



Collection Development

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials which anticipate and meet the needs of the communities of Vancouver Island Regional Library. It directly relates the collection to the library's mission statement, and defines the scope and standards of the collections.

As the community changes, Vancouver Island Regional Library will reassess and adapt its collections to reflect the needs and expectations of the communities served. The policy is intended to familiarize the library customer with the philosophy by which selection decisions are made at Vancouver Island Regional Library.

Selection Philosophy

The Vancouver Island Regional Library Board endorses the Statement on Intellectual Freedom of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations, which states in part:

[t]he Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms that all persons in Canada have a fundamental right, subject only to the Constitution and the law, to have access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, and to express their thoughts publicly. Only the courts may abridge free expression rights in Canada.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms further that libraries have a core responsibility to support, defend and promote the universal principles of intellectual freedom and privacy.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations holds that libraries are a key institution in Canada for rendering expressive content accessible and affordable to all. Libraries are essential gateways for all persons living in Canada to advance themselves through literacy, lifelong learning, social engagement, and cultural enrichment.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some individuals and groups consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, in accordance with their mandates and professional values and standards, libraries provide, defend and promote equitable access to the widest possible variety of expressive content and resist calls for censorship and the adoption of systems that deny or restrict access to resources.

[...]

Furthermore, in accordance with established library policies, procedures and due process, libraries resist efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Library employees, volunteers and employers as well as library governing entities have a core responsibility to uphold the principles of intellectual freedom in the performance of their respective library roles.

(Canadian Federation of Library Associations, ~ June 27, 1974 Amended November 17, 1983; November 18, 1985; and September 27, 2015).

In accordance with this statement, the staff of Vancouver Island Regional Library develop collections to represent as many viewpoints as possible, within constraints of budget, space and availability, including those which some may see as offensive or unorthodox so to present all sides of an issue. The presence of materials in the library does not constitute endorsement of their contents by the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees does not purchase, retain, or make accessible in its collections resources in violation of the statutes of Canada or British Columbia.

Selection Responsibility

The responsibility for selection and retaining materials is delegated to qualified and knowledgeable staff who employ the criteria outlined in this policy. The final responsibility for material selection and retention resides with the Executive Director.

Responsibility of the Customer

Vancouver Island Regional Library realizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some customers. While library staff is available to assist individuals and groups to select material, the ultimate responsibility for the choice of materials lies with the customer.

Responsibility for Children's Reading

Vancouver Island Regional Library provides access to its materials to all customers. Responsibility for children's use of the library materials rests with parents and or legal guardians.

Donations

Vancouver Island Regional Library accepts donations for the library's collections that fall within the needed subject categories, as determined by the Executive Director and the staff. Donations are subject to the following limitations:

- Vancouver Island Regional Library retains unconditional ownership of the gift;
- Vancouver Island Regional Library makes the final decision on the use or disposition of the gift;
- Vancouver Island Regional Library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing and access to the materials;
- Monetary gifts to the collection are welcome and may be designated as memorials;
- Donations of money designated for the periodicals and newspapers collection are accepted in lieu of actual subscriptions. These contributions offset the high cost of subscriptions and maintain the continuity of subscriptions from year to year; and
- Donors of funds may suggest subjects or titles to be acquired with their donation, but Vancouver Island Regional Library reserves the right of the final decision.

Scope of the Collections

Vancouver Island Regional Library maintains a floating collection for its print resources. Materials are freely exchanged across all branches, and only a small number of items have a permanent home in a single branch. The floating collection allows VIRL to provide all customers access to the widest possible range of materials, regardless of their geographic location or the size of the branch in their community. The floating collection allows us to develop and maintain collections collaboratively and equitably for all residents, to minimize duplication of titles, and to maximize the budget. Customers seeking materials on specific topics are encouraged to search for items in the catalogue, and request delivery to the branch of their choice so that they may gain access to the best materials from around the system.

VIRL is dedicated to the ongoing enhancement of its digital collections and electronic resources. Our eLibrary is available to all registered customers with a device and internet access regardless of time of day. Digital resources make a significant addition to the overall collection by allowing VIRL to focus funds on content, lessening the need for delivery services, and minimizing customer wait times for access to materials.

General Selection Criteria

Materials selected will meet high standards in quality, content, expression and format.

Whether purchased or donated, materials shall be considered according to the following criteria:

- Comprehensiveness of treatment, including breadth and depth of material;
- The extent to which the item supplements, expands upon, or supports the existing collection, rather than duplicates it;
- Cost relative to the value the item contributes to the collection;
- Suitability of subject and style for intended users;
- Strengths and weaknesses of existing collection;
- Timeliness and accuracy of the information;
- Contribution to balance of treatment of a controversial subject;
- Contemporary significance or permanent value;
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, creator, or publisher of the work as established through evaluation in professional journals; and
- Local significance of the author or creator of the work.

Electronic Format Criteria

- Ease of use of the product;
- Accessibility to multiple users;

- Access to necessary hardware and software;
- Enhancement of the print equivalent (if any) in terms of speed, flexibility, combinations of search terms or general utility;
- Continued access to retrospective information when necessary or desirable;
- Reduction of space requirements over print products; and
- Reduction in the number of copies of a print source when purchased for multiple locations.

Accessibility

VIRL is dedicated to providing resources to our customers with print disabilities. We offer materials in large print and audiobook formats within branches. Most of our digital resources are delivered on platforms or services with accessibility features built in.

Customer Suggestions

Library users may place a formal request for the purchase of collections materials by completing a *Suggest an Item* form. All suggestions are reviewed by library staff, who applies to the customer's suggestion the same selection criteria that are applied to all materials purchased by the library.

Resource Sharing / Interlibrary Loan Service

Items that fall outside of the selection criteria of Vancouver Island Regional Library, or that are temporarily or permanently unavailable, can be requested by library customers from other library systems. Vancouver Island Regional Library has the authority to limit the number of Interlibrary Loan requests.

Collection Maintenance: Withdrawing Library Materials

Maintenance of the library's collection through constant re-evaluation by the library staff ensures its usefulness and relevancy to the community. This evaluation depends heavily on the staff's professional expertise in assessing the needs of the community and the content of the collection. Those materials determined to no longer be of value are withdrawn from the collection.

Materials are withdrawn for one or more of the following reasons:

- Obsolescence: subject matter is no longer timely, accurate or relevant;
- Damage or poor condition;
- Space limitation; or
- Insufficient use

Reconsideration of Materials

Customers from the Vancouver Island Regional Library communities wishing to recommend the removal of a particular item in the library collections may initiate a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials process, which will be reviewed by senior staff up to the Executive Director. Decisions relating to the reconsideration of materials are made in relation to the Library’s mission statement and the selection criteria of this Collection Development Policy.

Adoption History

ADOPTED BY:	DATE:
VIRL Board of Trustees	November 2009
VIRL Board of Trustees	May 26, 2018
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: 2023	REVIEW CYCLE: 5 years