Milford Town Library Collection Development Policy

Mission Statement:

The Milford Town Library is a focal point for community learning. We are dedicated to providing free, easy, equal and confidential access to all forms of human expression. Our staff is responsive to cultural diversity and standards of excellence.

Purpose of the Collection Development Policy:

This document provides the public with an understanding of the purpose and nature of the library's collection. It explains the criteria staff use for making decisions to add or withdraw items in the collection.

Responsibility:

The Board of Library Trustees has the ultimate legal responsibility for the library's collection. Collection development and management activities are administered by the Library Director and implemented by staff in various departments.

Principles:

We are dedicated to the free and open distribution of ideas. The library is a government-funded agency. The First Amendment of the Constitution insures that ideas, even ideas that some find offensive, cannot be restricted by the government. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the library to provide a wide-range of ideas, opinions and information necessary for the functioning of a democratic society.

We are dedicated to free and open use for all. No restriction is placed on the use of the library's collection based on age, race, sex, nationality, educational background, physical limitations, or any other criteria that may be the source of discrimination.

We are dedicated to protecting the individual's right to decide for themselves and for their own children what library materials to use. We will not restrict what we add to the collection, or base decisions on what to remove from the collection, based upon protecting potential users from the contents of the material. We strongly encourage all parents to establish guidelines for their own children's use of library materials.

The inclusion of any item in the Library's collection does not constitute an endorsement by the Library or the Town of the item's contents.

The Board of Library Trustees upholds the principles of intellectual freedom as stated in the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" and the Freedom to Read Statement (see appendices).

Community Analysis and User Groups:

Milford is a community located in Worcester County approximately 30 miles southwest of Boston, 18 miles southeast of Worcester, and 32 miles north of Providence, Rhode Island.
The 1994 State Census estimated the population of Milford as 25,209. The Town is approximately 15 square miles in area, giving it a population density of 1,737 per square mile. Population trends indicate that the population will be 28,946 by the year 2010.

Data from the U.S. Census shows that 48% of the population is male and 52% is female. The largest age group is between 15-44 years with the next largest group between 45-64. Race and ethnicity statistics show 23,699 of the Town's residents are White, 312 are Black, 35 are American Indian, 248 are Asian, 1,022 are of Hispanic Origin and 39 are other. There has been significant change in recent years in the Asian and Hispanic populations of Milford. Both populations have grown considerably, although figures to document this increase are not yet available.

Historically, the old Yankee population was supplanted by large numbers of Irish, then Italian immigrants. There are also many Portuguese and Armenian residents who have been in Milford for several generations.

A recent survey in the public schools showed that 431 children live in homes where English is not the primary language. 49% of these are from homes where Portuguese is spoken and 36% from homes where Spanish is spoken. Among the other languages spoken are Arabic, Chinese, Korean and a variety of Indian languages (Hindi, Bengali, Sindhi, etc.).

There are 9,362 households with 58% reported as a married couple family. The median family income is $38,180 or slightly above the state average. Approximately 4.5% of the people are determined to be below the poverty line as compared with the state average of 8.9%. Over one-third of Milford residents have college degrees.

Milford is the largest community between Framingham and Worcester. Its shopping facilities and hospital location attract people from many of the smaller surrounding towns such as Bellingham, Holliston, Hopedale, Hopkinton, Medway, Mendon, and Upton. The combined population of what is known as the Greater Milford Area is 91,674. The Milford Town Library serves a wide variety of user groups from Milford as well as from the surrounding communities.

The Milford Public School System has three elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. There is a regional vocational-technical high school in nearby Upton. Many students use the library for assignments and reports. These students include nearby ones from Dean Junior College, Framingham State College and several community colleges located nearby.

Other users include professionals, laborers, the unemployed, retired people, young mothers and their children. Children represent 22% of the library's registered borrowers.

Researchers from all over the country use the Milford Room, which houses the library's local history and genealogy collection.

**Library Programs and Services:**

The Milford Town Library offers a variety of programs and services that increase the need for certain types of materials.
The **Milford Room** collection is a unique and valuable source of local history available for both residents and non-residents of Milford who are interested in the town, its people, and heritage. The collection contains general historical information on Massachusetts, genealogical materials, and information about the town of Milford. The room is open to the public during normal library hours. A genealogist is available on a regular basis and upon prearranged appointment to help users.

**Free literature** on topics of educational, cultural, social and recreational concern selected for its information value to the community is distributed and various locations in the library. A **bulletin board** offers notices meeting these criteria as well.

