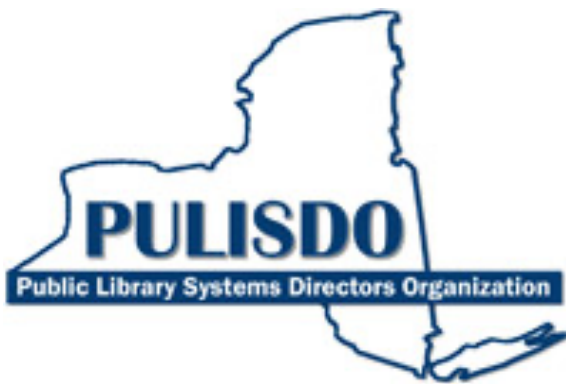


# Public Library Collection Management Policy Template and Guide

Presented by:



Empire State  
Library Network

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This "Public Library Collection Management Policy Template and Guide" (the "Template & Guide") is maintained by ESLN and PULISDO to assist NY Regents-chartered public libraries as they assess, develop and/or maintain a policy covering all aspects of collection management, including: selection, procurement, cataloging, evaluation, and removal. Areas in grey are spaces where the user should add the library's unique information. **DRAFTING NOTES** are noted in separately outlined boxes. **Footnotes and drafting notes are for guidance and should not be in a library's final version of the policy.** To the greatest extent possible, a final version based on this "Template & Guide" should be reviewed by the library's attorney for consistency with its charter, bylaws, other policies, and Plan of Service, before being adopted by trustees. For an unannotated version, contact your public library system director.

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## Introduction to this resource

This annotated "Public Library Collection Management Policy Template and Guide" (the "Template & Guide") is brought to you by the Empire State Library Network (ESLN) and Public Library System Directors' Organization (PULISDO).

Collection management is a critical consideration for any library. The selection, maintenance, and (sometimes) disposal of collection materials is at the heart of a library's service to its community.

The purpose of this document is to provide New York's public libraries with a step-by-step framework and annotated guidance for updating--or adopting for the first time--a clear policy covering all phases of collection management, from selection, to procurement, to cataloging, to removal.

Drafted by a lawyer, but reviewed and tested by seasoned public library directors, the step-by-step approach of the Template & Guide is based on a holistic view of collection management, giving each phase of the life-cycle of library materials due consideration and specific policy.

This "holistic approach" is not just about the practicalities of selecting and managing collection materials. The model language in this "Template and Guide" is rooted in New York's firm commitment to libraries as the guardians of intellectual freedom. From that ethical and legal foundation, its model language and drafting guidance are based on the state laws and regulations that create and empower local and regional libraries and systems in New York. And over-arching all of that, are consideration of both free speech and due process as assured by both the state and federal constitutions.

And at every stage of the collection management process, the Template & Guide confirms the critical roles of those involved: the precise responsibilities of library trustees to develop and uphold policy, the authority of library directors to determine and apply collection criteria, and the obligation of library employees to ensure access to all library users.

Through footnotes and clear drafting guidance (both of which should be removed in any final adopted version), this document helps a public library board and director--and their attorney--consider not only the "how," but the "why," of having a policy governing every phase of collection management.

That said, this "Template & Guide" is not intended as a substitute for informed, meaningful, and community-focused discussion about collection management among

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library leadership. Rather, we hope this annotated "Template & Guide" will aid and inform those discussions...enabling library leadership to quickly, but thoughtfully, take action during times of questions or challenge of library materials.

Above all, we hope this "Library Collection Management Policy Template and Guide" is helpful. As with any resource put forward by ESLN and PULISDO, we invite further analysis and commentary through a form on the "Ask the Lawyer" webpage (<https://www.wnylrc.org/ask-the-lawyer/resources>), and if the materials have proven useful to your library, we hope to hear that, too. For an unannotated version, contact your public library system director.

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## Public Library Collection Management Policy Template & Guide

### **FIRST DRAFTING NOTE:**

As you will see below, the document is in the form of a policy, with annotations and footnotes **that should be removed in the final version.**

Public libraries using this document are free to use it internally however they wish, but it is designed to be reviewed by the board passing it on a routine basis, so trustees and directors have a shared vocabulary and ethical foundation for collection management considerations.

