

ATHENS-LIMESTONE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



1. GENERAL POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

FOR

LIBRARY OPERATIONS, STAFF, AND PATRONS

Policy adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 14, 2024
Athens-Limestone County Public Library
603 S Jefferson Street | Athens, AL 35611 | 256.232.1233

ATHENS-LIMESTONE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

PURPOSE AND OPERATIONS

As a public operation, the purpose of Athens-Limestone County Public Library (ALCPL) is to provide free, unfettered, and equal access to information to all library patrons, as well as to all the citizens of the City of Athens and Limestone County, and to all visitors to the library. To achieve its purpose, ALCPL provides regular and special services for children, youth, and adults from its location at 603 South Jefferson Street in Athens, Alabama.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Sources of information available at the library include books, magazines, newspapers, computers, digital resources, and special programs. These sources of information are selected and maintained by ALCPL's staff of professional, local employees. Daily interactions between patrons, citizens, visitors, and the staff allow ALCPL to have a collection of information that reflects the values and interests of our local community.

GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library is the result of a joint project of the City of Athens and Limestone County. The ALCPL is located in property owned by the City and County. The City and County have agreed that the ALCPL will provide library services for the citizens of Athens and Limestone County, and the Athens Library Board is obligated to operate the ALCPL for that purpose. Both the City of Athens and Limestone County provide funding to the ALCPL.

The Athens Library Board consists of 5 members, all of whom are appointed by the Athens City Council. The members serve staggered terms of 4 years. The City Council fills any vacancies including expired and unexpired terms. Members of the board serve without any compensation.

The Board of Trustees provides oversight of ALCPL operations. Each board member is responsible for ALCPL's objectives and policies and has the responsibility of understanding ALCPL's local programs of library service. As appointed representatives of local government, citizens, and ALCPL, each member of the Board of Trustees has the duty of helping secure financial support for the planning and implementation of library programs as well as for securing funding sufficient to meet other library needs such as staffing, operations, and maintenance.

MATERIALS SELECTION

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library Board of Trustees endorses the historically held and commonly accepted understanding that libraries are forums for information and ideas.

To ensure free and unfettered access to information and ideas, the ALCPL Board of Trustees will ensure that ALCPL's books and other resources are available for all citizens of the City of Athens and Limestone County and to other members of the public served by ALCPL for their interest, information, and enlightenment.

To further ensure free and unfettered access to information and ideas, the Board of Trustees and Director will ensure that materials, information, and resources selected for the library reflect the diverse values, beliefs, and interests of all the members of the Athens and Limestone County community so that individuals can develop their own intelligent and well-researched decisions and opinions.

SPECIAL AGE LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

The Library's objective in selecting materials for children is to build a collection that meets the informational, recreational, and cultural needs from the age of earliest word and picture awareness through the elementary and high school years.

Materials are included that have general appeal to the majority of children, as well as materials with qualities and content that make them valuable to children with special needs, talents, limitations, or interests.

Materials for the young adult collection are selected to meet the unique needs of patrons ages 13 to 17. It includes fiction and general non-fiction works appropriate for the reading and educational needs of this age group. Selection criteria for young adult materials are the same as for adult materials.

The Library will provide books for the actual and potential reader in a wide range of reading levels and a large variety of interests. The Library considers readability, popular appeal and quality of writing.

GIFTS OF MONEY, BOOKS AND OTHER LIBRARY MATERIALS

The ALCPL Board of Trustees understands that it has an obligation to encourage gifts to the library.

Gifts of money, books and other library materials will be accepted by the board with the understanding that the library's selection policy and processes will determine how the gifts are incorporated into library operations.

Gifts of books and other library materials are accepted by the library with the

understanding that they are not necessarily added to the collection. If the gift, in the judgment of the staff, will add value to the library's collection, it will be cataloged and made available to library users. Otherwise, it will be sold, given to another organization, or sent to the Recycling Center. The Library Director decides which action is appropriate.

LIBRARY SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

The library sponsors library-related activities for all ages and groups in the community to encourage a more effective use of library materials.

CHILDREN ON LIBRARY PREMISES

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library encourages children of all ages to visit the Library with their parents to take advantage of the resources available for them to meet their informational, recreational, cultural, and educational needs. The responsibility for the child's health, safety, behavior, and material selection at the Library resides solely with the parent or guardian. Library staff is not responsible for the supervision and care of children visiting the Library. This policy applies to children of all ages who visit the library.

VOLUNTEERS

The Library welcomes volunteers but does not accept any liability for the health or safety of the volunteer for actions which are the volunteer's own doing. Volunteers are utilized to perform routine tasks which can be easily taught and remembered, or special projects tailored to talents the volunteer may possess. They may also be asked to assist a staff member in his/her duties or to help supervise at library programs. There is not always a task waiting for a volunteer but every attempt will be made to find a task when there is a person willing to give of his or her time and knowledge to help the library.

