's use of library collections rests with their parents, guardians, or caregivers.

#### **Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials**

Citizens of Alhambra and library patrons has the right to express concerns about materials in, or excluded from the collection, and may request a formal re-evaluation of the item(s) in question. However, no material will be arbitrarily removed or placed in the collection solely in response to differences in ideology or judgment. The *Library Bill of Rights*, the principles of intellectual freedom and the *First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States* support the Library's commitment to responsible collection development. The Mission Statement, the Selection Criteria and the librarians' professional standards ensure a collection which best serves the Alhambra community.

A Request for Reconsideration of Material form can be obtained at and returned to any librarian at a service desk. Once received, the library director will appoint a library staff committee with appropriate professional expertise to review the request in relation to the following:

- The Library's mission,

- The current Collection Development Policy (as adopted by the Board of Library Trustees),
- Professional journals and published reviews.

The committee will make a recommendation to the Library Director for approval. While the material in question is in the review process, it will not be removed from circulation or temporarily reassigned to other shelving locations.

A response to the Request for Reconsideration is sent to the patron within thirty (30) days via email or mail. The Library Director will keep the Board of Library Trustees informed of each request for reconsideration, as well as the disposition.

(See Appendix A for the form.)

## **OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION**

### **Responsibility for Selection**

The Library Director and delegated professional staff are responsible for the selection of library materials. In all aspects of materials selection, professional judgment is exercised, and personal bias is set aside.

### **Selection Criteria**

Selection of materials will be based on any combination of the following:

- Critical acclaim
- Reputation and status of author and publisher
- Current or anticipated demand
- Appropriateness for age and comprehension level
- Practical and factual data
- Scholarship
- Informational and educational value
- Honorary recognition through awards or prizes
- Importance in relation to existing material on the same subject
- Quality of presentation
- Preservation as local history

The Library considers gifts and recommendations but will evaluate them in accordance with selection criteria.

## **COLLECTION OVERVIEW**

The emphasis in collection development for Alhambra Library is on providing an active, frequently used collection of resources that support the Library's Mission Statement.

The Library:

- Collects and provides access to materials and information that are frequently used. It does not, in general, serve an archival function.
- Provides comprehensive subject collections only in response to a high degree of demonstrated interest and need.
- Collects all editions of works or all titles by an author or all work in a series only when doing so responds to a high degree of demonstrated interest and need.

- Acquires self-published materials and local author or publisher materials only when they meet collection development guidelines and selection criteria.

Materials that are specialized or expected to have limited use are not added to the collection but may be borrowed through interlibrary loan.

Alhambra Library's collection is not developed to function as an elementary, high school, or college library. It is not within the mission of the Library to support the entire curriculum of a school system or academic institution. Textbooks or multiple copies of materials that can serve for school assignments are provided only when they are of general interest and when they meet collection development guidelines.

The collection is developed to provide access to as wide a variety of titles and sources of information as possible. However, individual resources may be duplicated when there is a high degree of expressed or anticipated interest in a specific title or when duplication is seen as the best method of meeting demand. The goal is to provide a selection of currently popular resources while continually developing and improving the core collection with additions that have more enduring usefulness and interest.

The Library provides:

- A collection of general monographs and reference works and selected specialized works
- A collection of general periodicals
- Limited collections of appropriate materials in languages other than the primary language of the area, for example material on learning a language for the non-native speaker and Spanish and Chinese language materials in fiction and non-fiction
- Broad collections of the works of well-known authors and selections from the works of lesser-known authors
- Defined access to a broad collection of owned and/or remotely accessed electronic resources

The collection will be systematically reviewed for currency of information and assurance that essential and valuable information is retained.

### **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY**

The Library Director and Deputy Director of Library Services are responsible for recommending policy, implementing procedures, and coordinating the overall planned development and management of the collection and information budget. Staff members assigned to select and maintain specific parts of the collection report to the library management team. Staff charged with collection development responsibilities are professional librarians and are expected to be:

- Familiar with and carry out the Collection Development guidelines
- Employ a system-wide approach to selection and maintenance
- Exercise objectivity and subordinate advocacy for areas of responsibility to the needs of the collection as a whole
- Expend budgeted funds to ensure an even flow of resources into the library
- Consult regularly with the various library departments and with the library management team
- Participate in reviewing, recommending, and establishing priorities, procedures, and policies having to do with Collection Development
- Participate in and prepare proposals for the annual budget review process

