

ALABAMA PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE LIBRARY OPERATIONS DIVISION  
ADMINISTRATIVE CODECHAPTER 520-3-1  
SERVICES TO STATE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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520-3-1-.01      Collection Development Policies.

(1) Goals and Objectives: The Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) will strive to empower all Alabama citizens by providing equal access to the world's library and information resources. These goals and objectives may be summarized as:

(a) To provide public libraries with backup resources that will enable them to provide Alabama citizens access to library materials electronically or on-site to obtain information and services that meet their needs.

(b) To provide job-related resources to State of Alabama employees and elected officials. The materials acquired to serve state government will be selected to serve needs not met by other State collections.

(c) To provide specialized library materials to persons with disabilities.

(d) To prepare library staff through continuing education materials to use current and new technologies in order to assist users in accessing information.

(e) To provide professional materials to public libraries to ensure that children and youth at risk in Alabama will receive the library services they need to support their educational and recreational needs.

(f) To provide resources to public libraries that support programs and ensure library services for users who are of diverse geographic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, or who have limited functional literacy or limited information skills.

**(2) Philosophy of the Collection Development Policy:**

(a) The collection development policy is a statement of principles to guide staff in the selection of materials to fulfill the objectives of the library. Since the collection development policy statement cannot be definitive for all time, it is subject to continuous review and revision. APLS subscribes to the "Library Bill of Rights" (see Appendix A), "The Freedom to Read" (see Appendix B), and the "Alabama Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Material" (see Appendix C), and other supportive documents of the American Library Association.

**(3) Responsibilities for Selection:**

(a) Ultimate responsibility for the collection is assigned to the APLS Director by the APLS Executive Board within the framework of policies approved by the Board. Selection, however, is a responsibility shared by all APLS professional staff.

**(4) Standards for Selecting Library Materials:** The selection of library materials is based on several important factors which determine their value to the collection. These factors are:

(a) Demand. Any service institution must include demand among its criteria when considering acquisitions. This demand may be voiced by the library's users, the APLS staff, public libraries, or state agencies.

(b) Value. Materials will be selected because of notable inherent qualities regardless of demand. Reviews in authoritative reviewing media will be consulted in determining which items meet this criteria. However, materials representing all sides of controversial issues will be considered even if such materials are less than authoritative.

(c) Format. APLS will collect material in any format deemed most appropriate to meet the goals and objectives of APLS.

**(5) Policies by Format of Material:****(a) Monographs.**

1. Policy statement. The APLS collection serves as a back-up resource collection for reference and informational materials.

2. Criteria for selection.

(i) The collection will be limited to Alabamiana, selected Southern works, award-winning titles, and works of literary significance.

(ii) Juvenile books will generally only be purchased if Newbery, Caldecott, Coretta Scott King, or other prestigious award winners or if works by Alabama authors. Exceptions may be made if introductory level works are needed on a subject and the only suitable works are juvenile in nature. In addition, selected titles may be purchased to support the work of the APLS Children/Young Adult Services Consultants. APLS defines juvenile as ages 10 or younger or grades 5 or lower.

(iii) Primary selection of monographs will be from current review journals, standard selection tools, and bibliographies, e.g., Library Journal, Booklist, and Choice. Special notice will be given to the annual lists of "best" books appearing in such publications. Other professional publications may be used. On occasion, materials will be selected from other sources, i.e., publishers' catalogs, for new editions of standard works, new titles by popular authors, continuations and supplements, *Alabamiana*.

### 3. The Collection.

(i) *Alabamiana* collection. *Alabamiana* will be purchased regardless of merit. Old, out-of-print, and rare *Alabamiana* will be acquired when available and practical. At least two copies of *Alabamiana* will be purchased: one for the reference collection and one for the circulating collection. The criteria to determine that a book is *Alabamiana* are that the author be born in Alabama, reside in the state at least five years or write the work(s) as a consequence of residency in Alabama; or that the book be set in Alabama or has at least one-third of the subject matter dealing with Alabama. No effort will be made to collect individual family histories.

(ii) Alabama Documents collection. APLS acquires when funds are available at least one copy of documents issued by Alabama state agencies according to the selection policy for the general collection. Three copies of documents compiled and/or published by APLS are processed into the collection.

(b) Newspapers. A highly selective policy will be carried out in maintaining the newspaper collection due to the expense of newspapers and the frequent lack of indexing.

