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POLICIES

Excerpts relevant to collection development from:

Los Alamos County Library System Policies

Adopted January 28, 2025 by Los Alamos County Council

1.1 Mission

MISSION STATEMENT: The Library enriches our unique community with excellent customer service, knowledgeable staff, dedicated partnerships, welcoming spaces, and diverse resources. The Library recognizes that its services must be valued by members of the community and must be of such relevance that support for the Library remains a valid use of community resources. Recognizing that the community is constantly changing, the Library regularly assesses its services in the context of professional library standards and community needs. The Library strives to maintain reasonable levels of service in a consistent and dependable manner.

1.2 Purpose

The Library provides educational, cultural, leisure, reference, technology, and information services, resources, and programs for all ages. The Library may partner with other organizations in order to expand resources and offer additional services. The Library is guided in the nature and type of services offered by available financial resources, community input, and professional standards and emphasizes direct public service rather than archival activities.

1.3 Goals

Goals and related activities are established as part of a dynamic response to community input, needs, and desires as identified by various assessment methods as well as by Los Alamos County Council's and Community Services' strategic goals and priorities. The

extent and mix of services will vary according to the needs of the community and the availability of resources. Delivery methods will respond to technology changes.

3.3.4 Request For Reconsideration of Library Services

The Library recognizes that patrons may question the inclusion of items in Library collections or the content of Library programs or services. Patrons are encouraged to first discuss their concerns with the Library Manager. If concerns remain, the patron may ask that the Library reconsider the request by submitting a Request for Reconsideration form to the Library Manager. The Library Manager may consult with staff and other relevant sources. In making a decision, the Library Manager shall consider:

- The purpose of the item, program, or service itself
- Information obtained from research including accuracy of content, reputation or significance of the author/creator/presenter, diverse points of view
- Whether the Library's guidelines and processes were followed
- Library mission, goals, and policies
- American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights

The Library Manager will make a timely decision regarding the Request for Reconsideration and respond in writing to the requester. If the patron is not satisfied with the Library Manager's decision, the patron may forward the matter to the Director of the Community Services Department. The Community Services Director will convene a committee consisting of the patron bringing the concern forward, chair of the Library Board, and the County Council's liaison to the Library Board to review whether staff followed established policies and procedures in the development of the service or

acquisition of materials and to offer recommendations on the reconsideration to the Director of the Community Services Department. The Director of the Community Services Department, taking into consideration the committee's recommendations may consult with the County Attorney, and will make a decision and prepare a written document on the matter. The decision of the Community Services Director will be final. The Library will respond only to requests for reconsideration from those eligible to obtain a library card from Los Alamos Public Library. The request for reconsideration process does not apply to certain electronic collections that the Library does not have control over, including those administered by Hoopla or the New Mexico State Library. Items in the collection, programs, and services shall remain available and accessible to the public while the reconsideration is being evaluated.

4.3 Library Materials

The Library will develop and maintain a collection of materials that, to the fullest extent practical, meets the varying informational and recreational needs of the Library's service population, in particular, residents of Los Alamos County. No Library can meet all the needs of all of its patrons all of the time. The Library will, however, apply all reasonable diligence in developing and maintaining the best collection possible given available resources. The Library will maintain a definite and recognizable process for the development of the collection. While the details of the process may change as needs require, the procedures will be defined clearly and be easily available and certain basic elements, as noted below, will be included.

4.3.1 Selection Responsibility

The Library Manager is responsible for collection development and is assisted by members of staff, with suggestions from Library patrons. Library staff making selection or

withdrawal decisions are guided by professional review and evaluation sources, ALA's Code of Ethics, practical experience, personal knowledge, expert advice, and community needs as reflected in collection usage statistics, feedback from the community, and purchase requests.