COMMUNITY SERVICE WORKERS

The Library will attempt to provide duties for community service workers whenever there are persons who need to work such hours, but Athens-Limestone County Public Library reserves the right to turn away such workers when there is no suitable work, or if there is any question as to the suitability or the worker for the library. In order to be allowed to work at the library, the individual should make an appointment to discuss individual needs and work out a mutually acceptable schedule. Following the initial interview,

community service workers must show up on time, give advance notice of their arrival, and carry out the work assigned in an efficient and courteous manner.

PHOTOCOPYING MATERIALS

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17 United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproduction of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a user later uses a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

This institution reserves the right to refuse access to the photocopier if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

DISPLAY OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION

The Library Board of Trustees recognizes the need for a designated area to display community information. To meet this need, bulletin boards, countertops, and or literature display racks may be provided. Community information may be displayed only in designated areas. Public study and staff work areas may not be used to display such information. Only library related items may be displayed at the circulation desk.

Community information includes public service announcements for activities or events of a civic or governmental nature. Items announcing educational, entertainment, and recreational events may also be posted. The display of “For Sale” notices and/or advertising for strictly private business purposes is not allowed.

HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library sexual harassment policy accepts the principle that all employees have the right to work in an environment free from any type of harassment.

The library prohibits unwelcome sexual advances, requests of sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. You may not threaten or even imply that refusing or accepting sexual advances will affect another employee's job or future career.

Other prohibited actions are disagreeable flirtations, advances, or propositions; verbal abuse involving sex or gender; explicit or degrading comments about another's person; negative or biased treatment of an employee based on suspected sexual preference; and displaying suggestive materials.

It is best to avoid any conduct that can be considered offensive or abusive. Such activity will result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Sexual harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to:

- The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man.
- The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex.
- The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or a non-employee.
- The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.
- Unlawful sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim. The harasser's conduct must be unwelcome. If you feel that you have been subjected to any form of sexual harassment, report it to either the Library Director or Library Board. They will discuss the situation with you and walk you through the grievance procedures. Anyone who is victim of sexual harassment has a right to file a grievance without threat of retaliation or adverse effects on his/her employment situation or status.

OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT

Racial harassment, as well as harassment on the basis of religion, disability, or other protected status, is prohibited not only by the Library but also by various acts of Congress, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended. Other types of harassment are prohibited by applicable law. Violation of these acts may subject individuals to disciplinary action and may have legal consequences.

The Library encourages prompt reporting of such harassment and its prompt resolution through either informal or formal procedures. Complaints should be reported to either the Library Director or the Library Board of Trustees.

PRIVACY OF CIRCULATION RECORDS AND LIBRARY USE

Pursuant to the Code of Alabama, 1975. Sections §41-8-9 and §41-8-10, the use of

public libraries is confidential. The registration records, circulation records, computer use records, and general use of the Athens-Limestone County Public Library are confidential regardless of source of inquiry and they shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

Patrons have the right to inspect their own circulation records. A provision in the Code of Alabama allows an exception for a parents' right to access the circulation records of their minor children. Such access will always be granted.

Upon receipt of such process, order or subpoena, consultation shall be made with the legal officer of the library to determine if such process, order or subpoena is in good form and if there is a showing of good cause for its issuance. If the process, order or subpoena is not in proper form or if good cause has not been shown, insistence shall be made that such defects be cured before any records are released.

Any threats or unauthorized demands (i.e., those not supported by a process, order or subpoena), concerning circulation records or computer use records shall be reported to the Board of Trustees and appropriate legal authorities.

Any matter relating to the privacy of circulation records or computer use records which are not provided for in this statement are to be referred to the Director.

Patron use will be kept confidential. Staff will not indicate to anyone, in person or over the phone, if a patron is or has been in the library.

LIBRARY RULES OF CONDUCT

The library is a place for serious study, as well as a place for recreational reading and borrowing books. All who come into the library are expected to respect the rights of others by moving and speaking quietly.

Smoking and other tobacco use, food and uncovered drinks, pets (except service animals), and use of audio equipment without ear pieces are not allowed in the library.

Library management is not responsible for loss of personal property. The library is a public building and it is the patron's responsibility to safeguard personal property at all times.

Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to: running, loud noise, throwing objects, climbing on furniture, needless pulling of materials from shelves and abusing machinery. Those in violation will be warned. Temporary eviction from library premises will result if inappropriate behavior continues.

Disorderly conduct, fighting, harassment or any illegal activity will result in immediate

suspension from the Library.

Any child visiting the library who has not yet entered the seventh grade must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Children under the age of seven must be accompanied and directly supervised at all times by a responsible adult. For the purpose of the policy, a responsible adult is the child's parent or another caregiver age eighteen or over.