As you review the template policy, you will see it makes use of "Appendices" for the actual collection criteria to be applied, an approach that allows the criteria to be updated by the Director *without the need for the board to amend the entire policy.*

This approach--an established policy, with malleable appendices--is so a library can maintain a strong, clear board-approved framework for collection management (the policy), but identify and apply management criteria that is responsive to the evolving needs of a community (the appendices).

A suggested process for adopting a policy based on this document is:

1. The board reviews the model policy and discusses it at a board meeting, paying close attention to the definitions and the footnotes that explain them;
2. The board identifies an ad hoc "collection management policy committee" to work with the director on a final version for board approval;
3. The director prepares the appendices to be included with the first adopted version;
4. The ad hoc committee and director meet to prepare a final draft; if this model policy is used, all items in grey are updated to reflect the library's information;
5. The board reviews the final version (if the board wishes, it may have a public hearing to get feedback on the policy, but **that is not required**);
6. The board adopts the policy via resolution;
7. The director and designated staff update the appendices as needed, publishing a current copy in the manner the library's other public-facing policies are maintained;
8. Board reviews policy at least once every 5 years, or as needed.

And with that, here is the template policy:

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<p>LIBRARY NAME <b>Collection Management Policy</b></p>	<p><b>Authority responsible for passing and revising policy:</b> Board of Trustees<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Authority responsible for updating appendices as needed:</b> Director</p>
<p><b>Date adopted:</b> DRAFT</p>	<p><b>Most recent review by the board of trustees conducted on:</b> DATE</p> <p><b>Most recent update of appendices done on:</b> DATE</p>

**I. Purpose**

This "Collection Management Policy" (the "Policy") sets the NAME Library's policy and procedures governing:

- Selection
- Procurement
- Cataloging
- Evaluation
- Removal

of "Library Resources" as defined in this Policy.

The purpose of this Policy is to position the Library to assure its community, and relevant oversight authorities,<sup>2</sup> that the Library's collection management practices meet the needs of the community served by the Library, uphold the Library's mission, and comply with relevant law and regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> While the Library's Director will have primary responsibility for ensuring the policy is followed, adopting and periodically updating a Collection Management Policy is the responsibility of a library's board of trustees. Developing and, as needed, revising the precise criteria for selection, cataloging and removal are the responsibility of the Director and/or designated employees.

<sup>2</sup> "Oversight Authorities" means the New York State Education Department and on occasion, the New York Attorney General and the New York State Comptroller.

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## II. Definitions

Because the management of Library Resources by a NY Regents-chartered library is controlled by law, regulation, and Regents' policy, this Policy uses the following precise terms, drawn from those laws and regulations, to define specific concepts critical to orderly and compliant collection management:

**(the) Library:** The NAME Library, which is a [insert library type] chartered by the Regents in [year].

**(the) Charter:** The most recent version of the document that creates the Library, as approved by the Regents.<sup>3</sup>

**Area of Service**<sup>4</sup>: The precise, geographically-defined community served by the library, as described in its Charter and Plan of Service and any contractual or policy arrangements.<sup>5</sup>

**Trustees (or the "Board"):** The members of the Library's governing board, responsible for setting Library policy and hiring the Library [Director].<sup>6</sup>

**Library Director**<sup>7</sup>: The professional hired by the Trustees to lead the library and supervise all other library employees. The minimum qualifications of a library director are set by 8 NYCRR 90.8, and include educational and continuing education requirements set by 8 NYCRR 90.7.

**Library Resources:** As defined by 8 NYCRR 90.3, "Library Resources" means "the print and nonprint materials owned by the library and any other services provided by the library to the resident borrowers of the Library's Area of Service." In this Policy, Library Resources held by the Library are collectively referred to as the "**Catalog**" or "**Collection Materials**."

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<sup>3</sup> The exclusive authority of the Regents to charter libraries is created by the NY Education Law, Article V.

<sup>4</sup> This definition of "Area of Service" is taken from 8 NYCRR 90.2.

<sup>5</sup> Per the NY Education Law, public libraries can also offer services per contract with a municipality or district.

<sup>6</sup> The authority and responsibilities of library trustees are set by: the NY Education Law, the NY Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, and the NY Public Officers Law. Indian libraries (as defined by the NY Education Law) should also consider the impact of tribal authority.