4.3.2 Selection Parameters

The principles of intellectual freedom do not require that any public library own or not own any particular item. The Library acquires materials to support a broad range of citizen interests, attempting to maintain a balance in an effort to achieve its service goals. The Library carefully considers the use of public funds to respond to individual requests. In selecting materials of any format, the Library Manager and staff are guided by ALA's Code of Ethics and should neither avoid nor encourage political, social, artistic, or religious controversy. The Library takes no advocacy position on materials. Believing, however, that the free and healthy intellect thrives on diverse opinions, the Library encourages an environment of intellectual stimulation. In fulfilling its purposes, the Library strives to assure a measure of educational, cultural, recreational, research and informational materials, regardless of format. Certain materials may have educational, cultural, recreational, research and informational value even though parts of the materials contain salacious appeal. Selection of such materials is discretionary with the Library Manager, all other policies considered.

General Selection Criteria

The Library attempts to obtain a variety of materials to satisfy the needs of all patrons. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are evaluated by the following standards. An item need not meet all criteria to be acceptable, nor is any single criteria

decisive. The order of the general criteria in the list does not indicate priority. The following general criteria are used:

- Community needs, interests, and demand
- Reputation, qualifications, and authority of the creators, publisher, or producer
- Literary, artistic, or technical merit
- Relationship to existing material in the collection
- Accessibility from other lending sources
- Format appropriate to library use
- Recommendations of reviewers
- Price
- Suitability of subject, style, and reading level for the intended audience
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of format to content
- Accuracy of content
- Date of publication
- Special effort to obtain material representing all sides of lived experience including a balanced examination of controversial issues and current topics
- Inclusion of resources from self-published, independent, small, and local producers
- Multiple formats to accommodate access for patrons with different needs
- Content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups
- Content in the major languages used in the community that the library serves, when possible

4.3.3 Collection Characteristics

The Library's collection serves the needs of the community, and may change over time. Among the most commonly considered collection characteristics by staff during the collection development process are format, audience, and availability. The Library does not restrict the format of materials to be considered for the collection. All formats are potentially appropriate and shall be given due consideration. Examples of formats include but are not limited to print, audio, video, digital, graphic, online, etc. New formats are evaluated for inclusion as patron interest warrants and resources permit. Formats may be removed as usage declines and items are withdrawn. Although the Library does not categorize nor limit access to materials designated as 'adult' or 'youth,'; certain materials will be of particular interest to or appropriate for different age groups by virtue of the subject matter, level of complexity, etc., and will be designated as such. These designations are intended to provide a convenient mechanism for the arrangement of materials of particular interest to adults, children, young adults, and teens, and are not intended to restrict use to a particular age group nor does it signify appropriateness of content. As a public library, the Library emphasizes the circulation of library materials and for that reason, the bulk of the collection is available on loan to eligible patrons. In order to support certain services such as reference and information activities, or to safeguard rare or costly items, the Library limits the use of some specialized materials and some equipment to library facilities.

4.3.4 Donations

Donations are accepted for the collection when they assist the Library in accomplishing its goals and objectives and also meet physical and subject standards required of similar items in the collection. Materials donated to the Library cannot be accepted on a

conditional basis and items not added to the collection cannot be returned to the donor. The Library retains unconditional ownership of all donations and makes the final decision on use or disposition.

4.3.5 Withdrawal

The Library withdraws items from the collection that are seldom used, no longer accurate, duplicated elsewhere, or are worn and/or damaged. In withdrawing materials, the Library takes no advocacy position.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Los Alamos Public Library has a collection of more than 153,000 physical materials in addition to numerous digital resources. The collection of materials offers choices of format, perspective, and language. “Materials” has the widest possible meaning and includes, but is not limited to, print, audiovisual, and digital formats.

Funding for collections comes from the General Fund of the Los Alamos County appropriation, supplemented by New Mexico State Library Grants-in-Aid, donations from the Friends of Los Alamos County Libraries, the Library Gift Fund from private citizens and community organizations, General Obligation Bond funding, and other grants as available.