- Support and respond to recommendations and requests for resources from the staff and library users using the guidelines of the Collection Development Policy
- Respond to comments and concerns from library users, staff, Library Board members, informing and involving appropriate staff

Staff positions with collection development responsibilities:

- Select adult, youth, and technical services librarians
- Deputy Director of Library Services
- Library Director

## **BUDGET**

The materials and information budget are line items in the Library's annual operating budget. As such, it is established during the Library's yearly budget deliberation process. The library staff makes recommendations to the Library Director who determines the annual allocations. The library management team is responsible for coordinating the distribution of funds to specific collection development categories and projects. The Library Director, in consultation with the Deputy Director of Library Services, has the final authority to establish priorities, guidelines, and funding distribution.

## **SELECTION PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA**

Because of constraints imposed by budget, space, the variety of patron needs and other considerations relating to acquiring, processing, housing, maintaining and assuring optimum access to a collection of useful materials and information sources, the Library staff must choose from the vast array of resources available. Selectors must exercise professional judgment based on knowledge of community needs, knowledge of subjects and formats and on the collection development guidelines and priorities.

Selectors make use of reviews from professional library periodicals as well as from literary, specialized, and general periodicals. Established and authoritative bibliographies of recommended titles are consulted as well as knowledgeable people who can help develop specific parts of the collection. Selectors are expected to be familiar with the universe of resources available in their field and to use a variety of selection tools including review journals, subject bibliographies, publisher's ads and catalogs, vendor recommendation or curation lists, print and on-line notification services, and visits to bookstores, media centers and other libraries.

The citizens of Alhambra are encouraged to request specific book titles, as well as information on subjects in any of the library's supported formats. Selectors are expected to be responsive to such requests as well as to how the current collection is meeting community needs.

When a selection decision involves a sensitive or a potentially controversial title or subject, a recommendation is made by a team of staff members and the final decision is made by the Library Director.

## **FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE SELECTION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES – GENERAL**

### **Degree of expressed, perceived, or anticipated community demand**

Collection Development guidelines established for subject, format, or special collection:

- Authority, skill, competence, reputation, and significance of the author

- Importance of the resource compared to other works in the field
- Availability of other resources in the area
- Importance of the subject matter or point of view to the collection
- Current adequacy of subject representation in the collection
- Style
- Artistic or literary merit
- Accuracy, clarity, objectivity, accessibility
- Responsibility and authority of the publisher or producer
- Timeliness of resource or information and frequency of updating
- Attention of recognized authoritative critics and reviewers.
- Inclusion in professionally recognized bibliographies
- Accessibility/availability
- Effectiveness of indexing
- Potential for loss due to theft or misplacement, or physical quality of the resource and related hardware and software
- Speed and reliability (of electronic access)
- Format
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of the format to the content
- Degree to which the format is familiar to library patrons
- Price
- Quality
- Durability
- Additional Criteria by Subject

While the above criteria apply to all selection decisions, the evaluation of resources in specific formats or for identified subsets of the collections (special collections) may require the use of additional criteria.

### **Adult Fiction**

There is no single standard of literary quality used in selecting titles from the range of fiction available today. The library staff strives to provide a broad selection of current and older fiction that is of demonstrated interest to our patrons who vary in education, interests, tastes and reading skills. Classics as well as award winning novels and best-sellers are included to maintain a vital, well used collection.

### **Religious Materials**

In addition to a variety of materials on major world religions, the library acquires a selection of materials relating to the history and the founder or leader of a particular religious group, and the titles which are the holy books of religious groups. In addition, religious titles that are of widespread general interest are considered for inclusion in the collection.

### **Medical Resources**

To meet the need of our patrons for accurate, up-to-date medical information, the library provides a wide range of medical resources including professional handbooks, medical dictionaries, encyclopedias, as well as information produced specifically for the layperson. Popular, self-help, and alternative medicine are represented. Authoritative reviews are used in the selection of medical materials. However, the library does not endorse the information or advice presented in the materials made available, including those accessible on the internet.

### **Collection Maintenance**

The library's collection of resources is continually and systematically reviewed in the light of how well individual items or electronic resources help meet the expectations and needs of the library patrons. Materials are removed from the Library's collection at approximately the same rate as they are added. This is necessary to:

1. Update the collection,
2. Keep the collection in good physical condition,
3. Assure that materials retained are being used frequently and contributing to an active, effective collection that meets patron needs and
4. Provide space for new items.

