

Collection Development Policy

Maryland Circuit Court Libraries

(SAMPLE)

I. Introduction

A. Library Mission Statement

The _____ Library serves the legal and law related information needs of the county, including the judges, county officials, members of the Bar and other county residents. The Library cooperates with this community to enhance knowledge of the law and to facilitate access to the justice system.

B. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to guide the Library in the selection, acquisition and retention of materials for the Library and to serve as a plan for the overall development of the collection. The Policy establishes priorities in collection, supplementation and retention.

The Library's acquisitions policies are based on the needs of the Library as well as the needs of the community it serves.

This Policy must grow and change to meet the needs of the Library and its patrons. Accordingly, this Policy will be reviewed and revised as new resources and technologies become available and old ones disappear, and as the needs of the Library and its patrons demand.

II. Collection Development Principles

A. Responsibility for Selection

_____ [*insert here the relevant position title such as Law Librarian, Law Clerk, Court Administrator etc.*] (herein after "Librarian"), in consultation with the Administrative Judge, is responsible for review and selection of materials for purchase. The Librarian will abide by the criteria stated in these guidelines. The Librarian will welcome suggestions and recommendations from the public and legal community.

B. Selection Criteria

The focus of the Library's collection will be to provide the materials its patrons need and use for their day-to-day research needs.

The following will be considered when evaluating materials for acquisition:

- Potential use, including frequency of use
- Patron request for materials
- The collection objectives of the Library as reflected in this Policy
- Whether the materials bring unique coverage to the collection in the subject area, add depth to an otherwise shallow area of coverage, or duplicate existing Library materials
- Reputations of the author or editor and the publisher or producer
- Currency of coverage
- Current and permanent value, including consideration of whether the materials will be updated
- Availability of alternative formats or sources
- Cost, including continuing and indirect costs
- Format and technical support
- Physical quality
- Available space

C. Current Materials vs. Retrospective Materials

The Library will generally purchase only current materials. However, the Library will purchase retrospective materials to replace older materials missing from essential core collections.

D. Selective Supplementation

Supplementation to all Maryland materials, primary materials, and secondary materials that are heavily used or likely to undergo significant changes during the year are acquired according to publishers' schedules.

Supplementation to other secondary materials may be cancelled at the discretion of the Librarian, following prescribed procedures. The decision of whether to retain lapsed secondary materials shall be made in accordance with the specific retention guidelines in Section L of this Policy.

E. Format Selection

In general, the Library will acquire information in the most effective and efficient format, including print-based (books and periodicals), computer-based (databases and digital publications), or microform materials. In some instances, this Policy specifies that materials will be acquired in print.

Materials formerly available only in paper or microform are increasingly made available through computerized resources. When materials are available in both print and computerized media, the decision to purchase one format or the other, or both, is based on frequency of need, convenience of use, the need for multiple access points, and price. In choosing a format, the Library will also consider the selection criteria above.

The availability of a resource through an online service will be a significant factor in determining whether the Library will acquire the resource in hard copy, as well as the number of copies of the print resource that will be acquired.

F. Duplication and Multiple Copies

Multiple copies and duplication of resources will be avoided unless there is a clear and demonstrated need.

G. Languages

Generally, selection will be based on a preference for materials in languages appropriate for the Library's intended patrons.

H. Gifts and Donations

The Library welcomes offers of gifts of books and other materials that may, in the discretion of the Librarian and Administrative Judge, contribute to the development of its collection and services and are consistent with the collection guidelines in this Policy. Gifts to the Library are considered outright and unrestricted donations to be used without restrictions by the donor. The Library reserves the right to use the gift in any appropriate way for the support of the Library, and may dispose of gift items at any time and in any manner deemed appropriate.

I. Collection Development by Jurisdiction

The Library will use as its guideline for the acquisition of jurisdictional materials the following documents:

- Proposed Minimum Standards for Maryland County Public Law Libraries (Appendix C of the Circuit Court Libraries Study Committee Report, February 2001)
- Recommended Maryland Treatises for Maryland County Law Libraries

The materials listed in the above documents are recommended as the basis of a strong county law library collection. The list should not be used to limit the scope or growth of a collection that meets or exceeds the standards.

J. Collection Development by Subject

The subject area priorities for collection development are dictated by the extent to which items in a particular subject area are used.

K. Weeding and Retention

“Weeding” is the process through which materials are removed and withdrawn from the Library’s collection. Generally, the Library will remove from its collection obsolete or outdated materials (that have little historical or research value), worn out or extensively damaged materials (that will also be considered for repurchase), and surplus copies of materials no longer in high demand. Weeding determinations are based on the following factors:

- Frequency of use of the material by Library patrons
- Whether the material is outdated and of little or no historical value
- Whether the material is duplicated in another text or service, or is a duplicate copy of a work already held by the Library
- Whether the material is in a physical form of lasting value
- Whether the material is available in another format for archival purposes
- Whether the material is considered an authoritative work
- Whether the material is of direct interest to Maryland attorneys and legal researchers
- The degree to which the material fits the selection and retention criteria of this Policy

L. Specific Retention Guidelines

- i. Codes, session laws and ordinances
 - Superseded volumes of the Annotated Code of Maryland are kept permanently.
 - All other states’ code volumes are discarded when replaced by the publisher
 - Superseded volumes of the United States Code are discarded when replaced by the publisher
 - Replaced pages and superseded editions of the _____ County Code and/or Ordinances are kept permanently
 - Superseded volumes of the Code of Federal Regulations and Federal Register are discarded
 - Uniform building and housing codes are kept permanently
 - Laws of Maryland, House and Senate journals, Maryland legislative bills, and annual legislative reports are kept at the discretion of the Librarian, taking into account policies above
- ii. Reporters
 - Maryland Reports and Maryland Appellate Reports are kept permanently
 - Maryland Advance Sheets are discarded as replaced with bound volumes

- Federal reporters are retained at the discretion of the Librarian, taking into account policies above
- iii. Court Rules and Sentencing Guidelines
- Maryland and local rules of court are kept permanently
 - Federal court rules are kept permanently
 - Federal and state sentencing guidelines are kept permanently
- iv. Legal Treatises and Continuing Legal Education Materials
- Superseded treatise volumes are not kept, with the following exception: Maryland continuing legal education materials are discarded after 10 years
 - Lapsed treatise materials are reviewed after three years, but may be retained as necessary to fill a subject gap in the collection. These materials will be clearly marked “no longer updated”.
 - Lapsed looseleaf services are discarded when the subscription period ends. Transfer binders and case books are kept permanently
 - Newsletters and other explanatory materials which accompany looseleaf services are discarded after one year, or once the material is represented in other Library publications
- v. Other Materials
- Materials specific to Maryland published by a department, branch, or other public governmental entity may be retained
- vi. Law Journals, Periodicals and Newspapers
- Maryland law reviews are kept permanently
 - Newspapers are kept for 6 months
 - County bar publications are kept permanently
- vii. Directories
- Martindale-Hubbell volumes will be discarded as replaced
 - County Bar Association directories are kept permanently. All other directories are discarded when replaced with a revised volume, or reviewed after a lapse of 3 years.

M. Superseded Policies

This policy supersedes any and all earlier policies adopted by the _____ Library.

N. Review and Revision

This Policy will be reviewed and revised as new resources and technologies become available and old ones disappear, and as the needs of the Library and its patrons demand.

Date of adoption: _____