The Library strives to develop a collection responsive to the changes in and the needs of our community. As charged by Library policy - approved by the Los Alamos County Library Board and adopted by the Los Alamos County Council - the Library Manager and the Collection Development Committee regularly evaluate these needs and identify collection priorities.

COLLECTION SCOPE

The Library collection encompasses a broad range of popular, classic, and research materials to reflect and support the diverse interests, languages, reading levels, and experiences of the community. Some print and audiovisual materials are managed through a floating collection system, allowing items to circulate between locations based on user demand and space availability. All materials—physical and electronic—are selected and maintained with the aim of supporting a balanced and responsive collection.

The collection is designed to provide equitable access to information and resources in multiple formats, serving the following purposes:

- To support personal enrichment and the enjoyment of life through free choice;
- To develop skills and competencies for individual success;
- To promote civic engagement and participation in a diverse society;
- To encourage artistic, intellectual, and personal growth;
- To foster empathy and strengthen understanding among diverse communities;
- To educate, inform, and inspire; and
- To advance literacy and a lifelong love of reading.

Gifts

Gifts may be purchased by the Library with money donated to the Library Gift Fund which is authorized under the Los Alamos County Code of Ordinances Sec. 20-367, and which is administered by the County Administrator or designee in accordance with approved administrative policy. Collection Development teams will choose these materials based on the Library's general selection criteria.

Resources Generated by Artificial Intelligence

The Library prioritizes acquiring works created by human authors, including original books, translations, and audio/video recordings. AI-generated materials may be selected only when they are the most viable or sole option to meet an identified need. Such exceptions will be reviewed individually to ensure alignment with the Library’s mission and collection goals.

The Library will make every effort to label AI-generated content added either through these exceptions or inadvertently. Items will only be removed if they meet standard weeding criteria. While the Library does not control all third-party content providers, it will make reasonable efforts to remove AI-generated materials supplied by vendors. AI-assisted works—human-authored content refined or edited using AI tools—are permitted under the same selection criteria as fully human-authored works.

Local Authors and Artists Collection

The Library curates a representative—rather than comprehensive—collection of works by authors and creative artists who currently reside in, have resided in, or have produced work while living or working in Los Alamos County.

All materials considered for inclusion in this collection must meet the general selection criteria established in these guidelines. The items are also subject to the same evaluation and deselection standards applied to the broader Library collection to ensure continued relevance, quality, and alignment with community needs.

Acceptance of a donated item by a local artist does not guarantee its addition to the collection. The Library reserves the right to decline, rehome, or dispose of donated

materials in accordance with established policies and professional best practices.

Donors may not be notified of the final disposition of donated items.

Materials for People with Disabilities

The Library provides materials for people with disabilities in accordance with patron needs and the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and related acts. Physical collections include large print books and magazines, audiobooks, DVDs with subtitles or captioning, and Braille books for children. Digital collections with accessible features include e-books and magazines, downloadable audiobooks, streaming audio and video, and research databases. The Library will make an effort to obtain an item in an alternate format when requested for accessibility purposes, whether by addition to the collection, interlibrary loan, or referral to another library with a larger collection of the material (e.g., New Mexico State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled).

Multiple copies

The Library may buy multiple copies in multiple formats of titles with anticipated high patron demand. Acquisition of multiple formats of the same titles also supports accessibility for all users including users with disabilities. Digital and physical formats are acquired in a coordinated effort based on interest, usage, and budgetary considerations. The Library does not seek complete duplication of titles in all offered formats.

Patron Requests

Patron requests are an important way for the Library to understand the interests of its community. While the Library strives to accommodate these requests, they are evaluated alongside other factors such as the Library's collection development goals, selection

criteria, budget, and availability. Requests are considered as staff resources allow and may not always result in acquisition.

Replacements

Decisions to replace lost or damaged items are based on:

- Budget considerations;
- Continued need or demand;
- Item availability; and
- Historical or local significance.