Factors considered in the collection review are:

- Currency and accuracy of information
- Number of copies
- Circulation or reference use over the last 2 years
- Adequacy of other resources in the subject area to meet patron needs
- Ease and cost of replacement
- Availability outside the library
- Physical condition
- Importance of a work within its category (classics, for example)

Duplicate copies of titles are removed from collections when they are no longer in high demand.

Materials withdrawn from the collections become the property of Alhambra Public Library Foundation, and some become available for sale at the Foundation Book Store. Proceeds from the sale of deselected materials by Alhambra Public Library Foundation go towards the support of the Alhambra Library.

### **GIFT POLICY**

Donations of money for the purchase of books as well gifts of books and other materials are welcome in support of Alhambra Library's mission. These donated materials, including those purchased with donated funds or accepted as gifts, become the property of Alhambra Library. They are subject to the library's collection development policy and the same guidelines and procedures for selection, evaluation, repair, processing, loaning, and withdrawal are applied.

The library staff is happy to discuss how gifts of money or materials might be managed and what materials are needed for the collection. Donated materials that are not included in the collection are given to the Alhambra Public Library Foundation for sale at the Foundation Book Store.

Donations are tax deductible. The Library provides forms acknowledging gifts for this purpose but cannot assign value to the donated items.

### **RESOURCE SHARING**

Alhambra Library recognizes that it cannot provide everything that its patrons might request. Therefore, the Library is committed to the cooperation and sharing of resources among libraries and other agencies.

The Library supports:

1. Cooperative use agreements such as that established through the Southern California



Library Cooperative (SCLC)

2. Interlibrary loan as a means of providing access to specialized, out-of-print, and other materials the Library does not acquire
3. Access to other library catalogs through Z39.50 technology

All requested materials are considered for purchase first. The library management team and delegated staff will make the decision on whether to purchase or borrow a requested item. Because interlibrary loan is costly in terms of staff time for both borrowing and lending libraries, the Library charges a fee for each interlibrary loan request. The Library also may pass on to the requestor any charges assessed by the lending library including loan and photocopy charges, postage and handling fees and lost, damaged or overdue fees.

## **SELECTION OF AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS**

### **DVD Selection Policy**

The Library provides an extremely limited selection of films of interest to children and adults on DVD due to the age and prevalence of the format. The emphasis is making material available that cannot be readily and inexpensively obtained at rental outlets.

Subjects and interests represent in the non-fiction DVD collections reflect those of the community of library users and are as varied as those of the print collection. This includes documentaries, instructional films, literary titles, and works of the imagination. Instructional programs primarily intended as supplemental material for classroom use are added only if they are of general interest and fill a need in the collection. The DVD collection is subject to guidelines for selection and maintenance as all other formats.

Downloadable film subscription services do not adhere to this policy.

## **SELECTION OF CHILDREN'S MATERIALS**

### **Overview of the Children's Collection**

The Children's Services Division houses a collection of materials for pre-readers through 8th grade, with the understanding that the Library's complete collection is accessible to all, regardless of age. Responsibility for the checkout and reading of all minors rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection of materials for the library collection is not restricted by the possibility that minors may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate.

Children's materials are selected by professional staff and include fiction and non-fiction books for children, audio, video, magazines for children, and ephemera such as pamphlets and pictures.

The collection is designed to meet the recreational and educational needs of the diverse population of children in the Alhambra community. Materials occasionally are provided to support components of the local school district curricula. It is understood, however, that the Library cannot provide text-book materials or multiple copies of individual titles for classroom use.

Particular attention is paid to providing materials that introduce very young children to the enchantment of literature. Easy reading books with controlled vocabulary are selected for young

children as they begin to acquire the skills necessary for reading success. Both fiction and nonfiction materials are selected with the wide diversity of interests and reading-levels of children in mind. A strong collection of classic and prominent children's titles is supplemented by items of current and popular appeal. Multiple copies are purchased as demand dictates and budget allows. Children's award-winning materials are regularly selected.