Children up to age 18 should not be left at the library past closing time. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to be aware of regular closing times and special holiday hours or closings. If a child is left past closing time, two staff members will wait with the child until he/she is picked-up, or for a maximum of 30 minutes. If no one comes for the child within 15 minutes past closing time, staff members will call the police for assistance. Staff members should never transport children in their own cars or a library vehicle.

COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

[Adopted May 4, 2004]

Athens-Limestone County Public Library provides computer workstations, many with Internet access and wireless Internet access, to assist community residents of all ages with free and equal access to information which meets their individual needs.

The Internet provides a means to access information far beyond the Library's own collections. However, the Internet is an unregulated medium. While most of the information accessed can be valuable and enlightening, the user may also find materials that are unreliable, personally offensive or illegal. Each user must take responsibility for his or her own activities while using the Internet, as well as all use by his or her minor children.

It is the policy of Athens-Limestone County Public Library to:

- (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications;
- (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity;
- (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors;
- (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h).]

Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).*

ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS

Technology protection measures (“Internet Filters”) shall be used to block or filter Internet access (as well as other forms of electronic communications) to inappropriate information. Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Technology measures may be disabled by Staff for bona fide research or lawful purposes by those users aged 17 and older.

INAPPROPRIATE NETWORK USAGE

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of all users, including minors, accessing the Library’s online computer network when using electronic mail or other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by CIPA, inappropriate network usage includes:

- (a) unauthorized access, including so-called ‘hacking,’ and other unlawful activities;
- (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

It shall be the responsibility of Library Staff to provide and maintain all computer workstations, including the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children’s Internet Protection Act. Staff will not monitor an individual patron’s Internet use, except for length of use and validating the identity of the user in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone and compliance with all appropriate regulations. The patron, or the parent of a minor, is responsible for his or her Internet session at all times.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Library Director or other Staff designated by the Director.

The Library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session which disrupts library services or that involves user behavior which violates the Library’s policies.

Parents are responsible for their minor children’s use of all Library resources and facilities. As with all other Library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents and/or legal guardians, not Library Staff, to determine and monitor their minor children’s use of the Internet. (Minors are defined in this policy as children and young people under the age of 17 years.) Parents concerned with content their children may encounter when using the Library’s Internet access are requested to monitor their own children’s Internet use.

Library Staff, with approval of the Director and within Board adopted Policy, will develop rules and procedures necessary to ensure fair and reasonable use of computer workstations, including those with Internet access.

RULES GOVERNING USE

Computers may be used in 60 minutes time blocks with a maximum usage of 180 minutes per day. If no one is waiting when the hour is up, the time may be extended as overall usage allows but not to exceed maximum time allotted. It is the patron's responsibility to request an extension prior to their time expiring.

Print-outs are \$.20 per page for black and white print. Color copies are \$.50 per page. By confirming the number of pages printed, patrons agree to pay for all print-outs.

Use of Library computers is a privilege, not a right. Due to the limited resources available for provision of computers for public use and for public access to the Internet, the Library reserves the right to limit the amount of time an individual may use workstations, as well as which files can be downloaded and in what manner. The public must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, including laws governing the transmission and dissemination of information while accessing the Internet.

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this policy are the following:

- (1) Harassment of other users. (This includes standing behind other users' computers, asking when they will be finished, or requesting staff to log a patron off a computer.)
- (2) Invading privacy of others.
- (3) Using computers solely for profit.
- (4) Gambling on the Internet.
- (5) Making unauthorized entry into other computational, informational or communication services or resources.
- (6) Damaging or destroying equipment, software, or data belonging to the Library or to other users, including adding, altering, or deleting files on Library workstation hard drives or other Library computer equipment.
- (7) Violating software license agreements.
- (8) Violating computer system or network integrity, including attempts to bypass network security functions, obtain passwords, or alter the configuration of Library workstations in any way.
- (9) Using the Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other rights of third parties, or in a manner inconsistent with the Library's tax-exempt status or its proper operation.

- (10) Wasting finite resources. (This includes printing without paying).
- (11) Accessing lewd or pornographic websites or material.
- (12) Using another patron's card.

Violations of Library Policy and/or Procedures will result in loss of computer access. Unlawful activities will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

DISCLAIMERS

While the Library endeavors to provide access to information of the highest quality, the Library specifically disclaims any warrant as to the information's accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness or fitness for a particular purpose.

The Library will have no liability for direct, indirect, or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed through the Library's Internet service.

Having installed and enforced the operation of filtering software in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Library will have no liability for damages related to the operation of, or failure of, the filtering software, or for its circumvention by users. [Filtering software is not foolproof. It diminishes the likelihood that searchers will inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive, but does not eliminate that possibility. Filters often block access to sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful.]