<sup>7</sup> This job title can vary; in some places, it is "Library Manager" or "Executive Director." When a Library adopts this Template, throughout the policy, the job title "Director" should be changed to conform to the title of the employee with ultimate administrative responsibility.



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**Collection Management:** The overall term for the selection, procurement, cataloging, evaluation, and removal of Library Resources.<sup>8</sup>

**Selection [of Library Resources]:** The process by which Library Resources are chosen by Library staff (see "Selection Criteria" below), based on the Library's budget and through use of vetted materials.<sup>9</sup>

**Selection Criteria:** The criteria determined by the Director and other Library staff, based on the goals and identified community needs in the Library's Long-Range Plan adopted by the Board, that must be met by the Collection.<sup>10</sup>

**Procurement:** The process by which selected Library Resources are purchased. Procurement is governed by a combination of law, regulation, and Library policies, including: [insert name(s) of fiscal and procurement-related policy/ies].<sup>11</sup> For certain purchases, it may also be governed by grant terms required by funding sources.

**Cataloging:** The process by which purchased items are formally added into the Library's collection. "Cataloging" includes how selected materials are listed in the [insert specific catalog resources, such as ILS] and in what section of the Library they are placed (where they are "shelved").<sup>12</sup>

**Evaluation:** The process by which collection materials are periodically reviewed to ensure they remain physically intact, relevant, and meet "community needs" as required by 8 NYCRR 90.2(6).

**Request for Re-Evaluation**<sup>13</sup>: The formal process by which any trustee, library employee, or individual served by the Library [either by residing in the Area of Service,

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<sup>8</sup> The term "Collection Management" is not based on law, but rather on usage within the library and information management professions. If a Library Director has strong feelings about using another term, that is appropriate.

<sup>9</sup> There is no firm list of "vetted materials" but book reviews, journal articles, and other peer-reviewed publications are typically relied upon to select Collection Materials.

<sup>10</sup> The term "Selection Criteria" is not based on law, but rather on usage within the library and information management professions; however, the requirements that collections meet community needs is set forth in 8 NYCRR 90.2(6).

<sup>11</sup> Procurement by public libraries must follow the requirements of the General Municipal Law; this is a frequent point of attention in public library audits conducted by the New York State Comptroller. However, maintaining and ensuring the Library is abiding by a regularly reviewed set of fiscal controls and procurement procedures is a primary responsibility of all library boards of trustees, regardless of library type.

<sup>12</sup> The term "cataloging", in this context, is used by 8 NYCRR 90.2(10).

<sup>13</sup> This Template uses "request for re-evaluation"; other common terms are "re-consideration" or "challenge." "Re-Evaluation" is used, since "evaluation" is a term used by 8 NYCRR 190.2(6).



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or being served by the INSERT Library System<sup>14</sup>] may request re-evaluation of a Library Resource being included in the Library's Catalog, per the library's Selection Criteria.

**Long-Range Plan:** A community needs-based, board-approved, written long-range plan of service developed by the Library Trustees and staff. As required by 8 NYCRR 90.2, the Library's Long-Range Plan includes the goals and identified community needs that must be met by the Library's Collection.

**Annual Report (to community):** An annual report to the Library's community setting forth the Library's progress in meeting its mission, goals, and objectives, as outlined in the library's Long-Range Plan. This requirement became law in 2021.

**Annual Report (to Education Department):** An annual report to the State Education Department, required by 8 NYCRR 90.1 and the NY Education Department's Division of Library Development.

**Record Retention Period:** How long different records pertaining to actions under this Collection Management Policy are retained, after which they are purged. [**Choose:** As a public library, the Library follows the record retention periods in the LGS-1.<sup>15</sup> **OR** As the Library is an association library, the Trustees set this policy.]

**Donated Materials:** Books or other materials that are donated to the Library. These items are not immediately added to the Collection; they are evaluated according to the same Selection Criteria that are applied to purchased material. Donated Materials which do not meet the library's Selection Criteria will be disposed of at the discretion of the Library.<sup>16</sup>

**Accession:** "Accession" is a term not defined by law or regulation in New York, but is used by libraries, museums, and archives to refer to collection development where the origins ("provenance") of the item is relevant. As noted in the LGS-1, "*some libraries accession manuscripts, rare books and special collections, but not their general library holdings.*" This policy does not address "accession"; if your library has a collection of rare items and/or archives, it should be governed by a separate policy.

