

Dothan Houston County Library System Collection Development Policy

It is the mission of the Dothan Houston County Library System (DHCLS) to transform lives by providing resources needed to educate, inform and entertain the residents of Houston County, Alabama. This Collection Development Policy will provide the framework for the growth and development of collections in support of the DHCLS's mission.

In order to meet its mission, DHCLS will provide all citizens of Houston County materials that reflect a wide range of views, expressions, opinions and interests. It is the responsibility of DHCLS Staff to maintain and develop physical and online collections by following the guidelines set forth in the Collection Development Policy. As part of strategic planning, the Collection Development Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is a living document that addresses up to date collection concerns.

It should be understood that the DHCLS collection may include items that may be unorthodox or unpopular with the majority or controversial in nature. Acquisition of these items does not constitute endorsement of their content by DHCLS, but rather makes available its expression.

DHCLS provides free access to materials in a number of formats (print, media and electronic) to all customers. Users make their own choices as to what they will use based on individual interests and concerns.

Selection Criteria

All materials, whether purchased or donated, will be consider in terms of the criteria listed below. An item does not have to meet all of these standards in order for its addition.

- Popular interest or demand
- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Currency of information
- Accuracy
- Local emphasis
- Relevance to community needs or interests
- Readability or ability to sustain interest
- Treatment of subject to age of intended audience
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer or illustrator
- Publisher print run
- Creative, literary or technical quality
- Nationally recognized literary or A/V awards
- Critical assessments in professionally recognized review sources
- Format and ease of use
- Circulation statistics and trends
- Cost and availability
- Relationship to existing materials in the collection
- Whether a title is part of an existing series
- Relationship to materials in other area libraries

Priorities of Selection

- DHCLS should plan to acquire, within its budgetary limitations, all types of materials needed to meet its obligations. Items may include books, pamphlets, documents, periodicals, maps, microforms, audio-visual materials, software, and online databases.
- When lack of funds limit purchases, current in-print publications of lasting value, regardless of format, will be given priority over out-of-print publications.
- Holdings of other area libraries will be considered when selecting subject areas for intensive collection or large purchase items. Consideration will be given to both the privileges and responsibilities of cooperative acquisition plans and interlibrary loan procedures.
- The number of copies of any title shall be dependent upon demand by patrons and the size of the population served.
- While DHCLS is sympathetic to the needs of students, including home-schooled students, it is not the responsibility of DHCLS to provide curriculum-supportive materials for them.
- DHCLS will not purchase textbooks.
- Materials that should not be acquired or added to the collection include literature in languages not justified by community needs, religious materials designed to be used for proselytizing, or purely propagandistic literature.
- In selecting materials, DHCLS staff will use as many selection and bibliographic management tools as possible, including: book selection periodicals such as Booklist and Publishers Weekly; Books in Print; Public Library Catalog; Children's Catalog; Book Review Digest; Dewey Decimal Classification; LC Subject Headings; professional journals such as American Libraries and Library Journal; databases such as OCLC; and bibliographies such as Magazines for Public Libraries, Reference Books for Small and Medium-Sized Libraries, and any other useful bibliographic reference works.
- DHCLS staff will strive to find at least two professional reviews of any item before considering it for purchase. Librarians may also consider purchase of items based on advertisements, author tours, television and radio coverage, and direct mail.
- In light of the current abundance of vanity publishers and print-on-demand publishers, the Library does not purchase all local authors' works. DHCLS will accept donations of such works with two reviews for consideration. Decisions to add any local author's work to the collection is done following these Collection Development guidelines.

Weeding

Weeding Criteria: age, use, condition, and relevancy all play a role in deciding when a title is no longer fit for the collection. This process is subject to DHCLS staff's discretion and are only intended as guidelines for maintaining a relevant and current collection. The process for deselection is detailed as follows:

- DHCLS staff runs a report that identifies the publication date and circulation count for each title in the collection. The titles that have not circulated within the recommended time frame for each Dewey Classification, are identified for deselection.