(c) Periodicals. Selection will be made to meet APLS public service needs and to support agency staff professional work. APLS will join organizations to acquire their publications when practical advantages will be received as a result of the

membership. At least one copy of each title will be acquired. Acquisitions will conform to the fair use guidelines of the current copyright law. Titles with regular coverage of Alabama will be acquired. Consideration will be given to periodicals that aid in materials selection.

(d) Electronic formats. The selection of electronic formats will complement, not duplicate, those titles included in the Alabama Virtual Library and will be evaluated as they are developed.

(e) BPH special format materials. Within APLS, BPH functions as the Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Its service policies are established by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), a branch of the Library of Congress. For this reason, its operation policies and collection development levels will vary from some of those used within APLS. BPH adheres to the *NLS Selection Policy for Reading Materials and the NLS Collection Building Policy*.

(6) Policies by Subject Material:

(a) Collection development levels. The subject matter of the collection will be developed on three levels:

1. **Comprehensive.** A collection in which APLS attempts, so far as is reasonably possible, to include all significant works of recorded knowledge in a necessarily defined and limited field. The aim, if not the achievement, is complete coverage.

2. **Strong.** A collection intended to support and supplement the information needs of APLS users. Its broad coverage at a basic research level includes the reference tools and fundamental works pertaining to the subject.

3. **Basic.** A core collection of standard works containing general information.

4. **Minimal.** A subject area in which few selections are made beyond very basic works.

(7) Gifts Policy:

(a) Gift material will be accepted with the understanding that APLS has the authority to use or dispose of such material as it meets the criteria established in this collection development policy. No restrictions on the use of gift material added to the collection may be made by the donor. APLS will not price or evaluate for tax purposes materials donated to APLS or to any other tax-exempt institution.

## (8) Weeding Policy:

(a) The proliferation of information and diminishing space makes weeding the collection a high priority. Weeding is selection in reverse. The same care, thought and judgment must be exercised in this process as in the original selection. The objectives of the library as outlined above in the Collection Development Policy as well as the kind of collection APLS is attempting to build and maintain will be considered. Materials considered for weeding will be measured against the criteria in the latest edition of *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries*. BPH weeds its collection based on guidance from the NLS Network Library. The collection will be weeded by the professional staff of APLS on a continuous basis.

## (9) Replacement Policies:

(a) Replacement of titles withdrawn for any reasons will be governed by the following factors: importance of the author or title; existence of similar materials in this collection; availability of newer or better material; cost.

## (10) Intellectual Freedom and Procedures for Complaints:

(a) Any resident of Alabama who objects to a book or any other material owned by APLS should be listened to courteously and asked to fill out a reconsideration form available from the APLS Director or from the Head of BPH. If a complaint arises about APLS material:

1. A form will be sent to the complaining patron. (See Appendix C) The APLS Director will be notified and the patron should be told that his objections will be given serious consideration and that his interest in the library is welcome.

2. The APLS Director will notify the APLS Executive Board that a complaint has been received.

3. The objections will be forwarded to an ad hoc committee made up of the APLS Assistant Director, the Head of BPH, and a library consultant; they will draft a response for review by the Director. The response may encourage the complainant to accept the addition of another title to balance the collection or to accept a substitute title for his own use.

4. If the complainant is not satisfied, then the complainant will be told that he may appeal to the APLS Director.

5. The APLS Director will review the completed form, the staff comments, and the appeal. He will contact the

complainant, explaining the decision of the library, and advise the complainant that further discussions are welcome.

6. If the complainant still feels that his objections have not been resolved, he may make a final appeal in person to the APLS Executive Board.

7. The APLS Executive Board will decide whether to withdraw the book or other material, refuse to withdraw, or purchase another title to counterbalance the material in question. The Board will notify the complainant in writing of their decision within a month after the meeting.

**Author:** Nancy C. Pack, Director

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§41-8-(1-10).

**History:** Filed September 30, 1982. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed March 20, 2000; effective April 24, 2000. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed August 19, 2010; effective September 23, 2010. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed December 10, 2018; effective January 24, 2019.

#### 520-3-1-.02      Circulation Policies.

(1) Patrons served: The Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) provides services to the following categories of patrons:

(a) In-state libraries.

(b) Out-of-state libraries. Interlibrary loan services are provided to out-of-state libraries under the guidelines of the Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States, revised 2001. (American Library Association, 2001).

(c) State employees. In this category are included all state officials, legislators, state employees, legislative employees, and members of state boards, commissions, and authorities, etc. (those who receive their paychecks directly from the State Treasury). State employees are eligible for direct loans of library materials, interlibrary loan services, and reference services. A registration card must be filled out and returned to APLS before material is borrowed. A state employee who has not borrowed material in 36 months must re-register.