Since software and information downloaded from any sources, including the Internet, may contain computer viruses, users are advised to utilize virus checking on their home computers. The Library is not responsible for damage to users' disks or computers or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the Library's computers. As with other equipment or materials, library staff may reserve certain times to provide instruction or proctor tests.

Library staff will attempt to answer basic computing questions or assist users in finding information. Library staff will not complete personal forms or provide in-depth computer instruction outside a class/lab situation.

ADOPTION

This Computer Use and Safety Policy was adopted by the Athens-Limestone County Public Library Board of Trustees at a public meeting, following a public hearing held with advance notice, on May 4, 2004.

***CIPA DEFINITIONS:**

"Minor" – any child or young person under the age of 17.

"Technology Protection Measure" – a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. “Obscene” – as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. “Child Pornography” – as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code;
3. “Harmful to Minors” – means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:
 - a. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
 - b. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
 - c. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

“Sexual Act;” “Sexual Contact” – have meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code

MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

In order to provide the most current and consistent information about the library, all contact with news media will be carried out through the Director or Board President, although at times individuals occupying such positions may refer the media to specific staff members. The Board President is the spokesperson for the Library Board of Trustees. All inquiries from reporters or other media persons should be reported immediately to the Director.

When asked by the public for information related to library business or policy, staff should respond in accordance with library guidelines regarding such requests and, in the case of doubt, should consult with the Director.

Employees who represent the library as media spokespersons should avoid speculation on any topic and refrain from offering personal opinions about library policies or programs, even when asked to do so by a reporter.

Questions from the public regarding the general operations or direction of the library should be referred to the Director. Inquiries related to the underlying principles of a policy that are open to interpretation from a political, constitutional, and/or legal perspective should be referred to the Director who may refer questions to the Board of Trustees. Examples of such policies include but are not limited to those covering Internet Access, Filtering, Intellectual Freedom, and Meeting Room issues.

Inquiries regarding the library budget should be referred to the Director, Business Manager, and/or Board of Trustees.

NEWSGATHERING IN THE LIBRARY

Members of the media who wish to conduct newsgathering in the library in any manner disruptive to, or interfering with, the operation of the library or its use by other customers or be inconsistent with its mission, must make themselves known to either the Director of Library Services, or to the staff member in charge of the building in the Director's absence. Examples of behavior that can be disruptive, or interfere with, the operation of the library or its use by other customers or be inconsistent with the library's mission, include (but are not limited to) interviewing at other than normal conversational voice level, photographing, video recording, or audio recording customers or staff. (See Photography or recording by members of the public or media below.) Staff members witnessing members of the media engaged in such activity must inform them of the policy and ask that they request and gain permission from the Director before further conducting newsgathering in the library. This policy does not apply to a member of the media in his or her capacity as a customer using the library's resources.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING IN THE LIBRARY

PHOTOGRAPHY OR RECORDING BY THE LIBRARY

Library staff has the right to photograph, film, and record library events and customers for promotional use. Visitors to the library, or participants in any library event being captured on film or by photograph, will be advised in advance, verbally or through signage, that their participation in the event acts as consent to being photographed, filmed, or recorded, unless they otherwise clearly indicate to the contrary to library staff. To ensure the privacy of all individuals, their images will not be identified using full names or personal identifying information without written approval from the photographed subject, parent, or legal guardian.

The above policy applies only to open, public events. Closed events such as class visits would require releases and/or permissions from the supervisor of the visiting organization.

PHOTOGRAPHY OR RECORDING BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC OR THE MEDIA

While the library is a public place, it is considered a "limited public forum" under federal law. Public libraries may reasonably restrict the exercise of free speech rights in their buildings, particularly when the conduct would be disruptive to, or interfere with, the other customers or staff or be inconsistent with the library's mission.

Subject to the preceding paragraph: photography and video or audio recording by visitors to the library are generally permitted if it is strictly for personal use. Photography and video or audio recording for commercial purposes are permitted only if the activity has been expressly approved by the Director. In order to ensure that such activity would not be disruptive to, or interfere with, the library staff or customers, or be inconsistent with the library's mission, all individuals proposing to engage in such commercial activities must request approval in writing and in advance.

All requests to use a library facility as a setting for photography, video or audio recording are to be referred to the Director of Library Services, who has the responsibility and authority to evaluate the requests and to monitor the recording. Requests will be evaluated in terms of their impact on library operations and services. The Director will seek approval and plan with specific library departments and personnel in advance of the approved photography or recording.

In order to protect the rights of individual customers and to prevent disruptions, or interference with, staff or customers, or conduct inconsistent with the library's mission, photographing and video or audio recording on library property are restricted as follows:

Under no circumstances may the public or members of the media take photographs or record video or audio without the express permission of any library customer who would be included within the composition. In the case of minors, permission must come from the parent or legal guardian.

