

Collection Development Policy for Wake County Public Libraries

Approved by Library Leadership Council 6/1/2022, effective 6/1/2022

Wake County Public Libraries (WCPL) Mission & Service Priorities

Our Mission

To instill the love of reading and to foster the pursuit of knowledge for the residents of Wake County.

Our Priorities

To reach our mission, we are guided by the following five priorities:

- Services to children
- Recreational reading
- Being a center of lifelong learning
- The library as community center
- Bridging the technology gap

The population of Wake County is diverse and growing larger every day. We operate [multiple libraries](#)ⁱ that serve over 1.1 million citizens spread across 847 square miles. [Learn more about Wake County demographics here](#)ⁱⁱ. We embrace the [Wake County Core Values](#)ⁱⁱⁱ: Act with integrity; Be accountable; Embrace diversity; Work together; Make it better; Nurture health and well-being; and Serve with passion and empathy. These values guide how we conduct ourselves, how we work with each other, and how we interact with the communities in which we serve.

Purpose of Collection Development Policy

The collection development policy provides guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials that anticipate and meet the needs and interests of our diverse community. It outlines best practices for maintaining the collection over time and defines policies that protect the collection from societal and political pressures. The policy honors the [Core Values embraced by Wake County Government](#)^{iv} and offers transparency to the public and library staff about collection development processes.

Principles & Philosophy

Lifelong Learning and Enrichment

WCPL strives to curate a diverse collection that meets the needs of an expansion of knowledge, perspectives, backgrounds, enlightenment, recreational reading, professional development, and human experience.

Intellectual Freedom

WCPL recognizes the freedom to read as a protected right established by the [First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States](#)^v. The freedom to read is an intellectual freedom, a pillar of the democratic process, and the foundation of our beliefs as a nation. With this in mind, WCPL fully supports the ability to read, seek, and receive information from multiple viewpoints for the enlightenment of all people. Along with these ideals, the library fully endorses the American Library Association's [Library Bill of Rights](#)^{vi}, [Freedom to Read](#)^{vii}, [Freedom to View](#)^{viii}, [Statement on Labeling](#)^{ix}, and [Free Access to Libraries for Minors](#)^x.

Balanced Collection

WCPL strives to offer a diverse and balanced collection of materials that represents a wide range of topics and viewpoints. This includes materials that may contain controversial, unorthodox, or even unpopular ideas. The presence of an item in the collection does not indicate endorsement of the ideas or viewpoints expressed by the material or creator.

Patron Protection

WCPL believes that the use of library materials is an individual and private matter. Anyone holding a Wake County Public Library card with borrowing privileges will be allowed to check out materials from the library no matter their origin, age, background, or views, as stated in the [Library Bill of Rights](#)^{xi}. We affirm that only parents and legal guardians have the authority and responsibility to determine the use of library materials for their own minor children. Location and display of materials will not be influenced by the possibility that materials might inadvertently come into the possession of minors.

Format Accessibility

In the interest of having a collection that is useable by a majority of Wake County residents, we select a variety of formats that are readily available where space and budgetary constraints allow. For access to additional materials, we provide an [Interlibrary Loan](#)^{xii} service to all cardholders in good standing.

Collection Management

WCPL's Collection Development Services (CDS) department maintains a current, relevant, diverse, and enduring collection to meet readers' needs. We accomplish this

through evaluating and selecting titles and continually reviewing the collection to ensure currency and relevancy.

Purchases

Library staff role

WCPL maintains a professional staff whose primary objective is to fulfill the intent of the collection development policy. The professional selectors use their expertise to ensure the collection champions the diversity and needs of Wake County citizens. Additionally, WCPL encourages staff to provide their professional input as well as suggestions from patrons to the selectors. WCPL staff manage the collection according to these guidelines. Overall responsibility for collection development rests with the Library Director.

Budget and space constraints

Wake County government funds WCPL and dedicates a portion of the budget to library materials annually. [Learn more about Wake County's budget here](#)^{xiii}. WCPL divides funds for different areas of the collection, including adult and youth, print and digital materials. WCPL also considers the shelving capacity in our libraries and monitors collection sizes throughout the year to offer the optimal collection in each of our libraries.

The selectors use their professional knowledge and expertise, along with WCPL's selection criteria, when making purchasing decisions. We consider multiple competing factors, such as the need for replenishment of additional copies of titles already owned, requests from patrons and staff, new books, and the need for equity and diversity among titles in our collection.

