



## MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

### Policy/Procedure: **LIBRARIES COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

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#### **Purpose of Policy**

This policy will inform and educate library staff, patrons, Borough administrators and public officials about the environment in which the Matanuska-Susitna Borough libraries operate, their mission, the selection and weeding criteria used, how collections reconsiderations are handled, and the priorities of collection development. Borough library administrators will review the policy every five years.

#### **2. Community Description**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough lies in the heart of South-Central Alaska, encompassing more than 24,000 square miles of rolling low land, mountains, lakes, rivers and streams. The Borough includes portions of the Alaska Range in the northwest, the Chugach Mountains in the southeast and the entire Talkeetna and Clearwater Ranges in the interior.

Since incorporation in 1964, the Borough's population has climbed steadily. The 2020 census figures indicate that 107,081 people reside in the Borough. The region is expected to reach 130,000 by 2027.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough provides library facilities and services in the following areas, outside of the incorporated cities of Palmer and Wasilla: Big Lake, Sutton, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek and Willow. The Alaskan ideal of independence is embodied in each of these communities and therefore each facility maintains a unique identity.

#### **3. Mission Statement and Library Goals**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Libraries support the educational, civic, and cultural activities of their communities, as well as the intellectual, creative and inspirational endeavors of the individual.

In support of our mission, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Libraries strive to ensure our collections are focusing on the requests and needs of our communities.

Specifically, we have recognized these areas of primary consideration in order of priority:

**Popular Materials Centers** - Each library houses up-to-date material in a variety of formats to meet the recreational, educational and remote lifestyle needs and wants of our community members. These collections include fiction, non-fiction and Alaskana (collected for adults, juveniles and young adults).

**Reference and Community Resource Centers** - Each library maintains a basic reference collection. We house local, borough and state publications for public review, as well as online access to state, federal and local forms. Phone reference and our website: [www.matsugov.us/msln](http://www.matsugov.us/msln) helps meet-the needs of people who cannot visit their local library. Interlibrary Loans provide our patrons with material not found within our network.

**Preschooler's Doorway to Learning**- MSB Libraries support parents with early literacy with a collection that includes a selection of books, audio and video material.

**Support for K-12 Education** -The MSB Libraries work in partnership with local schools and school curriculum to support students in their academic endeavors.

**Non-Print Materials** - The MSB Libraries acquire non-print items for a variety of purposes and items are selected according to the libraries' mission including audio and visual recordings.

**Access to Electronic Resources** - To fulfill its mission of providing public access to information resources and services and to provide opportunities for lifelong learning through self-education, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Public Libraries offer free internet access through WiFi and public access computers at all facilities. Access to multiple databases are available from our website: [www.matsugov.us/msln](http://www.matsugov.us/msln). Access to other links available from our web-site include access to current accurate medical information, local and state news, government information, etc.

#### 4. Interlibrary Loans

The MSB Libraries belong to the Alaska Library Catalog (ALC), which is made up of public libraries in the state of Alaska. Using an interconnected courier system and the mail system, the libraries within the ALC transport material daily to fill patron requests.

Requests are made by patrons either from home or from any of the five participating libraries and material is delivered to the library of their choice. Further, each library subscribes to a policy of resource sharing with libraries outside the network, thereby providing interlibrary loan service to our patrons as well as providing material to libraries outside of our system that requests material from us. Each library is a member of the OCLC Network which gives patrons access to bibliographic records of libraries nationwide.

#### 5. Material Selection Guidance

The purpose of the MSB Libraries Materials selection guidance is to provide MSB library staff members, and inform the MSB Library Board, MSB Library Citizens' Advisory Committee and the public about the principles upon which selections are based.

The primary objective of library materials selection in MSB libraries is to collect material of current interest and significance, as well as those of permanent value.

Responsibility for material selection lies with the librarian at each Borough library. Items are chosen as follows: input from other staff members, public recommendations, patron requests and statistics showing areas of high use and interest.

The following general criteria are used when selecting library material:  
Present and potential relevance to community needs:

- Suitability of subject, style and reading level for the intended audience.
- Suitability of format.
- Importance as a document of the times.
- Reputation and/or significance of author, publisher or producer.
- Positive review in one or more appropriate professional journals.
- Positive critics', patron and/or staff members' reviews.
- Relationships to existing materials in the collection.
- Within limits of budgets for materials.
- Not available, or with limited accessibility, from other lending sources.
- Insufficient materials available on the same subject.
- Author or illustrator is local.
- Enhances a specific collection within the libraries.
- Literary and artistic merit.
- Accuracy of content.
- Popularity with library patrons.

