



Materials Selection Policy – 2007 Recommendations

Date:	December 10, 2007
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend changes to the Materials Selection Policy that arise from the on-going review of policies to improve library service. The Materials Selection policy provides a framework that guides the development of library collections and supports the Library's mission of providing "universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas..."

Only minor changes are required and are intended to clarify the Materials Selection policy. The policy continues to reflect the Library's vision, mission and library service goals.

Changes recommended include: incorporating the policy into the standard policy template, adding selection criteria, amending the list of prohibitive grounds to correspond with the Ontario Human Rights Code language; specifying the removal of materials subject to libel action until resolution; referencing the Gifts-in-Kind to Special Collections policy, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the current practice of an annual report for challenged materials. Selection criteria have been added for clarification and reflect experience over the past number of years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that Toronto Public Library Board:

1. Approves the revised Materials Selection Policy (Attachment 1).

Implementation Points

The revised Materials Selection Policy will be posted on the Library's website and communicated to staff. The Library provides a process for members of the public to complain about materials in the collections. Library staff will continue to provide an annual report to the Board regarding complaints received and the findings/action taken.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report has no financial implications beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

The Director, Finance and Treasurer has reviewed this Financial Impact statement and is in agreement with it.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of June 26, 2000, the Toronto Public Library Board approved the Materials Selection Policy.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The selection of Library materials is driven by the principles defined in the Library's Mission Statement described in part as providing "universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas..." The Library's commitment to ensuring intellectual freedom is further demonstrated by the endorsement of the Canadian Library Association's Position Statement on the Intellectual Freedom and the Ontario Library Association's Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library.

The Materials Selection Policy guides the development of Library collections and provides a framework for Library staff involved in the selection or de-selection of Library materials. It provides guidance in the following areas:

- customer access to collections;
- guidelines and criteria for the selection of materials;
- introduction of new formats to the collection;
- de-selection or weeding of materials;
- exclusions from selection;
- gifts and donations;
- customer requests;
- reconsideration of materials.

COMMENTS

Minor changes highlighted in Attachment 1 are being recommended to update the wording of the Materials Selection Policy. A summary of the recommended amendments are provided below:

- revisions to incorporate the policy into the standard Toronto Public Library policy template;
- adding a reference to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms similar to other Ontario public library materials selection policies;

- adding additional material selection criteria, including: significance of the originator of the work; demand for material; reputation of the publisher or producer; clarity, accuracy and logic of presentation; and purchase price and other budget considerations;
- specifying that materials subject to libel action will be removed from the collection until the action is resolved. Depending on the outcome, materials will either be returned to the collection or permanently withdrawn;
- amending the list of prohibited grounds for discrimination in the policy statement to reflect the Ontario Human Rights Code language;
- reference to the Gifts-in-Kind to Special Collections Policy; and
- adding a reference to the current practice of an annual report to the Library Board regarding challenged materials.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Revised Materials Selection Policy