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<sup>14</sup> A library should be very careful regarding who is qualified to bring a challenge; this Template bases such status as on either a) having a library card or b) residing in the Area of Service. A library should review its enabling legislation, charter, and bylaws before finalizing this aspect of a policy, to see if either document speaks to this issue.

<sup>15</sup> The retention periods listed in the rest of this Template are from the LGS-1, which applies only to public libraries. For association libraries that do not have a written records retention policy, however, these retention periods can be a default retention period, if the Library can adhere to them.

<sup>16</sup> This definition should be coordinated with any policy the Library has for receiving donations. If helpful, the Library can also add "Per IRS regulations, persons donating materials who wish a tax deduction must supply their own appraisal."

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### III. Collection Management

#### A. Selection

The Selection Criteria of the Library, as informed by the Long-Range Plan approved by the Trustees, are attached as Appendix "A."

Selection Criteria are set by the Director.

Selection Criteria are maintained as a schedule to enable ease of amendment and flexibility with respect to evolving community needs.

It is expected, but not required, that Selection Criteria as set forth in Appendix "A" may be updated more frequently than this Policy. Such revision does not require approval by the Board.

**Records management:** records pertaining to Selection of Library Resources are kept for 0 years after no longer needed (see LGS-1 #600).

#### B. Procurement

The Procurement of selected Library Resources by the Library is governed by the Library's [insert policy name]<sup>17</sup> policy.

At all times, the Director and the Board distinguish between Selection and Procurement. "Selection" is how Library Materials are chosen; "Procurement" is how they are purchased using library funds (for example, Donated Materials are not procured).

**Records management:** records pertaining to Procurement of Library Resources are kept for 1 year (see LGS-1 #599).

#### C. Cataloging

The procedures for Cataloging the Collection of the Library, as informed by the Library's Long-Range Plan, are attached as Appendix "B."

The procedures for Cataloging are set by the Director, as informed by the Long-Range Plan approved by the Trustees, and the Director's familiarity with current relevant standards as set by the Library and the library and information management profession.

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<sup>17</sup> Typically, this is called a "Procurement Policy", but other names, such as "Purchasing Policy", or "Requisition Policy" are common. The important thing is that it sets out the fiscal and operational procedure for buying Library Resources and meets the NYS Comptroller's standards for internal fiscal controls.

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The procedures for Cataloging are maintained as a Schedule to enable ease of amendment and flexibility to evolving community needs.

It is expected, but not required, that the procedures for Cataloging may be updated more frequently than this Policy. Such revision does not require approval by the Board.

As required by 8 NYCRR 90.2, the Library provides a circulation system that facilitates access to the Library's Collection as cataloged after selected materials are acquired.

**Records management:** As the final cataloging is set out in the Catalog, records pertaining to the procedures for Cataloging are kept for 0 years (see LGS-1 #62). Printed manuscript or published library catalogs are kept permanently; continuously updated library catalogs (such as databases) are kept until updated (see LGS-1 #598).

## D. Evaluation

### 1. Routine Evaluation

As required by 8 NYCRR 90.2(6), Library Resources in the Library's Collection are routinely evaluated to ensure the Collection meets community needs; to ensure routine evaluation, the Library Director oversees such evaluation per the schedule attached as Appendix "C."

The Director reports to the Board on the routine evaluation of Library Resources not less than annually.<sup>18</sup>

Routine evaluation decisions are often affected through a process referred to as "Weeding" the Library's procedures for Weeding are included in Appendix "C."

**Records management:** records pertaining to Routine Evaluation are kept for 0 years after no longer needed (see LGS-1 #600).

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<sup>18</sup> The law and regulations do not require a set timeline, but since the Library must submit an annual report to the community regarding the library's progress in meeting its mission, goals and objectives, and an annual report to the NY Education Department, an annual report on routine evaluation is a good default routine. This does not mean every item in a library's collection is evaluated on an annual basis, but rather that some meaningful pattern of evaluation is established.

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## 2. Request for Re-Evaluation

A trustee, employee, or person served by the Library (a "Request-Maker")<sup>19</sup> may request that the Selection or Cataloging of a Library Resource or Resources be re-considered.

To initiate a Request for Re-Evaluation, the Request-Maker may fill in the "Request for Re-Evaluation" form attached as "D." **Only the factors listed in the form are a suitable basis for a filing such a request.**

The procedure for removal based on a Request for Re-Evaluation is addressed in Section VII, C of this Policy.