- Each title that is identified for deselection is evaluated for condition and relevancy to the curriculum and collection. Considerations are made for titles that are considered cornerstone works in their particular field, have cross discipline relevancy, have prior circulation history and are in good condition, and/or are the only title in their respective field/area within the classification.
- If a title has been identified through the previous two steps needing deselection, the title is removed from the stacks, deleted from the local catalog and interlibrary loan services and offered to the Friends of the Library for their Book Sales. All items not sold in the Friends of the Library Book Sales will either be donated to other charitable organizations or recycled.

Time Frames for weeding of nonfiction material based by Classification:

- Identified for review if title has not circulated in past 3 years
 - 000s - Computer science, information & general works
 - 500s - Science (general science, biology, mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, earth science, zoology, paleontology, botany)
 - 600s - Technology (medicine, health, nursing, engineering, agriculture)
- Listed for review if title has not circulated in past 10 years
 - 100s - Philosophy & Psychology
 - 200s – Religion
 - 300s - Social Sciences (anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, law, education)
 - 400s – Language
 - 700s - Arts & recreation
 - 800s – Literature
 - 900s - History & geography

For fiction, reference, children’s, and young adult materials, DHCLS must consider the limited space growth needs of the collection. Titles will be considered for weeding based on age, condition, use and relevancy. If a title is in poor condition but has yielded high use, a new edition will be ordered to replace the current one. When space restricts the addition of new titles, the oldest titles with the lowest circulation count will be considered for weeding to make room for the new titles in order to keep the collection current and relevant. Reference materials that are weeded and considered to still be in good condition and relevant to the community may be moved to the non-fiction collection and made available for circulation.

Reconsideration

Any DHCLS patron who would like to request the reconsideration and the reclassification or removal of an item in the DHCLS collection may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form, which is available at all DHCLS locations. In response to a submitted Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form, the DHCLS Director will appoint a committee of three professional library employees to review the work in its entirety, evaluate whether the item was selected in accordance with the Collection Development Policy, and provide a recommendation as to the item’s retention, reclassification, or removal. The Director will evaluate the

recommendation and render a decision. This decision will be issued to the patron within sixty days of the receipt of the request.

If the patron is dissatisfied with the decision rendered by the Director, the patron may notify the Executive Committee of the Dothan Houston County Library System of Board of Trustees. Notifications must be submitted in writing, must include specific information as to why the work is objectionable, and must be received within ten business days of the issuance of the Director's decision. Notifications should be sent to the following address:

Dothan Houston County Library System
ATTN: Chair, Board of Trustees
P.O. Box 1369
Dothan, AL 36302

The Executive Committee will then determine whether the particular title was selected in accordance with the Collection Development Policy and will make a determination regarding the item's retention, reclassification, or removal.

The item in question will not be removed from circulation during any step of the review process.

Decisions reached through the Materials Reconsideration Process shall remain final for a period of five years from the latest date of issuance. During this five-year timeframe, subsequent reconsideration requests for titles that have already been evaluated through this process will be dismissed.

Purchase Suggestions

DHCLS welcomes suggestions for titles to consider purchasing. To suggest an item for purchase, please fill out a "Request Item for Purchase" form, which can be found on the DHCLS website (www.dhcls.org). Before submitting a purchase suggestion, please check the catalog to verify that DHCLS does not already own the item. Submitting this form does not guarantee the purchase of the suggested item. The suggestion will be evaluated based upon the DHCLS Collection Development Policy and current budgetary constraints.

Limited Access Collection

The Dothan Houston County Library System collection may include titles related to sexuality, sexual development, sexual health, and sex education. Given that individual sensitivities vary, great care and consideration are taken so that titles related to these subjects are acquired, classified, cataloged, and shelved appropriately and in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Collection Development Policy. Titles that contain graphic and gratuitous illustrations or depictions of sexual acts, unnecessary to the work taken as a whole, will not become part of the collection.

Additionally, titles related to sexuality, sexual development, sexual health, or sex education that contain visually explicit depictions of people engaged in sexual activity will be cataloged as "limited access" and will not be available to cardholders under the age of 19.