### **Selection Criteria for Children's Materials**

Selection criteria for Children's materials are the same as those used throughout the Library's various divisions as cited earlier in this document. In addition, particular attention is given to the age appropriateness in reading level of children's materials as they are selected and located within the Children's Department. Professional journals, published reviews, and industry publications are used to assist librarians with this process.

As a Public Library, we are committed to maintaining a diverse and relevant collection. The Children's collection may include materials considered objectionable to some parents and caregivers. However, what is objectionable to some may be considered valuable to others. It is strongly recommended that parents and caregivers with concerns about their children's selections to actively assist them in the browsing and checkout processes.

## **THE YOUNG ADULT COLLECTION**

This collection provides material that appeals to teens ages 13-18. The collection consists of both popular and youth support/advocacy materials, as well as some homework support. The collection includes traditional literature, electronic books and magazines, and graphic novels/manga. The YA collection should:

- provide recreational and/or supportive reading of high interest to teens and young adults
- include material that may "fall between the cracks" of other collections, appropriate for the targeted group

### **Selection Criteria for the Young Adult Collection**

The YA collection includes fiction and non-fiction, hardcover and paperback written materials. Paperback editions will be chosen when that format is deemed more appealing for an item, especially for fiction titles.

The emphasis of the fiction collection is placed on popular books and items of high interest. The non-fiction collection consists of many items that support the school curriculum as well as high interest and teen advocacy.

Items that are aimed at a younger group may be included when the topic is considered too mature for the Children's Collection.

Selection Criteria may include one or more of the following:

- A favorable review in a recognized review source
- Inclusion of a list of recommended books, where the list is the product of a recognized organization or library, such as ALA, etc.
- High demand and purchase suggestions submitted by library patrons
- Hi-Lo literature for reluctant readers
- Work is by an established author
- Work is of a popular topical nature

- Award winning titles

Titles held in the Children's or Adult Collection may also be included in the YA collection if they are of an exceptional nature and wide range of appeal, indicating that circulation expectations may warrant an additional copy.

Materials intended for a young adult audience represent a tremendous diversity in theme, content, language, viewpoints and intended developmental level. What an author intends as appropriate reading for a sophisticated urban teenager may not be a patron's or parent/caretaker's idea of appropriate for a teen with a more conservative upbringing. It is important to recognize this diversity in content and that it is the parent or caretaker's responsibility to guide and determine what is appropriate reading for their individual young adult.

### **Electronic Resources (eBooks, eJournals, databases)**

Electronic resources consist of content that is stored and displayed digitally and accessed via computers and other electronic devices. These resources are often referred to as databases, or as online or digital content, resources or media.

The Library collects a variety of electronic resources that may include some or all the following: full-text magazines, newspapers, journals and other periodicals, reference sources, indexes, abstracts, images, electronic books, and electronic media. With the electronic collection the Library aims to extend access to library information, regardless of location. Patrons can access these collections within or beyond the actual, physical facilities of the Library.

Some electronic resources the Library offers to patrons are on a subscription or contract basis. The content contained in these resources is not cultivated or selected by the Library or Library staff but is rather based on contracts negotiated between the vendor and various publishers, media, and distribution companies. For these types of electronic resources, the Library does not assume responsibility for the content available therein.

#### **Selection Criteria:**

Selection criteria for electronic resources are the same as those used throughout the Library's various divisions as cited earlier in this document. When selecting electronic resources, librarians must consider the following in addition to the selection criteria for the collection at large:

- Currency
- Authority
- Content output options/usability format of documents
- Coverage/Scope of content
- Ease of use
- Ability to print and/or download
- Feedback on database trials
- Number of simultaneous users
- Ownership of content versus subscription access to content
- Impermanence of the technology
- Terms of licensing and/or maintenance agreements

- Relationship of the resource to the print collection
- Remote access
- Technical supportability
- Usage statistics

Because electronic resources are an ever-changing medium, they must be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

## APPENDIX A

Request for Reconsideration of Material Form  
v. 01/2022



## ALHAMBRA CIVIC CENTER LIBRARY

101 S. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Alhambra, CA 91801

### Request for Reconsideration of Material Form

The Alhambra Board of Library Trustees have established a Collection Development Policy and a procedure for gathering input about library materials. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. Please return the completed form to a librarian, and it will be forwarded to the library director. You will receive notification of progress or decision within thirty (30) days of the date the form is received by the library.