COLLECTIONS OVERVIEW

Fiction, nonfiction, reference, periodicals, professional, small press, large print, graphic novels for adult, juvenile, and teen collections are developed in accordance with the general selection criteria outlined in the library policies already mentioned.

All other collections are also guided by these general criteria; however, they may incorporate additional selection considerations specific to their subject matter, format, or intended audience. These special considerations are detailed in the respective sections for each collection below.

Audiovisual Materials

The Library's audiovisual collection currently includes music and audiobooks on compact disc, videos on DVD and Blu-ray, and a limited selection of video games in formats no longer actively supported.

The collection may evolve to include emerging formats as technology and patron needs change. Conversely, obsolete formats may be withdrawn when they are no longer supported or accessible through commonly available technology.

Digital Collections

Digital resources, including subscription databases and apps, are provided through the Library website to increase the depth and breadth of the collection. These digital resources enhance the Library's collections of books, audiobooks, magazines, films, and music. Some digital resources that the Library subscribes to may not follow the general selection guidelines as established in Library Policies. These resources are not individually selected but rather made available as a package. Some links may be available only within a Library building or only to Library card holders. E-books and e-audiobooks must be available through our established partners to be considered for acquisition.

Web Link Subject Guides

The Library provides curated subject guides containing links to external websites for informational and research purposes only. These links are offered solely as a convenience to users.

The inclusion of any external website does not constitute endorsement by the Library or Los Alamos County, nor does the Library or Los Alamos County assume any responsibility for the accuracy, legality, or content of such external sites. External links included within the subject guides are provided only to noncommercial and nonprofit websites.

Framed Art

The Library maintains a circulating collection of framed art, consisting primarily of prints with some original works. Selection focuses on established themes, including Northern

New Mexico, the Southwest, science, art of interest to juvenile and teen audiences, and works by local artists.

Library of Things

The collection is primarily developed in collaboration with other Los Alamos County entities and community organizations to support dissemination of community-wide resources through the Library.

Staff also consider other selection criteria including:

- Safety
- Durability
- Ease of operation
- Size
- Ease of transportation
- Manageable number of parts
- Price point and potential replacement cost
- Little to no duplication of existing community commercial rentals and paid services

Government Information

The Library provides a group of local government print resources for public review, including Los Alamos County reports and presentations related to ongoing projects. Depending on their long-term informational value, some of these materials become part of the Library's permanent collection. The Library also provides online access to local, regional, and national government information.

Book Club Materials

The Library has book discussion materials available for checkout. The materials consist of nine copies of the same title in regular print, a large print copy, biographical information about the author, and discussion questions. Materials are selected according to the following additional criteria:

- availability in multiple formats
- suitable for book group discussion
- appealing to local book groups

To ensure that the book club collection remains balanced, diverse, and attractive to many book clubs, the titles are chosen exclusively by Library staff. We do not accept purchase requests for this limited selection.

Local and Regional History Resources

The Library collects print, audiovisual, and digital materials that document the history and development of Los Alamos County, including the Manhattan Project, the Los Alamos Ranch School, and other topics of local and regional significance. The Library maintains microfilm and digital archives of Los Alamos newspapers, including historical issues of the Albuquerque Journal (through 2016), as well as a curated file of newspaper clippings and ephemera relevant to Los Alamos news and events. A basic map collection is also maintained, including general and subject atlases, city maps, USGS topographic maps, and Forest and Park Service recreation maps.

While the Library is not an archive for primary source materials or rare books, a small number of limited-access items are housed in locked cases to preserve materials of lasting local or historical interest that are fragile or difficult to replace. These items are

selected using the Library's general criteria and circulating or reprint editions are provided when feasible to ensure public access. The purpose of limited-access housing is preservation—not restriction—and all materials remain available to patrons upon request.