Media are subject to the provisions of the Code of Conduct policy and may not disturb the normal operations of the library.

In the event of a critical incident or emergency requiring police or fire response, public and media access may be limited to allow emergency personnel to ensure safety and security.

The terms above apply to the media as well as to amateur photographers and audio/video creators.

ATHENS-LIMESTONE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



2. GUIDELINES AND PROCESSES

FOR

LIBRARY OPERATIONS

Policy adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 14, 2024
Athens-Limestone County Public Library
603 S Jefferson Street | Athens, AL 35611 | 256.232.1233

ATHENS-LIMESTONE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY HISTORY

A vision for the kind of public library this community needs and deserves was conceived in the late 1960s. A building design was planned to accommodate 20 years' growth. Opened in March, 1970, Athens Public Library was a 10,000 square foot facility containing a collection of 3,000 books.

At that time the library served a county-wide population of 41,699. At the end of the 20-year projected life of the building in 1990, Limestone County's population had reached 54,135. After that, the area's growth surged – in 1995 the library served 58,099 people, and by the time the 2000 census figures were compiled, 65,676.

A Blue-Ribbon Panel in 1990 conducted the first study of library services and made recommendations for improvements. The name was also changed to Athens-Limestone County Public Library to better reflect the people it served.

During the spring of 1994, the Library Board of Trustees discussed at length the need to develop a long-range plan for the library. The Board appointed a committee in May, 1995 to develop a vision of the kind of library it believed the people of Athens and Limestone County wanted, needed, and deserved.

Over a period of 14 months the committee developed both the vision and the actions needed to transform that vision into reality. The first long range plan, called Enriching Lives, was adopted and published in 1997. It provided a roadmap to achieve what the library staff, community leaders, and residents first envisioned in the late 1960s.

It also was becoming apparent that a larger facility was needed in order to adequately provide the services and materials outlined in the library's mission statement.

In 1995 a Community Planning Committee established by the Board of Trustees studied future needs and determined that a 30,000 square foot building was needed to serve the community for the next 20 years. The committee recommended immediate action be initiated to acquire a new facility that could adequately serve the growing population.

The Board adopted this recommendation in 1996, and discussions about a larger building continued for more than a decade. In 2002, after collecting statistics regarding current usage, staff workspace needs, storage needs, and the amount of space required for computer workstations, shelving, and equipment, the library staff estimated a 39,000 square-foot building would meet the community's needs through 2025.

The City of Athens purchased the former Kroger grocery store and property at 603 South Jefferson Street in 2009 and designated it as a future public library. The next year

the Limestone County Commission agreed to purchase half the building, and the City and County agreed to work together to renovate and operate the library in the new location. The new library was opened to the public in December of 2014.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES, GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

AUTHORITY AND APPOINTMENTS

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library is a joint project of the City of Athens and Limestone County. It is located on property owned by the City and County, and the City and County have agreed that the library will provide services to the citizens of Athens and Limestone County. The Athens Library Board is obligated to operate the library for that purpose and both the City and County provide funding to the library.

The Athens Library Board of Trustees consists of five members that have the power and the authority as granted by Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, title 11-90-1, et seq., and the rules and regulations of the Alabama Public Library Service.

The Athens Library Board consists of 5 members, all of whom are appointed by the Athens City Council. The members serve staggered terms of 4 years. The city council fills any vacancies including expired and unexpired terms. Members of the board serve without any compensation.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- To represent the needs and desires of every segment of the community.
 - To become acquainted with various aspects of the library programs.
 - To know the programs and needs of the library in relation to the community.
 - To secure adequate funds to carry on the library programs.
 - To support and participate in planned public relations programs.
 - To know pertinent local and state laws and actively support library legislation.
 - To attend all board meetings and see that accurate records are kept on file at the library.
- To report regularly to the governing officials and the general public.
- To participate in library organizations to broaden knowledge of state and national library activities.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT

The Library Director, Assistant Director, and Board Chairman will be bonded in the amount of \$1,000,000 and will have the responsibility for the handling of the funds. All checks are to be signed by the Library Director, Assistant Director, or Board Chairman.

Gifts of cash should be deposited in the bank account and credited to the category for which the gift was intended.

GIFTS OF MONEY, BOOKS AND OTHER LIBRARY MATERIALS

PATRON REQUESTS TO PURCHASE MATERIALS AND MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Requests from individuals to purchase books or materials for the library collection will be evaluated according to the selection policy and procedures approved by the library trustees.

Staff members are invited to recommend books for purchase and to pass along recommendations coming from patrons of the library.

A staff member will handle Interlibrary Loan requests for books that are not owned by the library.