## 6. Specific Selection Guidance by Collection

### **Adult Collection**

To provide local communities information on subjects of topical as well as continuing interest, different points of view on all topics, historically significant points of view, material that provides instruction and material for entertainment and recreation.

### **Media Collections (Audio and Video)**

To provide our communities with topical, current and popular information by providing access to material in a non-print format such as DVD, audio, CD's and other new formats.

### **Youth Collections**

To provide material for youth 15 & under in a variety of formats. To meet the recreational and informational interests and well as to support their formal educational curriculum.

### **Young Adult Collections**

To provide material for young adults 16 & over in a variety of formats. To meet the recreational and informational interests and well as to support their formal educational curriculum.

### **Reference Collection**

To provide local communities with basic reference collections comprised of electronic resources and print materials. Libraries may add copies of items of local history and high-use non-fiction material to the reference collection to ensure availability to the public.

### **Alaskana Collections**

To provide communities with items of local interest or history which reflect the interest and relevance to each community. Local appeal, authors and demand will dictate the selection coverage in this collection.

### **Periodical Collections**

To supplement and complement the materials in the adult and juvenile collections with periodical literature. This collection is intended to be more current and more frequently updated than the general collections. The periodical collections comprise subscriptions to electronic magazine databases and print issues.

## **7. Gifts/Donations and Memorials**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Libraries are authorized to accept unconditional gifts and donations of materials to their libraries. Gifts with conditions or stipulations may require approval by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Administration following a recommendation from the Recreation & Library Services Manager. The selection criteria for gifts and donations of materials are the same as for the general collections. Gifts or donations that do not meet these standards may be donated to the local library board/advocacy or friends' group for their book sales or be discarded according to stated weeding practices. Gifts or donations of money must be accepted and appropriated by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly before the money can be spent.

## **2. Collection Evaluation and Maintenance**

Collection maintenance is a continuous process and reflects the goals and objectives of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Libraries to have updated and actively circulating collections. Systematic weeding is done in each borough library to keep their collection responsive to patron's needs and desires, to ensure the collection's usefulness to its respective community and to make room for new material. The library automation system provides the libraries with the statistics to help weed items no longer actively circulating.

Materials no longer meeting the guidance for material selection may be weeded.

In addition, MSB Libraries use the criteria outlined in the CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding) method of weeding. Items that are weeded include:

1. Topics and/or formats no longer a priority to the collection
2. Books and material of poor condition
3. Books and material of poor appearance
4. Unused Material

Use of the acronym MUSTIE provides further weeding criteria:

5. **M**isleading and/or factually inaccurate
6. **U**gly (worn out beyond mending or rebinding)
7. **S**uperseded by a new edition or better source.
8. **T**rivial (of no discernable literary or scientific merit)
9. **I**rrelevant to the needs and interests of your community
10. **E**lsewhere (the material may be easily borrowed from another source)

Even where materials may be weeded from a collection, Interlibrary Loans ensures the availability of items to our patrons that may not be available locally. Records kept on items requested and received also help libraries identify areas they may want to weed or collect in.

## **3. Conclusion**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough library staff is responsible for the selection of library material and delegates to such staff the authority to purchase those materials that are considered essential, useful and within the scope of this policy.

**APPENDIX I  
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
PROCEDURE FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

**Introduction:**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Public Libraries endeavor to provide to serve Mat-Su residents of every age and provide a full range of information resources for the communities they serve.

The Mat-Su Librarians manage the library collection at their respective libraries including selection and retiring of library material. Materials are selected for all ages and various education and comprehension levels.

Only Matanuska-Susitna Borough library card holders and residents may challenge materials in Borough libraries. Starting at the local library where the material is shelved is the first step in the process.

1. If a patron expresses concern about Library material, they will first discuss with the local librarian.
  - a. The librarian will listen to the patron's concerns and explain how and why materials are selected. A copy of the selection guidance will be made available to the patron.
  - b. If the patron is not satisfied with the result of the preliminary discussion, the librarian will explain and provide the patron with a copy of the reconsideration process.
2. The patron may file in writing, a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials which can be found online <https://matsugov.us/department/community-development>.
3. Upon receipt by the Community Development Department, the Department will notify the chair of the Library Citizens' Advisory Committee (LCAC) and request the challenge be placed on the next available agenda.
4. The LCAC will review the request. If accepted for review by the LCAC, the material will go into the LCAC queue for review in accordance with OR 24-039.
5. After the LCAC provides their recommendation to MSB Administration, the Community Development Director will provide a final decision. Written notification will be provided to the patron after the decision is made and is valid for three years from the date of the decision.

Adopted as policy this 14<sup>th</sup> of May, 2024

  
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Jillian Morrissey, Community Development Director