Southwest Collection

The scope of materials included in the Southwest collection is defined by the boundaries of New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Utah. Materials that provide insight into Texas, Native American history, Native American arts and crafts, the Santa Fe Trail, the Rio Grande, and Spanish Colonial history, but which lie outside the borders of the Four Corners states or only partially fall within these states, are assessed individually for potential inclusion in the Southwest collection.

World Languages Materials

The Library maintains a small collection of popular fiction and nonfiction titles in world languages, selected according to the general collection criteria. These materials are intended primarily for recreational reading by patrons fluent in the languages represented. Additional language collections may be developed on a trial basis in response to demonstrated community interest, relevant demographic data, and the availability of qualified volunteers to assist with selection. The identification of reliable vendors for world language materials is also a key consideration.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of the collection is a fundamental responsibility of all Library staff. Staff members continually evaluate materials--either withdrawing, replacing, or repairing them.

Deselection

To ensure the collection remains current, relevant, and responsive to community needs, the Library regularly evaluates and removes materials through a structured weeding process. This practice:

- Creates space for newly acquired materials;
- Maintains a fresh and appealing collection appearance;
- Ensures content remains accurate and up to date;
- Improves accessibility and ease of discovery for patrons; and
- Supports a balanced collection that reflects evolving interests and demographics.

Weeding is an essential component of responsible collection management and is conducted in accordance with the Library's deselection criteria. Those criteria are based on CREW: a Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries, produced by the Texas State Library and available at: <https://archive.org/details/crewmethod12>

Materials may be considered for withdrawal from the collection based on one or more of the following factors:

- Physical condition: items that are damaged, worn, stained, or otherwise unfit for circulation and cannot be cost-effectively repaired.
- Obsolescence: content that is outdated, inaccurate, or no longer reflects current knowledge or standards.
- Low usage: items with consistently low or no circulation over a defined period, unless they hold lasting value or local significance.
- Duplication: excess copies of titles no longer in high demand.

- **Relevance:** materials that no longer align with the Library's mission, service priorities, or community interests.
- **Format:** outdated or unsupported formats (e.g., VHS, floppy disks) that are no longer accessible or practical.
- **Space limitations:** items may be removed to maintain a balanced and manageable collection size.
- **Availability elsewhere:** items readily available through interlibrary loan or digital platforms may be candidates for deselection.

All deselection decisions are made in accordance with professional best practices and are subject to staff review. Statistical tools--such as circulation reports, shelf allotments, and average age of the collections--are studied to determine how the collection is being used and how it should be changed to respond to patron usage.

Weeding is not used to remove materials solely because they are controversial or unpopular with segments of the community. Such actions violate the principles of intellectual freedom as affirmed in the Library Bill of Rights.

Depending on condition, materials withdrawn from the collection as part of the evaluation process are given to the used bookstore operated by the Friends of Los Alamos County Libraries in accordance with a written contract.

Mending

Library materials are repaired in-house when the damage is minor, the repair process is straightforward, and the outcome is expected to be both effective and cost-efficient. Materials are not repaired if they exhibit water damage, animal damage, mold or mildew, persistent odors, or are otherwise severely compromised. Such items are evaluated for

withdrawal from the collection or for replacement, based on availability, demand, and relevance to the collection.

COMPLAINTS AND CENSORSHIP

When dealing with patrons' complaints and matters of censorship, the Library refers to the principles laid out in the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and [The Freedom to Read Statement](#).

Complaint Procedure

The Los Alamos Public Library maintains a Request for Reconsideration procedure (see section 3.3.4 of Los Alamos County Library System Policies rev. 2025) for patrons objecting to materials that are in the Library's collection.

Labeling

In alignment with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the Library uses only viewpoint-neutral labels as directional aids to help patrons locate materials. Labels intended to discourage, restrict, or prescribe use based on content or audience are not employed.

The Library does not adopt, enforce, or endorse external rating systems (i.e., those indicating age appropriateness or content advisories). However, ratings that are part of a material's original packaging or publication are retained to avoid expurgation.

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