#### PATRON INFORMATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### RESOURCE INFORMATION

**Type of Resource:**

\_\_\_\_ Book (e-book)    \_\_\_\_ Magazine or Newspaper    \_\_\_\_ Film  
\_\_\_\_ Audio Recording    \_\_\_\_ Digital Resource    \_\_\_\_ Other

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

Author/Producer: \_\_\_\_\_

**What bought this resource to your attention? What causes you concern about the item?  
(Please be specific and attach additional pages if needed):**

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

**Have you examined the entire resource?**     Yes     No

If not, what section(s) did you review? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Are there resource(s) you suggest which provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What action are you requesting the review committee to consider?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY**

Request received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Received by Library Director \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by Committee *(Please attach additional sheets if necessary)*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Discussion/Proceedings

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Professional Reviews/Resources Examined

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Committee Recommendation

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**Library Director**

Approve as Recommended by Review Committee Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Request further discussion/deliberation. Reason \_\_\_\_\_

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Patron Notified:  Email  Phone  Mail Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Library Board of Trustees Notified:**

Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

AB 1825  
California Freedom to Read Act



**AB-1825 California Freedom to Read Act.** (2023-2024)SHARE THIS:  

Date Published: 09/30/2024 09:00 PM

**Assembly Bill No. 1825**

## CHAPTER 941

An act to add Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 19800) to Part 11 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, relating to libraries.

[ Approved by Governor September 29, 2024. Filed with Secretary of State September 29, 2024. ]

## LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1825, Muratsuchi. California Freedom to Read Act.

Existing law establishes a public library system, including school libraries, unified school district and union high school district public libraries, municipal libraries, county free libraries, the California State Library, and library districts. Under existing law, the Legislature declares that the public library is, among other things, a source of information and inspiration to persons of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and economic statuses.

This bill would require every public library jurisdiction, as defined, that directly receives any state funding to establish, adopt, and maintain a written and publicly accessible collection development policy for its libraries by January 1, 2026, as specified. The bill would require the collection development policy to, among other things, (1) guide the selection and deselection of library materials, as defined, and (2) establish a process for community members to share their concerns regarding library materials and request materials be reconsidered for inclusion in the library's collection.

The bill would require the adopted policy to be sent to the State Librarian, and would authorize the State Librarian or their designee to provide technical assistance to public libraries in developing their collection development policy.

The bill would prohibit the governing board or body of a public library, or any body or commission designated to review the procurement, retention, or circulation of, or access to, library materials, from (1) proscribing the circulation or procurement of, or access to, library materials in a public library because of the topic addressed by the library materials or because of the views, ideas, or opinions contained in materials or (2) creating policies or procedures that limit or restrict access to library materials offered by the public library, except as provided. The bill would also prohibit library materials in a public library from being excluded, and access to library materials from being limited, solely on the bases of (1) specified protected characteristics of a subject of the library materials, an author of the materials, the sources of the library materials, or the perceived or intended audience for the library materials, (2) that the materials contain inclusive and diverse perspectives, or (3) that the materials may include sexual content, except as provided. The bill would provide that a person's right to use a

public library and its resources shall not be denied or abridged solely because of personal characteristics, age, background, or views.

The bill would prohibit a librarian, library media specialist, other employee, or contractor at a public library from being subject to termination, demotion, discipline, or retaliation for (1) refusing to remove a library material before it has been reviewed in accordance with the public library's process for reconsideration of library materials or (2) making displays, acquisitions, or programming decisions that the employee believes, in good faith, are in accordance with the bill's provisions.

The bill would provide that these provisions apply to a public library, as defined, including any public library operated on a contractual basis, or operated by a city, including a general law or charter city, county, special district, or joint powers authority, except that these provisions do not apply to any school library, as defined, or any library operated by the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, or the governing body of a charter school. To the extent these provisions impose additional duties on public libraries, the bill would create a state-mandated local program.

The bill would include findings that changes proposed by this bill address a matter of statewide concern rather than a municipal affair and, therefore, apply to all cities, including charter cities.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 19800) is added to Part 11 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, to read:

### **CHAPTER 10. California Freedom to Read Act**

**19800.** This chapter shall be known, and may be cited, as the California Freedom to Read Act.

**19801.** The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Libraries are essential for information, education, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves.

(b) Libraries provide access to books that offer teachable moments for readers of all ages and expand our understanding of people with different backgrounds, ideas, and beliefs.