**Greater Milford Health Resource Center** provides books, pamphlets, medical encyclopedias and a computer with access to health reference databases. The Center is a cooperative venture with the Milford/Whitinsville Regional Hospital. An advisory board comprised of representatives from the Hospital staff, Milford Board of Health, the Visiting Nurse Association and other area health agencies meets quarterly with Library staff to help provide up to date and accurate information on health and other medical subjects.

**Job Resource Information** provides books, videos, audiocassettes and periodicals to aid users in Job Searching and Career information. Two Word Processing computers are available for people to create and print résumés.

**Word processing computers** are available for public use. These computers are connected to a printer for printing.

**Internet** access for the public is provided through the C/WMARS network and through a partnership with AT&T. The Library offers Basic **Internet Workshops** on an as needed basis. Sign up is available in the Children's Room and at the Information Desk.

**Business and law information** is provided through a variety of sources including print, CD-ROM and Internet. Other topics covered in the collection include investment information, automotive manuals, construction specifications, and accounting and management information.

The Library maintains close links with the **School Library Media Centers** in order to provide support services for the educational programs. A School Assignment Notification Program allows the library to set aside materials needed for assignments.

The Library and the **Family Network Project** together, present programs and materials appropriate for the educational and recreational use of preschoolers. A computer and educational and recreational software are provided for children to use in the Children's Room.

The library trains tutors and matches teachers and students in an **ESL/Literacy Program**. A private tutoring room is provided for these classes. The library maintains a collection of support materials for this program in a variety of formats including video, audio, and print. Drop-in Basic English Classes are also available with no registration required.

A **Young Adult Librarian** provides programming, and materials to support the educational, and recreational needs of **Young Adults**. Some Programs offered are theater and cultural programs, music concerts, health programs, and animal shows. The library also provides an
active volunteer program, which fosters responsibility and commitment to the public library. A Young Adult newsletter is published bimonthly. A Young Adult Advisory Council provides input on programs, policy, materials and other library issues. The Young Adult Librarian is available for Community Outreach.

The Children's Room offers a variety of programming. Six-week sessions of storybook programs are offered three times per year for kids aged from birth through fifth grade. Drop-in Storytimes are open to all on a drop in basis at least once a week. Summer Reading Programs are featured during the summer months. Special Programming for all ages is also available on a regular basis and may consist of family movies, folk singers, musical, or multicultural programs. A display case is available for collections. Children's Librarians are available for outreach programs as well.

The Library also provides programming for adults on a regular basis. Programs offered have consisted of jazz concerts, historical talks, poetry readings, and antique appraisals.

The Milford Town Library and its volunteers deliver books to the elderly and disabled who are unable to reach the library due to physical disabilities and limitations.

The library makes available its meeting rooms to groups and organizations, if such use does not interfere with regular library services or programs.

The Library offers volunteer opportunities for all ages. Volunteer applications and job descriptions are available for those interested.

The Friends of the Milford Town Library provide the library with museum passes which allow library users free or discounted museum admission. The Friends select which Museum passes the library will receive and particular passes are subject to change on an annual basis. Passes may be reserved in advance by Milford residents and by members of the Friends of the Milford Town Library. The Friends also support a variety of programs for children and adults.

Overview of the Collection:

As of July 2002, the Milford Town Library collection consisted of approximately 95,680 volumes of books; 70% Adult/YA titles, and 30% Childrens titles. The library subscribes to 222 periodical titles, 3 microfilm subscriptions, and 12 electronic subscriptions. The library owns 2,292 compact discs and audiocassettes, and 1,584 videos and DVDs, 169 computer CD-ROMs and 147 miscellaneous items such as toys, Storykits, and filmstrips. The collection is an evolving one and as new media types become readily available the library may choose to collect in other formats as well.

The Adult collection consists of Fiction, Nonfiction, Large Print, Biography, Spanish and Portuguese language collections, Literacy and ESL materials, Reference, Paperbacks, Periodicals, Young Adult Materials, Videos, Compact Discs, Audio Cassettes and Books on Tape, Books on CD, Computer CD-ROMS, DVDS, and Online Databases.

The primary format of materials is print, but is not limited to print. The primary language is English, but we currently also collect Portuguese and Spanish materials appropriate for Adult, Young Adult, and Children, both in print and audiovisual formats. As new community needs arise, the library may decide to collect materials in other languages in the future. Most materials are at a Basic Information Level suitable for informational or recreational use.