Selection and content criteria

WCPL selects general interest materials with a focus on current and enduring titles for the benefit and representation of Wake County residents. WCPL evaluates titles based on our selection criteria:

- Positive/favorable reviews in professional journals
- High anticipated demand
- Circulation statistics for applicable materials (author's previous works, other books on the same subject matter, popularity of a particular genre or format, etc.)
- Advertising budget and publicity
- Coverage in national and local media
- Balanced and alternative points of view
- Existing need (subject or series gaps)

- Potential for future interest (movie options, first of a series, genre or format growing in popularity)
- Ongoing rather than short-term interest
- Quality of work and qualifications of author
- Scope of work
- Usefulness and practicality of a work for a public library with a general audience
- High print run relative to similar books
- Cost and availability for purchase
- Age of title and currency
- Anticipated popularity in comparison to other titles
- Projected circulation in regard to shelf space limitations

Format constraints & exclusions

WCPL does not select or purchase:

- Academic or specialized titles, particularly textbooks
- Consumable workbooks
- Books with spiral or comb binding
- Paperback Picture Books or Beginning Readers
- Books with objects such as toys or crafts
- CDs, DVDs, or Playaway audio books

Scope of physical & digital collections

WCPL serves Wake County residents and permanent card holders by providing a broad choice of materials to meet their diverse informational and recreational needs. CDS selects print and digital materials, with print being a priority and the primary format in the collection. WCPL may add or evaluate further formats and collection types as demanded by budget, space restrictions, and patron needs.

CDS and library staff analyze the collection on an ongoing basis to evaluate subject gaps using professional reviews and emerging patron needs and trends. The collection includes - but is not limited to - fiction books, nonfiction books, large print materials, audiobooks, downloadable formats, magazines, newspapers, paperback books, books in languages other than English, board books, and electronic databases. All library locations share physical materials that are not a part of Special Libraries or special collections.

Scope of Regional, Large Community, and Community Libraries

The library locations of WCPL serve specific communities within the county through a shared physical and digital collection. Each location serves the diverse informational and recreational needs of its county residents and permanent

cardholders. WCPL consists of Regional, Large Community, and Community Libraries, as well as Special Libraries and special collections. Regional Libraries house the broadest scope of the physical collection and Community Libraries house the smallest scope by location size constraints. All library locations have access to the entire shared collection.

Special Libraries and scope of special collections

WCPL maintains special collections for Wake County residents and permanent cardholders.

The Olivia Raney Local History Library specializes in collecting, preserving, and making local history and genealogy materials accessible. Collections include archival materials, family and local history-related books, historic maps, vertical files, microfilm, ephemera, periodicals, journals, and bound newspapers.

The Mollie Huston Lee Collection consists of books housed at the Richard B. Harrison Community Library, as well as academic materials housed at Shaw University's James Cheek Library. Lee (1907-1982) was the first Black librarian in Wake County, and the founder of the Richard B. Harrison Public Library, which was the first library in Raleigh to serve Black patrons. This collection documents individuals, institutions, and events significant in Raleigh's history from around 1917 to 1996.

These WCPL Special Collections were originally created and are currently maintained according to very specific missions and goals. They cover a narrower scope of subjects and authors in different formats than our general circulating collection by design.

Athens Drive High School Collection

Athens Drive Community Library is located inside Athens Drive High School and contains two collections: books belonging to and selected by WCPL, and books belonging to Athens Drive High School and selected by Wake County Public School System. While WCPL cardholders are granted access to books belonging to Athens Drive High School, WCPL does not select or maintain this collection.

New & emerging formats

CDS selects formats that are most appropriate for library using the following criteria:

- Impact on equipment, staff, storage, and space
- Availability
- Cost per Item
- Community demand

- Ease of use by patrons and staff
- Technical quality

CDS phases out obsolete or dated materials. The time frame for this process depends on circulation statistics, space constraints, and ongoing costs of maintaining the obsolete format.

Local authors

WCPL supports local authors by providing a way for North Carolina residents who have published books to be part of the cultural conversation of the community, where the work would not otherwise be selected for inclusion in the libraries' collection. This process helps authors' books gain exposure as part of our circulating book collection. WCPL defines local authors as those residing in North Carolina with particular emphasis on those in the Triangle region. Not all books submitted for consideration will be added to the collection. The process for local authors to submit their materials for potential donation is as follows:

- Download our "Local Authors @ WCPL" [form](#)^{xiv}.
- Complete and mail this form with one copy of your book to:

Wake County Public Libraries
 Attn: Local Author Book Review
 Library Administration Building
 4020 Carya Drive
 Raleigh, NC 27610

- All mailed books become the property of Wake County Public Libraries and will not be returned.
- WCPL will respond directly to the author only if the book is accepted for inclusion in the circulating collection.
- If the book is accepted for inclusion, the author will donate copies for this purpose at the direction of Wake County Public Libraries.

In order to be considered, the book must:

- Be in a hardcover format if the book is a picture book or beginning reader
- Not contain blank pages for journaling/writing
- Be at least 100 pages long, if the book is for adults
- Be donated by the author, in a quantity of 10 copies

Suggest a Purchase / Materials Requests

If WCPL does not own a published title that you want to read, you may [submit a Materials Request through our catalog](#).^{xv}

- Log in to your account, and then choose Materials Request under the My Account options.