(d) Blind and Physically Handicapped (BPH) patrons. A BPH patron certified by the BPH Division staff as handicapped, a member of the family of a handicapped person, or a professional working with the handicapped may borrow print materials from the BPH collection.

(e) **General public**. Members of the general public are strongly encouraged to use their local libraries. Members of the general public may borrow APLS materials through their local libraries through the interlibrary loan process.

(2) Materials Circulated:

(a) Books are generally circulated. Exceptions are reference books, out-of-print books in the Alabama collection, and materials in extremely poor condition.

(b) Hard copy periodicals do not circulate. Photocopies, microform printouts or microfiche copies are sent if doing so will not violate copyright laws.

(3) Loan Periods for Library Operations Materials:

(a) **State employees**. Three (3) weeks and renewable if no requests are pending for the materials;

(b) **Libraries**. Four (4) weeks and renewable if no requests are pending for the materials.

(4) Treatment of Overdues:

(a) No fines are charged.

(b) A state employee with two overdue books must return them before borrowing additional material.

(c) A library with 20 overdues must return enough overdues to be below the 20-overdues limit before borrowing additional materials.

(5) Handling of Lost or Long Overdue Books:

(a) If books are reported lost in the mail, APLS has them traced. Then, if not located, APLS may replace them at APLS expense with no penalty for the borrowing library. However, if a state employee loses books in hand-mail more than two times, APLS asks that he pay for the materials in the third instance or lose service.

(b) If a book is reported lost at a library, APLS asks the library to replace it with the same title or, if it is no longer available, with a substitute. After a library fails to replace two books within the 6-month limit, APLS will notify the library of the following:

1. That the two books have been replaced by APLS; and
2. That failure to reimburse APLS for the two titles along with failure to replace a third title will result

in notification of the local library that ILL service to the library will be discontinued after a month's notice.

(c) If a book is overdue three months (sooner if reserves are on it or APLS borrowed it from another library to send it), APLS will send a letter asking that the library return it or replace it. However, if a library has ten or more books overdue for three months with no apparent action to return them, APLS will notify the library that ILL services will be stopped if the books are not returned or replaced within a month.

(d) If a state employee loses a book, he is billed for the current replacement cost of the book if it is in-print. If it is not in-print and an equivalent title can be purchased as a substitute, APLS will bill the employee for the price of the substitute. If no adequate substitute may be purchased, APLS will charge the patron either the original book price or the current average price of a book (either in paperback or hard copy) whichever is higher.

(e) If a state employee fails to pay for a lost book, he will lose use of his library card.

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520-3-1-A

Appendix A - Library Bill Of Rights.

APPENDIX A

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939 by the ALA Council.

Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961;  
June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed  
January 23, 1996.

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**Author:** Nancy C. Pack, Director

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## APPENDIX B

## THE FREEDOM TO READ

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow-citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice.

Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the

books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about

the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one. The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991 by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by: American Library Association & Association of American Publishers

Subsequently Endorsed by:

American Booksellers Association

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression

American Civil Liberties Union

American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith

Association of American University Presses

Children's Book Council

Freedom to Read Foundation

International Reading Association

Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

National Association of College Stores

National Council of Teachers of English

PEN American Center

People for the American Way

Periodical and Book Association of America

Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States

Society of Professional Journalists

Women's National Book Association

The YWCA of the USA

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520-3-1-C

**Appendix C - Alabama's Resident's Request For  
Reconsideration Of Library Material.**

**APPENDIX C**

**ALABAMA RESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF  
LIBRARY MATERIAL**

MATERIAL TYPE:

☐ Book      ☐ Periodical      ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

REQUEST SUBMITTED BY:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you represent:

☐ Self

☐ Organization (name) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Other (name) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are you a state employee?

☐ Yes (Agency: \_\_\_\_\_)      ☐ No

3. Did you borrow this item through another library?

☐ Yes (Library: \_\_\_\_\_)      ☐ No

4. To what in the work do you object? (Please be specific. Cite pages.)

\_\_\_\_\_



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5. Did you read the entire work?    ☐ Yes            ☐ No

If not, what parts?

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6. What do you feel might be the result of reading this work?

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7. What do you believe is the theme of this work?

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8. What would you like your library to do about this work?

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9. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject treated?

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10. For further comment, use space below.

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO: Office of the Director; Alabama Public Library Service; 6030  
Monticello Drive; Montgomery, AL 36130

**Author:** Nancy C. Pack, Director

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