Materials shall generally only be subject to Re-Evaluation under this sub-section "2" once every 5 years. For repeat requests within 5 years, unless the Selection Criteria have changed with respect to the subject Materials, the prior determination shall be supplied.

**Records management:** records pertaining to a Request for Re-Evaluation are kept for 6 years (see LGS-1 #601). In addition, also per the LGS-1 #601, because such records deal with serious constitutional issues and may have value for future research, the Library shall appraise such records for historical significance prior to disposition.

## E. Removal

Per Education Law Section 260, "*prior to the discarding of used or surplus books or other such reading materials by trustees of a chartered public, cooperative or free association library which receives over ten thousand dollars in state aid, the Trustees shall offer to donate such books or materials to a not-for-profit corporation or political subdivision located within the area of the library system or offer to sell such books or materials to the general public.*" Also as required by law, the Trustees shall retain any proceeds received from the sale of such books and materials for the purpose of maintaining and improving library service within the system.

### 1. Removal of damaged or technologically obsolete items

Upon finding that a Library Resource is too damaged to be useful or has become technologically obsolete to the point where it can no longer function in the manner intended, the item will be removed from the Collection.

<sup>19</sup> This section and the definition of "Request for Re-evaluation" should be conformed, based on your Library's decision about who can bring a Request for Re-Evaluation. It is wise to allow at least card holders, trustees, and employees (those with an established relationship with the Library) to bring a Request. For more on that, see the training video that accompanies this Template & Guide.

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**Records management:** records pertaining to Removal of damaged or technologically obsolete items are kept for 0 years (see LGS-1 #600).

## 2. Removal based on Routine Evaluation

Upon finding, after Routine Evaluation, that a Library Resource no longer meets the then-current Selection Criteria (see Appendix "A") of the Library, the item will be removed from the Collection.

**Records management:** records pertaining to Removal based on Routine Evaluation are kept for 0 years (see LGS-1 #600).

## 3. Removal based on Request for Re-Evaluation

If a "Request for Re-Evaluation" form is properly submitted and either the Director, or the Board of Trustees upon appeal, determine that the Library Resource it pertains to should be removed from the Collection, it will be removed from the Collection and the Catalog by the Director (or their designee).

All Requests for Re-Evaluation will be evaluated per the Library's Plan of Service, this Policy, and the following excerpts from the American Library Association's Code of Ethics:

*I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.*

*II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.*

*VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.*

*VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.*

Decisions shall be communicated using the Appendices "E", "F", and "G", with modifications as determined by the issuing authority.

**Records management:** records pertaining to Removal based on Requests for Re-Evaluation are kept for 6 years (see LGS-1 #601) and may be kept longer based on a determination of operational or historic significance.

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#### **IV. Access to this Policy**

To facilitate community understanding of the Library's services, operations, and governance, this Policy and its Appendices shall be posted on the Library's website, available in hard copy at the Library, and a copy shall be provided when a person or authority inquires or raises a concern related to Collection Management.<sup>20</sup>

#### **V. Review and Update of this Policy**

This board-approved written policy for Collection Management shall be reviewed and updated by the Trustees at least once every five years (as required by 8 NYCRR 90.3 (b)(4), OR earlier if required by law, OR if a law, regulation, or policy impacting it changes.

#### **Table of Appendices and Authorities**

Appendices	<p>Appendix A: Library's Selection Criteria</p> <p>Appendix B: Library's Cataloging Procedures</p> <p>Appendix C: Library's Routine Evaluation of Collection Materials Schedule &amp; Procedures</p> <p>Appendix D: Library's Request for Re-Evaluation Form and Procedure</p> <p>Appendix E: Template for Director Determination of Request for Re-Evaluation</p> <p>Appendix F: Template for Board Resolution pertaining to Trustees' Determination of Appeal of Request for Re-Evaluation</p> <p>Appendix G: Template for Trustees' Determination of Appeal of Request for Re-Evaluation</p>
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<sup>20</sup> This section is to meet the requirements of 8 NYCRR 90.2 (11). Further, this is part of ensuring community members appreciate that selection of library materials must be based on the needs of the entire community, is governed by a process, and is not made based on arbitrary factors.