(c) A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged solely because of personal characteristics, age, background, or views.

(d) Removing and banning books from public libraries are dangerous acts of government censorship and erode our country's commitment to freedom of expression and the right to receive information.

(e) Librarians are professionals trained to not impose their own thoughts and opinions on which ideas are right, but to make knowledge and ideas available so that people have the freedom to choose what to read.

(f) Librarians and library staff receive extensive professional training to develop and curate collections to meet the broad and diverse interests of their communities, which include, but are not limited to, literary value and developmental appropriateness of material.

**19802.** (a) (1) Every public library jurisdiction that directly receives any state funding, including, but not limited to, state funding pursuant to this part, shall establish, adopt, and maintain a written and publicly accessible collection development policy for its public libraries by January 1, 2026, and shall submit that collection development policy to the State Librarian. The State Librarian or their designee may provide technical assistance to public libraries in developing their collection development policy. The collection development policy, at a minimum, shall do all of the following:

- (A) Establish a process for community members to share their concerns regarding library materials and to request that library materials be reconsidered for inclusion in the library's collection.
- (B) Guide the selection and deselection of library materials.
- (C) Acknowledge that the public library's collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respect both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.
- (D) Establish that the public library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas.
- (E) Acknowledge that library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole.
- (F) Acknowledge the right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences.

(2) A librarian, library media specialist, other employee, or contractor at a public library shall not be subject to termination, demotion, discipline, or retaliation for either of the following:

- (A) Refusing to remove a library material before it has been reviewed in accordance with the public library's process for the reconsideration of library materials established pursuant to subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1).
- (B) Making displays, acquisitions, or programming decisions that the employee or contractor believes, in good faith, are in accordance with the requirements of this section.

(b) (1) The governing board or body of a public library, or any body or commission designated to review the procurement, retention, or circulation of, or access to, library materials, shall not proscribe or prohibit the circulation or procurement of, or access to, any library materials in a public library because of the topic addressed by the materials or because of the views, ideas, or opinions contained in those materials.

(2) (A) Library materials in public libraries shall not be excluded, and access to library materials shall not be limited, solely on the bases of any of the following:

- (i) The race, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, political affiliation, or any other characteristic listed in subdivision (a) of Section 12940 of the Government Code, or the socioeconomic status of a subject of the library materials, an author of the library materials, the source of the library materials, or the perceived or intended audience for the library materials.
- (ii) The library materials contain inclusive and diverse perspectives.
- (iii) The library materials may include sexual content, unless that content qualifies as obscene under United States Supreme Court precedent.

(B) This paragraph does not apply to library materials excluded, or for which access is limited, pursuant to a library maintenance and deaccession policy.

(3) The governing board or body of a public library, or any body or commission designated to review the procurement, retention, or circulation of, or access to, library materials, shall not create policies or procedures that limit or restrict access to library materials offered by the public library unless the policies or procedures are adopted to preserve the safety or security of the library materials, are time, place, and manner restrictions not based on the content of materials, or are programs that provide for the effective management of the library and its resources to preserve access for all library users.

(c) A person's right to use a public library and its resources shall not be denied or abridged solely because of personal characteristics, age, background, or views.

(d) All people, regardless of personal characteristics, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in the materials they borrow from libraries.

(e) This section applies to a public library, as defined in Section 18015, including any public library operated on a contractual basis, or by a city, including a general law or charter city, county, special district, or joint powers authority, except that it does not apply to any school library, as defined in Section 18710, or any library operated

by the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, or the governing body of a charter school.

(f) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Library materials" includes, but is not limited to, books, periodicals and serials, audio materials, audiovisual materials, instructional materials, maps, databases, government documents, records, photographs, and all other similar materials, whether in tangible or electronic form. "Library materials" does not include hardware, tools, instruments, computers, appliances, or other items that are not for the primary purpose of conveying ideas or information.

(2) "Public library jurisdiction" means a county, city and county, city, or any district that is authorized by law to provide public library services and that operates a public library described in subdivision (e).

**SEC. 2.** The Legislature finds and declares that ensuring public libraries are free of censorship is a matter of statewide concern and is not a municipal affair as that term is used in Section 5 of Article XI of the California Constitution. Therefore, Section 1 of this act adding Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 19800) to Part 11 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code applies to all cities, including charter cities.

**SEC. 3.** If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.