



# MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

## Community Development Department

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## Matanuska-Susitna Borough Libraries Collection Development Policy

### 1. Purpose of Policy

This policy informs and guides library staff, patrons, Borough administrators, and public officials regarding the mission, environment, selection and weeding criteria, reconsideration process, and priorities for collection development within Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Libraries. The policy is reviewed at least every five years by Borough library administrators.

### 2. Community Description

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough is in Southcentral Alaska and spans over 24,000 square miles of diverse terrain including lowlands, mountains, lakes, rivers, and streams. It encompasses parts of the Alaska Range, Chugach Mountains, and the Talkeetna and Clearwater Ranges. Since its incorporation in 1964, the Borough's population has grown steadily. The 2020 U.S. Census recorded 107,081 residents, with projections estimating a population of 130,000 by 2027. The Borough provides library services in the unincorporated areas of Big Lake, Sutton, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, and Willow, outside the cities of Palmer and Wasilla. Each community reflects Alaska's value of independence, and each library maintains a unique identity.

### 3. Mission and Library Goals

The MSB Libraries support the educational, civic, and cultural activities of their communities, as well as the intellectual, creative, and inspirational pursuits of individuals.

To meet community needs, MSB Libraries focus on the following priority areas:

- **Popular Materials Centers:** Offer current materials in various formats to support recreation, education, and remote living.
- **Reference & Community Resource Centers:** Maintain basic reference collections, local/state/federal documents, online resources, and interlibrary loan services.
- **Preschoolers' Doorway to Learning:** Provide early literacy resources including books and multimedia.
- **Support for K–12 Education:** Align collections with school curricula to assist students.
- **Non-Print Materials:** Collect audiovisual and other non-print items aligned with the library mission.
- **Electronic Resources Access:** Provide free filtered internet access, public computers, and links to trusted online databases and government information via the library website.

### 4. Interlibrary Loans

MSB Libraries are members of the Alaska Library Catalog (ALC), allowing material sharing among libraries using a statewide courier and mail system. Patrons can request materials from home or any participating library and choose where to receive them. Libraries also participate in interlibrary loan networks beyond the ALC and are members of the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) network, giving access to nationwide bibliographic resources.

## 5. Material Selection Guidance

The goal of material selection is to acquire resources of current and lasting value. Selection is the responsibility of each library's designated librarian, guided by the following criteria. Materials must demonstrate at least one of the following:

- Relevance to identified community needs
- Suitable subject, format, and reading level
- Timely or historically significant content
- Credibility of author, publisher, or producer
- Favorable professional reviews
- Documented patron or staff interest
- Enhancement of the existing collection
- Strengthening of a targeted collection area
- Limited availability through other lending sources
- Filling gaps in subject coverage
- Local authorship or illustration
- Recognized literary or artistic quality
- Factual accuracy
- Demonstrated or anticipated demand

## 6. Specific Collection Guidelines

- **Adult Collection**  
Includes materials on current and enduring topics, instructional resources, and recreational content that reflect a range of viewpoints.
- **Media Collections (Audio/Video)**  
Provides access to topical and popular materials in various non-print formats, such as DVDs and CDs.
- **Youth Collection (Ages 15 and under)**  
Supports recreational interests and formal education with content appropriate for young users.
- **Young Adult Collection (Ages 16 and up)**  
Offers resources tailored to older teens, supporting both leisure reading and educational needs.
- **Reference Collection**  
Comprises essential print and electronic reference tools. May include high-use items and local history titles to ensure access.
- **Alaskana Collection**  
Focus on items of local significance or relevance. Selection is based on community interest, local authorship, and demand.
- **Periodicals**  
Includes both print and electronic subscriptions designed to provide current information that complements general collections.

## 7. Gifts, Donations, and Memorials

Library Material gifts are subject to administrative approval and may require Borough Administration approval. Donated materials must meet the same criteria as purchased materials. Items not meeting selection standards may be sold or discarded. Monetary donations must be formally accepted by the Borough Assembly prior to expenditure.

## 8. Collection Evaluation and Maintenance

Regular evaluation ensures collections remain current and relevant. Weeding removes outdated, worn, or unused materials using data from the library automation system.

MSB Libraries apply the CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) method and the **MUSTIE** criteria:

- **M**isleading or inaccurate
- **U**gly (physically damaged)
- **S**uperseded by better sources
- **T**rivial or lacking merit
- **I**rrelevant to the community
- **E**lsewhere available through loans

Interlibrary loans remain available for items no longer held locally. Usage statistics help identify future collection areas.

## 9. Material Selection Approval

The nine-member MSB Library Board serves as an advisory body to the Borough Manager and Assembly. The Board evaluates proposed library materials and offers input to enhance transparency and community representation regarding the procurement of new library material.

### Process for Reviewing Proposed Library Material Purchases:

1. **Submission:** Each library submits a list of proposed acquisitions and the list is provided to the Library Board and the public before the Library Board Meeting.
2. **Review:** Board members may review lists in preparation for the upcoming meeting and may 'flag' any material for further consideration. NOTE: Materials not flagged by Board members proceed through standard purchasing.
3. **Reconsideration:** Flagged materials are discussed at the following Board meeting. The requesting member may present a rationale for reconsideration, including citing criteria unmet.
4. **Advisory Vote:** The Board will vote on each flagged title with one of the following outcomes:
  - Approve
  - Request Staff Reconsideration
  - Reject

A simple majority determines the final recommendation.

## 10. Procedure for Reconsideration of Library Materials

MSB Libraries serve residents of all ages by providing access to a wide range of information and viewpoints. Only MSB library cardholders and residents may request reconsideration.

### Process:

1. Patron submits a [Library Material Reconsideration Request](#) form.
2. The Community Development Department notifies the Library Board Chair. The Chair may add the Library Material Reconsideration on a future Library Board agenda.

3. The Library Board may choose to review the material and provide an advisory vote.
4. The Community Development Director reviews and makes the final decision on the Library Material.
5. The decision is valid for three years.

## **11. Conclusion**

MSB library staff are entrusted with the selection and procurement of materials in alignment with this policy. Final authority rests with designated personnel, guided by community needs and professional standards.

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**Jillian Morrissey, Community Development Director**