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<p>Related policies and documents</p>	<p>Charter &amp; Bylaws</p> <p>Library Director Job Description</p> <p>Library's Procurement Policy</p> <p>System Member Agreement and System's Collection-related policies (for example, ILS services)</p> <p>ALA Code of Ethics</p> <p>NYLA Code of Ethics</p> <p>System Code of Ethics</p> <p>Library Code of Ethics</p>
<p>Controlling laws and regulations</p>	<p>New York Education Law Title I, Article 5, Part 2</p> <p>8 NYCRR 90.1, 90.2, and 90.3</p>

**Appendix "A"**

[INSERT Library's Selection Criteria]

**Appendix "B"**

[INSERT Library's Cataloging Procedures]

**Appendix "C"**

[INSERT Library's Routine Evaluation of Collection Materials Schedule & Procedures]



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## Appendix "D"

### Form to Request Re-Evaluation of Library Resource

This Request for Re-Evaluation is governed by the Library's Collection Management Policy and the Library's current procedures for Selection and Cataloging.

For current copies of these documents, visit ADDRESS or ask at PLACE for a copy.

To initiate a Re-Evaluation of a Library Resource, please fill out the form and follow the instructions below:

NAME	
Address	
Library Card #	
Catalog # of Material of Concern	
Title of Work	
Basis of Concern (select all that apply):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Does not meet current Selection Criteria</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Improperly Cataloged (please note specific issue)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Does not fall within needs of community</li> </ul>
Please include any comments you would like the Library to consider:	Comments:
Date submitting form:	
Signature:	

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## Instructions and process:

Please only list **one work** per form.

Please submit this form by either emailing it to INSERT, mailing it to INSERT, or faxing it to INSERT.

Your submission will be reviewed by the Library Director within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt.

You will receive a response in writing that indicates either:

a) your request for Re-Evaluation has been evaluated and no change is required;

OR

b) your request has been evaluated by the Library and the Selection or Cataloging of the item will be changed, which shall be briefly described in the reply.

If the Library determines that no action is needed, and you disagree, you may appeal this determination within fourteen (14) calendar days by submitting a copy of your original Request, and the Director's reply, together with statement saying "I request an appeal" to the Board of Trustees by either email to INSERT, fax to INSERT, or USPS to INSERT.

The Board of Trustees is an all-volunteer organization that meets no less than 4 times per year.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, any appeal regarding a Request for Re-Evaluation will be finalized within sixty (60) days. Any material under review will remain in circulation until such time as the Library determines it must be removed.

All Requests for Re-Evaluation will be evaluated per the Library's Plan of Service, policies, and the following excerpts from: [**Choose:** the American Library Association's Code of Ethics **OR** applicable code of ethics for the Library's specific community]

*I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.*

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<sup>21</sup> As required by Education Law 260-A.

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*II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.*

*VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.*

*VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.*

**The Board of Trustees' determination is final.<sup>22</sup>**

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<sup>22</sup> It is important to note this, since it must be understood by a municipality's leadership, or a local DA, that the Board is the final authority.

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## Appendix "E"

### Request for Re-Evaluation of Library Resource Form for Notice of Director's determination

Request for Re-Evaluation of Library Resource  
Notice of Director's determination made on DATE  
Regarding Request for Re-Evaluation of  
TITLE, CATALOG NUMBER  
Submitted on: DATE

**RE: Notice of Director's Determination**

Dear NAME:

The NAME Library received your above-referenced Request for Re-Evaluation on DATE.

In evaluating your request, I as Library Director have applied the Library's Collection Management Policy, its Long-Range Plan of Service, and the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association.

Based on that criteria, I have determined that [the Library Resource was properly included in the Library's collection] **OR** [the Library Resource was not properly included in the Library's collection, and will be removed/re-cataloged as INSERT].

The NAME Library strives to meet the needs of everyone in the community, as required by our Long-Range Plan of Service. If you would like to appeal this determination, you may direct your appeal to the Board of Trustees care of NAME at ADDRESS.

Sincerely,

NAME  
Director,  
NAME Library

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## Appendix "F"

### Template for Board of Trustees' Resolution pertaining to Trustees' Determination of Appeal of Request for Re-Evaluation

#### **DRAFTING NOTE:**

A board should take as much time as needed to make a careful, informed decision about a Request for Re-evaluation. The board should give ample time to consult with the Director, to review the Plan of Service, to consider the current Selection Criteria, and to factor in the ethics of the ALA and their oaths of office.