ALCPL appreciates that memorials made in the form of funds for books are opportunities to carry on the life interests of an individual or group, and that such memorials can be of continuing service for many years. The library encourages such memorials as well as gifts bequeathed through the last wills and testaments of citizens and patrons.

Contributions of memorials other than books require a written proposal to the Board of Trustees for evaluation and authorization. Such steps are necessary to ensure that memorials are appropriately directed. Because libraries are not museums they rarely accept objects other than printed or manuscript material or audio-visual material.

LOCAL HISTORY, PRINTED MATERIAL, MANUSCRIPTS

One purpose of a public library is to collect and preserve printed and manuscript materials on the history of the local community and region. To promulgate that purpose and maintain the integrity of separate archival organizations, ALCPL follows the following guidelines as approved by the Board of Trustees for the acquisition of historical materials:

- The library welcomes gifts of printed and manuscript materials on the history of the

community and the region.

- Except for temporary exhibition purposes, the library does not accept storage responsibility for historical documents or objects owned or controlled by groups or individuals.
- The library does not accept as a gift any printed or manuscript items or any objects if the condition of acceptance requires permanent exhibition of the item or object; public libraries follow the commonly accepted practice that exhibits should be changed from time to time to maintain interest.
- When materials are held at the library for temporary exhibit purposes, the library will endeavor to protect the materials, but the owner relieves the library of responsibility for loss or damage.

COOPERATION WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library will cooperate with school administrators and school librarians (or a teacher committee if there is no school librarian) to plan for services to schools. It is the purpose of the library to supplement school library services rather than supplant them.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Employees are encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities. Attendance at various library meetings is encouraged. All personnel are urged to join well-regarded professional organizations.

Registration fees and expenses of staff attending library conferences and workshops will be paid for by the library, upon approval of the Director.

Staff members holding offices in associations will receive first preference in attending conferences. Second preference goes to staff members who are dues-paying members of the associations, and third to other employees. Efforts will be made to rotate among the staff the opportunities to attend conferences and workshops.

Whenever possible, employees will be authorized to attend meetings, conferences, or conventions of professional or technical organizations on library time. Reasonable travel time is also granted.

When employees attend conferences, attendance of all applicable sessions is expected. Staff will be asked to share with other staff information and or ideas they have learned when there is need or interest.

Staff members who use personal cars in the performance of library duties connected with their positions are reimbursed at the Standard Mileage Rate allowed by IRS for

business use of a vehicle. An expense report must be turned in to the Library Director for approval before reimbursement is made.

The library pays annual membership dues for of the library director in the Alabama Library Association, the Alabama Directors Association, and any other local, state, or national associations approved by the Board of Trustees.

The library also pays the annual membership dues to the Alabama Library Association for Board members.

USE OF THE LIBRARY

BORROWER'S CARDS

The resources of the library may be used within the library by anyone with or without a Borrower's Card.

Materials to be circulated may be checked out for home use by any person who has a current Borrower's Card.

1. Borrower's Cards are issued to any resident of the City of Athens or of Limestone County upon approval of a properly completed registration application and presentation of current proof of address and photo identification.
 - a. Upon issuance of a Borrower's Card, the patron may check out 2 items. Upon safe return of the 2 items, a patron's limit will be set to their permanent patron type setting.
 - b. No fee is charged at the first issuance of a Borrower's Card. A fee of \$3.00 is charged for the replacement of a lost card.
 - c. If an individual is under the age of 18, his or her parent/legal guardian must also be present at the time a card is given. Both signatures are required for a card as the parent/legal guardian is responsible for all charges incurred. Proof of address and photo ID of a person aged 15-17 are acceptable in place of the parent/legal guardian's proof of address and photo ID.
 - d. Parents may opt for one of the following card types for their minor children:
 - Juvenile Only: This card type will restrict material checkouts to only those items in the Juvenile Collection.
 - Young Adult Only: This card type will restrict material checkouts to items in the Young Adult and Juvenile Collections.
 - Young Adult, or Juvenile, No Restrictions: Minors with these card types will be able to check out any materials in the Adult, Young Adult, and Juvenile Collections.