When the Milford Town Library opened a new facility in 1986, there were approximately 30,000 volumes in its collection. Books only occupied the central shelves of the stacks. In the first few years, upwards of 9,000 items were added per year and only damaged items were weeded or withdrawn. By May 1999, the library owned over 90,000 volumes. From FY1994 to FY1999, the Milford Town Library has added on average 6,000 to 7,000 new items per year. With ample shelf space little weeding was done, however, more shelf space has now become not only desirable but also necessary if we wish to continue to add new items. A weeding program was begun in 1997 and approximately 18,000 items have since been withdrawn from the collection.

**Cooperative Collection Development:**

To supplement its collection, the Milford Town Library makes use of materials borrowed from other libraries through cooperative agreements for Interlibrary Loan (ILL). The Milford Town Library belongs to the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (CMRLS) and is a member of the Central & Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (C/W MARS) network.

C/W MARS is a multitype automated library consortium that facilitates efficient resource sharing and rapid access to information for users of its member libraries through the provision of high quality computer and support services. C/W MARS now has NEARLY 130 members, including public, academic, special and school libraries. The database contains approximately 1.6 million unique titles and 5.8 million items.

Through C/W MARS, member libraries can call upon the resources of other members for materials not owned locally. In 1998, 1,623 items were borrowed by the Milford Town Library through ILL, and 1,626 were lent to other libraries by the Milford Town Library through the same process. A daily delivery service, provided by CMRLS and funded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, delivers the ILL materials to libraries that are members of the Region. CMRLS also provides links to other library consortia and networks to obtain materials not found in the C/W MARS database.

Interlibrary Loan, however, is not a substitute for the development of adequate collections based on the needs of a member library's service area and patrons. If a title is requested more than twice in a six month period (and is still in print), it is purchased. In addition, when areas in the collection are inadequate to meet regular patron demand, purchases are made to correct the situation rather than relying on Interlibrary Loan.

The Milford Town Library cannot expect to fill every patron request from its own shelves. Libraries are being used more than ever before, and more is being printed and produced in other formats. The purpose of cooperative collection development is to assist the library in meeting patron demands for materials that lie outside the scope of the library's collection.
Chronological and Retrospective Coverage:

The Milford Room collection is primarily research and historical in nature. Local history and genealogical materials relating to Milford and the surrounding area are particularly sought for this collection whether they are current or retrospective. Histories, local newspapers, vital records, town reports, pamphlets about Milford, books by local authors, yearbooks, photographs, and artifacts, and books about the area are all collected for the historical room. Many periodicals purchased by the library, and others that are not, are available online at the library or remotely through Infotrac, or on the SIRS CD-ROM.

The Fiction, Philosophy, History, Audiovisual, Cookery, Religion, Sociology, Literature, Art and Architecture, Games, Gardening and Biography collections, offer broader chronological coverage. The Library collects classic materials in these areas as well as current materials. (Classic materials being defined as chronologically older titles which are listed in the Fiction Catalog, Public Library Catalog or other professional bibliographies.)

The library collects only current materials in the areas of Health, Medicine, Science, Travel Guides, Technology, Law, Business, Computer Science, Language, and Sports. The only exception to these would be historical works on these subjects. "Current" is defined as information that is pertinent and timely, or materials that have significance "today".

The Milford Town Library collects a variety of Periodicals. Selection of these periodicals is based primarily on public demand and use. The library retains 3 years of current periodicals or a discontinued periodical for up to 3 years. Exceptions to this are: The Milford Daily News, Consumer Reports, the NADA Blue Books, The Boston Globe, The New York Times, Time and Newsweek on Microfiche. These exceptions are kept for varying lengths of time based on public demand and need. Many periodicals purchased by the library, and others that are not, are available online at the library through Searchbank, CARL, or on SIRS CD-ROM.

Format:

The Milford Town Library collects a variety of formats including but not limited to books, microfilm, microfiche, periodicals, CD-ROMs, audiocassettes, videocassettes, electronic diskettes, toys, compact disks, loose leaf financial services and CD-ROM databases. The library also provides access to a number of online databases. As demand for new technologies or formats increase the library may begin collecting other formats (e.g. DVD-ROM).

The Library does purchase or lease duplicates for materials that are in great demand. Leasing these duplicates is the preferred option, but if continual demand is anticipated or the material cannot be leased the library will purchase duplicate material. Duplicate materials are procured for library materials which circulate for a 2 week loan period that have 7 holds, or materials which circulate for a 3 week loan period that have 3 holds.