That said, unless the board determines a basis upon which to consider the appeal in Executive Session (for instance, if legal action has been threatened, or the request includes a complaint about personnel), **the complete discussion of the appeal must be conducted at a meeting as required by the Open Meetings Law.**<sup>23</sup>

Regardless of what needs to be discussed during Executive Session, any final vote regarding a decision must be conducted in a manner open to the public.

Text of resolution once decision has been reached:

**WHEREAS** the Board timely received an appeal of the Director's decision attached to this resolution from NAME OF REQUEST-MAKER; and

**WHEREAS** the Board has evaluated the appeal by applying the factors in the Library's Collection Management Policy, its Long-Range Plan of Service, and the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the appeal is [granted, and the item it pertains to is to be removed by the Director per library policy within 5 business days, and the Board shall notify the Request-Maker of this decision within 5 calendar days] **OR** [denied, and the Board shall notify the Request-Maker of this determination within 5 calendar days] as provided by the Library's Collection Management Policy; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Board re-affirms its commitment to New York State Constitution, the United States Constitution, and the American Library Association Code of Ethics, as adopted by the New York Library Association.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

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<sup>23</sup> As required by Education Law 260-a.

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## Appendix "G"

### Request for Re-Evaluation of Library Resource Notice of Board Determination of Appeal of Decision made on DATE Regarding TITLE, CATALOG NUMBER

RE: Notice of Library Board of Trustees' Determination upon Appeal

Dear NAME:

The board of trustees of NAME Library received your above-referenced appeal on DATE. On DATE, the Board met to consider your appeal.

In evaluating your request, the board applied the Library's Collection Management Policy, its Long-Range Plan of Service, and the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association.

Based on that criteria, the board has determined that [the Library Resource was properly included in the Library's collection] **OR** [the Library Resource was not properly included in the Library's collection, and will be removed/re-cataloged].

Thank you for entrusting the board of trustees with your concerns. The NAME Library strives to meet the needs of everyone in the community, and this requires careful attention to the needs of all, and the many factors governing selection of library materials.

Your understanding of, and input into, that process is appreciated.<sup>24</sup>

Sincerely,

NAME  
President,  
NAME Library Board of Trustees

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<sup>24</sup> This letter is designed to recite all the due process the Library Board of Trustees gave to its consideration of the decision. Once a Request for Re-Evaluation has proceeded to this stage, if at all possible, the library's attorney should advise on the final form of the letter.

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### **FINAL DRAFTING NOTE:**

This Template & Guide has a lot in it, but in many ways, it only scratches the surface of public library collection management. This is particularly true with respect to "requests for re-evaluation", sometimes referred to as "challenges".

This Template & Guide does not address the care, advocacy, community work, and partnerships needed to carry a public library community through a materials "challenge". Fortunately, there are many excellent resources from ALA, NYLA, ESLN, and others that *do* address those considerations. And when those excellent resources say "first, check your policies" *these* are the "policies" being referred to.

This Template & Guide is being released in June 2022. As it was being written, the number of "challenges" throughout the country, including in New York, was on the rise, and all signs pointed to the increase not being a short-lived phenomenon.

Further, since the ability to raise concerns regarding the operation of a public institution, in an orderly way, is inherently democratic, it is something a public library should be ready for, at all times. Hopefully, this Template & Guide will help with your preparation.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge, in a tool created for library leadership, the critical importance of taking care of a library's *people* (its employees and trustees) during a Request for Re-Evaluation. "Challenges" directed at collection materials can be stressful...particularly if the objection is somehow personal. Therefore, even though not mentioned in the template policy, at all phases of a "challenge", the well-being of a library's team is a critical consideration...even when the processes set out in this "Template & Guide" are long over.

I would like to thank Sheryl Knab, Executive Director at the Western New York Library Resources Council, and Sarah Glogowski, Chair of the Public Library Systems Directors Organization, for taking action when it was clear there was a need for this type of resource to be made available to New York's public libraries. And many thanks to the "testers" (listed on the cover), who helped revise and refine the document along the way.

Please let us know if the document has been helpful, and any suggestions you have for improvement. We get better together.

Best regards,

Stephanie A. Adams, Esq.  
Author