- If the Juvenile Only or Young Adult Only card type is chosen, no exceptions will be made on the type of materials allowed to be checked out on the account. For instance, no adult or young adult materials will be checked out on a Juvenile Only account. Checkouts of those materials will be restricted by the automated circulation system and the staff will not have the ability to override the system. As such, parents are encouraged to have their own library card to checkout all desired materials.
- e. There is no specific age limit on when a person can get their first Borrower's Card as long as he/she is able to write their own name. In cases where a minor might not be able to sign their name due to disability or injury, a parent's signature will suffice. Children must be present at the time the card is issued.
2. Non-Resident Borrower's Cards will be issued to non-residents upon approval of a properly completed registration application and presentation of current proof of address and photo identification. An annual membership payment of \$20.00 a year. These patrons are allowed to check out 25 total items.
 3. Limited-User Cards – The Library Director or the Head of Circulation may, at their discretion, allow a card to be made even when the patron does not provide official photo identification if the patron can provide proof of current address. This card will remain limited until photo identification can be provided.
 - a. Limited-User Cards can be issued to temporary residents of 6 months or less upon approval of a properly completed registration application, presentation of proof of permanent address, proof of current local address, photo identification and proof of current local employment. Badge ID information will also be gathered if applicable. Information must be taken at the time of registration on how long they will be here.
 - b. Limited-User Cards can be issued to temporary residents of 6 months or less who are here for reasons other than employment upon approval of a properly completed registration application, presentation of proof of permanent address, proof of current local address, and photo identification. Information must be taken at the time of registration on how long they will be here.
 - c. This patron type may have only 2 items checked-out at any time.
 4. A patron's card is not valid if the patron has an unpaid fine of \$5 or more. No materials may be checked out on this card.
 5. The number of books issued to a patron at one time may be limited for the following reasons:
 - a. Current demand for the books or subject matter
 - b. Record of habitual overdue items or other charges on the part of the borrower

- c. If the patron or the patron is on a payment plan
- d. If an adult aged patron is unable to transport him or herself to the library.
These patrons would be recommended to our *At Your Doorstep* Program to better suit their individual needs.

LOAN PERIODS & FINES

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>LOAN PERIOD</u>	<u>MAXIMUM RENEWALS/LOAN PERIOD</u>	<u>OVERDUE FINES</u>	<u>MAXIMUM OVERDUE FINE</u>
Books	21 days	3 renewals, 12 weeks	\$0.35 per day	\$10.00
Books-on-CD	21 days	3 renewals, 12 weeks	\$0.35 per day	\$10.00
DVDs	7 days	3 renewals, 4 weeks	\$1.00 per day	\$15.00
Playaways	7 days	3 renewals, 4 weeks	\$1.00 per day	\$15.00
Kits/Board Games	21 days	3 renewals, 12 weeks	\$1.00 per day	\$15.00

1. Books / Audio-books / CDs:

Books are loaned for three weeks. Items may be renewed three additional times if not on reserve; the maximum loan period is 12 weeks. EXCEPTIONS: Some reserve books are loaned for two weeks only. Only five Books-on-CD and five Playaway Audio units may be checked out on a patron's card at a time.

2. Playaway Units:

Only one of these may be checked out at a time for a period of one week. They may be renewed an additional three times for a maximum loan period of four weeks, if not on reserve.

3. DVDs:

DVDs are loaned for a period of one week and may be renewed an additional three times for a maximum loan period of four weeks, if not on reserve. Only five DVDs at a time may be borrowed on a patron's card.

4. Kits:

- a. May be checked out for three weeks and may be renewed an additional three times for a maximum loan period of 12 weeks, if not on reserve. There is a limit of five kits per patron at any one time. Patrons are advised they are responsible for all material checked out with the kit.
- b. Overdue fines of \$1.00 a day will be charged when any part of the kit is left out and not returned on time.

- c. A kit is checked out in its entirety. Individual parts of the kit (books, CDs, etc.) cannot be checked out separately.

6. Circulating Board Games:

- a. May be checked out for one week and may be renewed an additional three times for a maximum loan period of twelve weeks.
- b. Only two games may be checked out at one time per patron account.
- c. When a game is returned, it will be given to the head of Adult Services for verification that all pieces are present. Once it is confirmed all pieces are accounted for, the game will then be discharged from the patron account.
- d. Overdue fines of \$1.00 per day will accrue until all pieces of a game are returned.
- e. A game is checked out in its entirety. Individual parts of the game (books, CDs, etc.) cannot be checked out separately.

FINES

1. Overdue Fines:

Books - \$.35 per item, per day
Books-on-CD - \$.35 per item, per day
DVDs - \$1.00 per item, per day
Kits - \$1.00 per item, per day

Overdue charges shall not exceed \$10 on books and \$15 on all other materials.

2. Damage Fines:

Book Drop Charge - \$2 per item
Barcode Replacement - \$1 per item
Spine Label Replacement - \$1 per item
Cover Replacement - \$2 & up per item, depending on extent of damage
DVD Case Replacement - \$5 per item
Kit Container/Bag Replacement - \$3 per item
Cleaning Fee - \$2 and up per item
Audio Book Case Replacement - \$10 per item

Damage charges for torn pages, crayon/pen/pencil marks, water damage, etc., will be determined after examination by staff. Whenever a patron pays full replacement price, he or she may have the damaged item if desired.