As the cost of books continue to rise, paperback materials become a cost effective alternative to hardcover books. Trade paperbacks and some mass-market paperbacks are purchased to meet heavy demand for hardcover materials, or as duplicates for titles on school reading lists. Many donated paperbacks are added to the collection to meet the demand for popular, portable, inexpensive reading materials. Titles only available in paperback may be purchased to meet a specific need. Because paperbacks are inexpensive, and because they are easily damaged, the
paperback collection is weeded twice a year. Paperback materials are fully processed and cataloged to make them available for searching in the database.

The library does not ordinarily purchase textbooks, except in those subject areas where materials in another form are not conveniently available.

Collection decisions are based first on the needs of the community, and then attention is focused on the content required to meet the need. Only after the content need has been determined should the actual package or format be considered. The best format to fit the nature of the content and uses to which it will be put determines the format of the information that is purchased. Does the user just want a piece of the content? Does the user need to spend considerable time with the content? It is the library's responsibility to weave all aspects of use-need and purpose for the content, content itself, the medium of the content- into the purchase of the format that best meets the users need. Other considerations in selecting a format include cost and available space for storage and display. New formats purchased by the Milford Town Library are based on these user needs. Therefore periodical online databases, CD-ROMS, or print materials may be determined as the best format to provide certain information to library users.

**Funding:**

Materials purchased for the collection of the Milford Town Library are paid for with funds provided through the annual operating budget from the Town and with state funds received from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. State funds are received contingent upon qualifying for the Library Incentive Grant, the Municipal Equalization Grant and the Nonresident Lending Offset Program. In order to receive these funds, the Milford Town Library must meet minimum standards set by the Commonwealth for public libraries.

Monetary donations made to the Library for the purchase of materials are placed in a revolving fund. All gifts made to the Milford Town Library are expended in a manner consistent with the Collection Development Policy. The Library makes every effort to purchase items in subject areas or formats specified by the donor. However, we cannot guarantee that particular titles can be purchased due to availability. The Library will identify materials purchased with donated funds by means of a bookplate that names the donor.

If library materials are lost or damaged, the person who borrowed the item is charged for it. These funds are deposited to a revolving fund and used to cover the costs of replacing the lost or damaged items.

**Gifts:**

All books or other items given as gifts will be received with the understanding that they are accepted subject to the approval of the Board of Library Trustees. The Milford Town Library accepts gift books, or other items donated for the collection, with the understanding that the gift will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria by which purchased materials are judged. Donated materials are considered with the explicit understanding that such factors as duplication, lack of community interest, processing costs, or inadequate shelf space may prevent their addition to the collection or permanent retention on the shelves.
The library will not agree to separate treatment for gift materials. Donated materials will not be placed on special shelves, or separated from other similar materials already in the library collection.

Gifts are accepted with the understanding that the Library, if it cannot use them, may at any time discard them in any way it deems appropriate. Materials not of use in the library collection are frequently given to the Friends of the Library for their semi-annual book sale. The Library does not appraise donated books or other gifts.

**Selection Process:**

Materials (both print and non-print) are selected by members of the Milford Town Library staff using a variety of reviewing media. Responsibility for the Children's and Young Adult collections lies with the Youth Services staff Department and responsibility for the Adult collection lies with the Reference Department. Circulation Desk staff also participate in the selection of popular materials. Materials for the Literacy Program are the responsibility of the Literacy Coordinator. Responsibility for Milford history and genealogical materials lie with the librarian in charge of the Milford Room. Responsibility for ordering all materials lies with the Supervisor of Technical Services.

When selecting non-fiction materials for the collection, the staff considers the author's competency, overall excellence of the material (artistic, literary, etc.), superiority in treatment of controversial issues, ability to stimulate further intellectual and social development, appropriateness to the level of user, and potential usefulness to the library's collection. The same criteria are used for spoken word cassettes with the additional requirement of clarity of sound and performance.

First, the library staff attempts to meet patrons' demands. Second, material is purchased that is both pertinent and timely. The Mission Statement of the Library, Library programs and services and community needs are all factors in selecting materials for the collection.

Because of limited resources and because the library has access to other libraries' collections through Interlibrary Loan, the relevance of material to our collection is especially considered. Material that receives positive reviews might not be purchased if it duplicates material already owned.

The library attempts to purchase a wide variety of fiction titles to satisfy the needs of all our borrowers. The library staff chooses titles based on reviews that consider, among other things, the appeal of a book for a specific audience, the artistic skill evident in its rendering, and the literary reputation of the author.

The following bibliographies and review media are consulted in the selection of materials, but selection is not limited to these sources:

- Fiction Catalog
- Standard Public Catalog
- Booklist
The library purchases audio-visual materials as part of its collection development. Selection of audio-visual materials will be based on the same criteria used throughout the selection process.

