

---

PROCEDURES MANUAL

---

Subject: DESELECTION (WEEDING) OF  
MATERIALS / RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: June 2005

Review Date: June 2009

Prepared By: Reference Manager

Approval: Barbara S. Custen  
Library Director

---

**POLICY:**

Deselection or "weeding" is an essential component of collection management. Staff engaged in the weeding process are involved with a continuous collection review process which supports the Riverside Public Library collection development and the current Materials Selection Policy.

To meet customer needs and expectations the collection is systematically weeded to deselect inaccurate or outdated information, materials which are obsolete, in poor physical condition, no longer in demand or superseded, and for space considerations. Lack of use is the most practical criterion for deselecting an item. Past use is generally considered the best single indicator of future use although other factors such as an item's intrinsic quality or value may be taken into consideration.

This ongoing collection review process increases the availability of shelf space for current and future growth of the collection. An effective deselection process allows materials to be reshelfed quickly and provides the public with access to an up-to-date collection.

Deselection guidelines apply to the entire collection regardless of classification, category or whether acquired by purchase, gift or as a donation. Collection "maintenance" should not be used to bias the collection in favor of or against any one viewpoint nor should materials be removed solely on public pressure or demand.

Staff members responsible for deselection make informed decisions based on a combination of subject expertise, the RPL Materials Selection Policy, collection development principles and standard "weeding" guidelines such as the Crew Method. Staff may weed duplicates, weed from the reference collection to the circulating collection, from the circulating collection to a special collection or transfer to another branch site.

Refer to the current RPL Materials Selection Policy for more detailed considerations.

**CATALOGED COLLECTION**

The Library's goals and programs, customer base and collections and space availability along with the nature, relevancy to the Library's programs, format and physical characteristics of the material determine the criteria for deselection. Deselection decisions should be made on an ongoing basis as prescribed in the collection development policy section for withdrawal. Withdrawn materials may be offered to another institution, sold or discarded as prescribed by policy. Failure to deselect materials can diminish the value, vitality and viability of a collection.

---

PROCEDURES MANUAL

---

Lack of use is the most practical criterion for deselection measured by objective use data although subjective professional assessments by librarians and specialists are also taken into consideration. Deselection decisions are made title by title and in appropriate consultation with subject specialists.

The qualitative criteria used for deselecting materials can include the following:

- lack of relevance to customer interest
- lack of conformance to program needs
- lack of intrinsic merit
- lack of reference, historical or critical value
- reduced significance due to form, age or subject
- out of collection scope due to obsolete esoteric information or theme

## PERIODICALS COLLECTION

The Riverside Public Library maintains a popular magazine collection to meet the browsing and recreational interests of customers of all ages. The Main Library and branches offer a variety of general interest magazines including hobby, sports and recreational topics with wide appeal. A standard core collection of children's magazines is also maintained at every branch.

Branches may add unique titles for their individual collection based on the varying interests or recommendations of customers or to test the popularity of new titles. The latest issues of each subscription are available for browsing and back issues are available for checkout only at the branches. Back issues are only available for retrieval and browsing at the Main Library. Subscriptions are reviewed annually by Librarians and Branch Managers based on the renewal calendar.

General information needs such as for school assignments are met by the library's online full-text periodical databases and from microform back files. Periodical information at various reading levels is also available through Internet connections.

The most recent three months of local and general newspapers are collected at every branch. Specialized, employment, investment and business newspapers and back files are available. Newspapers are weeded continually to keep within space constraints. The Library also receives free publications which may be displayed for browsing by customers. These free publications are "weeded" as soon as the next issue arrives.

## DESELECTION of SPECIAL FORMATS:

### Annual Reports

Annual reports are only collected if they are frequently requested, part of a public review and comment process as issued by a local agency or the information is unavailable in other sources owned or accessed by the Library.

### Audiovisual Collection

The Riverside Public Library currently collects and circulates VHS and DVD format educational,

---

PROCEDURES MANUAL

---

informational and entertainment videos for adults and for youth. Available reviews and customer interest form the basis for selection as well as maintaining a collection of "classic/timeless" titles. The video collection aims to offer customers the most popular, attractive and timely choices. Outdated subject matter, particularly in the areas of health, travel and business are the most regularly deselected. The approximate life of a VHS videocassette is 350 circulations and should be reviewed based on condition.

### Computer Software

Rapidly changing technological advances make it necessary to regularly review software to ensure timely updates or replacement of software packages.

### Government Documents

The Riverside Public Library is currently a Federal and State depository selectively receiving ¼ of the documents published by government.

Federal documents are weeded according to depository guidelines. All depository items remain the property of the U.S. Government and cannot be disposed of except as outlined in Chapter 10 of the Instructions to Depository Libraries unless designated otherwise in the Superseded List. After being held by the Library for the appropriate time period, Federal documents are weeded based on the same standards as the cataloged collection. Depository libraries must obtain permission from the Regional Library to discard such materials and then they must be offered first to other depository libraries within the region. After this procedure is completed the library may dispose of the documents at its discretion if no other depository library is interested.

State documents are withdrawn according to the same standards as the cataloged collection. An exception is that of the State Legislative Bill service. The Library keeps bills from the current legislative session and the previous session. Bills from older sessions are discarded based upon space considerations.

### Music Collection

The Riverside Public Library currently collects and circulates recorded music in the compact disc (CD) format. The collection also carries a variety of cassette tapes. As new technology and customers' equipment preferences evolve, the Library will change the presentation formats of the collection.

Atypical CD's such as those augmented for use on personal computers are not generally added to the collection. The focus of the CD collection is standard album recordings of music representing "classic", popular recordings, retrospectives, musical scores and movie soundtracks and quality instrumental recordings in genres of popular demand. Selected titles represent albums reviewed in the music industry professional journals. The collection is not intended to reflect quickly evolving current popular music tastes and interests. Regular weeding, damaged beyond repair items and attrition will maintain the collection.

A collection of music scores is collected and circulated.

---

PROCEDURES MANUAL

---

Deselection of multimedia material may present more of a challenge to staff than print materials and may need to be reviewed by a media specialist. Basic deselection criteria include instructional usefulness, visual and sound quality, subject appeal, relevance of theme, factual accuracy and physical condition.

Pamphlets (Vertical File)

Materials in pamphlet format may be added to a small collection in branches when the information is unavailable in any other format owned or accessed by the Riverside Public Library. This usually includes local history or event information.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINAL DISPOSITION OF MATERIALS**

The ultimate responsibility for the disposal of library materials lies with the Board of Library Trustees; however Library Staff are responsible for the overall quality, physical condition, completeness and balance of the total collection. At the Main Library, the Reference Manager or designated Librarian will make final decisions on withdrawal and discard of books in subject areas of responsibility in order to determine the need for replacement of last copy or specific subject and to maintain physical condition standards. Consultation with the Chief Librarian may be included.

The Branch Services Manager or designated Librarian/Branch Manager in the branches will review and deselect the branch collection based on knowledge of local community needs or interests and specialized bibliographies such as The Fiction Catalog, Public Library Catalog and Children's Catalog.