- Collection Development Services staff review all purchase suggestions and make decisions based on our collection development guidelines, selection criteria, and availability. We strive to make decisions about suggested materials within one month from submission, but it is not uncommon for some to take longer.
- You can track your requests in the catalog through My Account -> Materials Requests (click on All Requests).
- We ask that patrons do not submit requests for books which have not yet been published, as we may be already considering them for purchase.

For more information, including reasons why books may be declined and not selected, please refer to our online [Frequently Asked Questions](#)^{xvi}.

Collection Maintenance

Library staff review and evaluate the collection on an ongoing basis to maintain a current, accurate, and attractive collection.

Material Replacement

CDS considers replacement of materials based on the following criteria:

- Relevancy and accuracy of the title
- Replacement availability in print and from our vendor
- Budget and space constraints
- Circulation statistics
- Interlibrary Loan (ILL) options
- Consideration is given to series replenishment based on the criteria listed above

Deselection

Deselection, also called weeding, is a continual process at all WCPL locations that makes it easier for users to locate relevant, appealing materials on the libraries' shelves. Criteria for deselection include:

- Physical condition
- Superseded by a purchased new edition
- Accuracy and currency of information
- Lack of use based on circulation statistics
- Availability in other formats
- Format no longer collected by the library
- Relevance to the collection and to the needs and interests of the community

- Number of copies in the collection
- Space limitations

CDS applies similar criteria when deciding whether to discontinue or replace materials in digital format.

WCPL contracts with a secondary vendor to sell removed items that are in usable condition. With this arrangement, WCPL incurs no cost for disposal and shares the profits with our vendor. [Learn more about the book disposal process.](#)^{xvii}

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Policy

WCPL serves the public by providing materials to meet our patrons' needs. The ILL service offers cardholders access to collections beyond what is held in Wake County. If an item you are looking for is not owned by WCPL and we are unable to offer an adequate substitution, we may be able to borrow the material from another library in the United States. WCPL cardholders can request books, microfilm, articles, and other items through the ILL service. [Access ILL here.](#)^{xviii}

- Please be aware it usually takes between 2 to 6 weeks for a requested item to arrive.
- The number of active requests a cardholder may have at one time is limited.
- All ILL materials are courtesy loans from lending institutions, so they determine the availability, due date, lending period, renewal possibility, restrictions on use, and fees for all borrowed items.
- We cannot request the following:
 - Videos, music CDs, or DVDs
 - New books published within the last 6 months
 - Electronic books or downloadable audio

Gift / Donation information

WCPL welcomes gifts of gently used books, audiobooks on CD, and DVDs in good condition. Due to the costs and labor involved with making materials ready for public use, WCPL does not add donated materials to the library's collection, but instead offers them for purchase through a secondary vendor. By selling the items to a secondary online vendor, these donations help our library system gain additional funding for new library materials. [Learn more about the book donation process.](#)^{xix}

Request for Reconsideration

Wake County Public Libraries selects and purchases books and materials to support our

mission "to instill the love of reading and to foster the pursuit of knowledge for the residents of Wake County.

As ours is a free society, Wake County values diversity, equity, and inclusion and supports the right of all people to receive information and ideas, a necessary condition of First Amendment rights. The Wake County Public Library System is committed to balancing this right with the duty to responsibly select and curate library materials for the benefit of all Wake County residents. Not all books in the collection will be suitable for all patrons and may reflect controversial, unorthodox, or even unpopular ideas. We affirm that only parents or legal guardians have the authority and responsibility to determine the use of library materials for their own minor children.

WCPL accepts requests from Wake County residents and/or permanent cardholders for the review, relocation, or exclusion of any library material. Our policy and process for Requests for Reconsideration are available on [WCPL's Policies page](#).^{xx}

ⁱ <https://www.wakegov.com/departments-government/libraries/locations>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.wakegov.com/departments-government/planning-development-inspections/planning/census-demographics>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.wakegov.com/departments-government/human-resources/core-values>

^{iv} <https://www.wakegov.com/departments-government/human-resources/core-values>

^v <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship>

^{vi} <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

^{vii} <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

^{viii} <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement>

^{ix} <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretation/labeling-systems>

^x <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors>

^{xi} <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

^{xii} <https://wakegov.illiad.oclc.org/illiad/logon.html>

^{xiii} <https://www.wakegov.com/departments-government/budget-management-services>

^{xiv} <https://askwcpl.wakegov.com/loader?fid=9602&type=1&key=3e6841ab51b501e0e4c9f7fef4aecec1>

^{xv}

<https://catalog.wakegov.com/MyAccount/Home?followupModule=MaterialsRequest&followupAction=NewRequest>

^{xvi} <https://askwcpl.wakegov.com/faq/278241>

^{xvii} <http://www.wakegov.com/book-donations>

^{xviii} <https://wakegov.illiad.oclc.org/illiad/logon.html>

^{xix} <http://www.wakegov.com/book-donation>

^{xx} <https://guides.wakegov.com/publicpolicies>