The library welcomes requests for purchase of materials for the library. However, such requests will be subject to the same criteria for selection as other considered materials.

Selection of materials for the library collection is an ongoing process which includes the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials that are still of value for informational or recreational needs.

Weeding:

The term weeding is used to describe the activity of seeking out items that are no longer useful or appropriate for the Milford Town Library Collection. These items are then discarded and may or may not be replaced.

Weeding the library collection is as much a routine as the acquisition of new books. The purpose of discarding materials from the collection is to maintain an accurate and up to date collection for library customers. Materials which are inaccurate, outdated, unused, or in poor condition detract from the usefulness and aesthetic appeal of the collection. These materials take up shelf space that could be occupied by needed and requested materials.

Weeding the collection is an ongoing process and is the responsibility of the Supervisor of Technical Services. The goal of the Milford Town Library is that each section of the collection is to be weeded on an annual basis to keep the collection accurate. Special attention is paid to Medical, Computer Science and Technology materials, as they become dated rapidly. Areas of the collection which occupy both the top and bottom shelf sections and where there is not 6 inches of space on a shelf, should be weeded immediately without waiting for the annual evaluation.

Materials are discarded from the collection using the CREW guidelines for weeding. Items that are weeded from the collection include ones that are: misleading or factually inaccurate; damaged, soiled or worn; outdated or superseded by a new edition or newer title on the same
subject; trivial or have no discernible literary or scientific merit; irrelevant to the needs and interests of the community or contain information that may be obtained more easily elsewhere. Materials that have not circulated in two or more years, duplicate titles no longer needed, or damaged materials are also considered for discarding.

Any material being discarded which is the last of its kind in the C/W MARS database will be offered up to other libraries over the network email and held for 2 weeks. If another library wishes to claim it, the material is sent to that library. If no other library requests the item, the item will be discarded. Discarded items in reasonable condition will be placed in the Friends of the Library book sale. Items in damaged or outdated condition will be thrown away. Discarded Reference items may or may not be offered to other C/W MARS or Central Region libraries.

Librarians and Library Assistants may be assigned sections for weeding. The Supervisor of Circulation, Supervisor of Youth Services and Supervisor of Technical Services will make decisions concerning repair or discard of damaged materials. Staff members participating in weeding will make decisions regarding the reordering of worn out materials.

**Encyclopedias** with publication dates older than four years will be withdrawn from the collection.

**Periodicals** are retained for 3 years and then withdrawn from the collection. Exceptions to this are: Consumer Reports, National Geographic, NADA Blue Books, all newspapers, and microfilmed materials. These are retained for shorter or longer periods based on user demand and research need.

**College Catalogs** are retained for 2 years and then discarded.

**Travel guides** are retained for 3 years from date of publication and then discarded.

**Print materials** meeting the CREW guidelines should be discarded.

**Compact Disks** are discarded if they are damaged or if they have not circulated in 3 years.

**Audiocassettes** are discarded if they have not circulated in 3 years.

**Videocassettes** are discarded if they have not circulated in 2 years or if they have circulated more than 250 times.

**CD-ROM’s** are discarded if they have not circulated in two years or they run on outdated platforms.

**Microfilm** is discarded only when damaged.

**Toys and Kits** are discarded if they are damaged, outdated, or have not circulated in 3 years.

**Preservation:**

The Milford Town Library is committed to providing appropriate physical and environmental care to the materials in its current collection. Appropriate temperature and protection from the
elements, as well as shelving, dusting, and storage of books will help protect the collection from deterioration.

A formal disaster plan, policies, and committees for dealing with emergencies will be written, placed on file, reviewed, and updated regularly. The staff member responsible for the Milford Room will keep abreast of the core issues of preservation and recommend needed preservation improvements.

Circulation and Technical Service staff responsible for the repair of damaged books will attend repair workshops offered by the Central Region.

To preserve an accurate database, Technical Service staff will keep the online database up to date by deleting system references to copies that no longer exist. They will also be responsible for implementing the C/W MARS “last copy retention” policy.

Complaints:

Anyone objecting to any item in the library collection may file a “Statement of Concern about Library Materials” with the Library Director. The Director, in consultation with the appropriate staff member(s) in the Adult or Youth Services Departments, will re-examine the item in question. A decision on the suitability of the item for inclusion in the Milford Town Library collection will be made based on the Library’s Collection Development Policy.

Adopted by the Board of Library Trustees September 8, 1999