Overdue fines on lost items cease when the item is reported lost or the maximum fine amount has been reached

3. The charge for replacing a lost library card is \$3.00. Patrons must complete the original registration process for their card type, in its entirety, again. If a patron owes more than \$5.00 in fines, those charges must be cleared in order for any new card to be valid.
4. If a patron needs to use the computer or check out materials, but does not have their library card, they may use a valid photo ID.

LOST ITEMS

Lost books or other library materials must be paid for at the library's listed replacement price or it may be replaced with a new or used item supplied by the patron. The replacement item, must be in the same, or better, condition than the lost copy. A direct ISBN match to the lost item is required. A hardcover book must be replaced with a hardcover book. Paperback books may be replaced with either a hardcover or paperback.

If, after having been paid for, a lost item is found and returned to the library within 90 days of payment, and the item is still in good condition, a refund for the price of the book will be made to the patron. Upon return, the patron will be charged the overdue charges that were due for the item

RESERVES AND RENEWALS

1. Books and other library materials may be reserved for patrons upon request. Only 10 items may be requested at one time, with the exception of Easy Books. Only two of these items may be held for a patron at a time. Hold materials are held for 7 days.
2. Requests may be made by using the Place Request function of the online catalog. A library card number and library pin number are required.
3. If an item is not part of the Library's collection, patrons may request that the item be purchased by the library. No guarantees are made that purchase requests can or will be fulfilled. No more than five requests may be made per quarter. Requests for future titles may not be made more than 60 days in advance of publication.

4. Patrons are notified of the availability of their held items via the method selected on their Patron Registration information page in the Library's ILS system.
5. Items may be renewed either by returning the item to the library, online, or by telephone. If there are no reserves on the item, it may be renewed up to three times. A patron's library card number is required for any renewals over the phone. Online renewals via the patron's account requires a patron's library barcode number and pin number.
6. Overdue items may be renewed if the library is contacted no later than 7 days after the original due date. Overdue items cannot be renewed online.

FAX SERVICE

The library offers a faxing service to patrons for the price of \$1.00 per page, up to a maximum charge of \$30.00.

Pages must be letter size, 8.5" x 11". Any copies made to fulfill this size requirement are \$0.20 a page. Only one side of a page will be faxed. If the back of a page is needed, the patron is responsible for making copies at their expense. There is no discount for sending multiple faxes. Cover sheets are available on request and are provided free of charge.

No refunds will be given for faxes sent. If a patron presents the confirmation page showing that the fax was sent to the incorrect number before leaving the library building after having sent the fax, staff will resend the fax free of charge.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN SERVICES

Interlibrary Loan services are an important facet of the library's plan to provide patrons with a complete range of helpful services. The Interlibrary Loan service is essential to the vitality of libraries of all sizes and types, and is a means by which a wide range of material can be made available to users.

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library staff will make every effort to assist patrons in using this service, but some consideration must be made to the fact that the staff is small and items to be requested should meet the following criteria:

1. A loan or copy of any material may be requested from another library in accordance with the published lending policy of that library. The lending library will decide in each case whether a particular item can be provided.
2. Under ordinary circumstances, borrowing libraries will not supply:
 - a. Audio-Visual materials
 - b. Rare or valuable material, including manuscript

- c. Bulky or fragile material
 - d. Unique material that would be difficult or impossible to replace
 - e. Material in high demand at the lending library
 - f. Material which can be copied cheaply or which is available at low price
 - g. Material for class, reserve, or other group use
3. Patrons should exhaust our own local library resources first. Staff assistance is available.
 4. The staff member charged with the responsibility of interlibrary loans may determine which patron requests for interlibrary loans meet the specified criteria. If there is a conflict, the Director will mediate.
 5. The library allows a maximum of 4 ILL items per patron at any one time. Best sellers and high demand titles published within the current calendar year will not be requested. The library will attempt to purchase as many of these titles as the budget permits.
 6. Staff will verify all loan requests for specific titles in OCLC. Patrons should furnish as much bibliographic data as possible in order for a request to be processed. Requests will not be accepted from patrons who have overdue materials and/or owe fines or other charges.
 7. At the time of the initial request, a minimum of \$5 per item will be charged. If the item is unusually heavy a surcharge of \$1 - \$2 will be due when it is picked up.
 8. In general, if an ILL search has not located a copy of a book available for loan within one month of the date of request, the loan search will cease. The patron will be notified that the library has been unable to locate the item.
 9. Library staff may request renewal of a book. Patrons should always request an extension of the loan period several days before the due date of the owning library. Patrons should be aware that these libraries may not be able to renew books because they may be on reserve for other patrons.
 10. If within a short period of time several requests for ILL for the same title are received, a recommendation will be made to the Library Director that a copy be purchased for the collection.
 11. The borrowing library and its users must comply with the condition of loan established by the lending library.

RESTRICTED MATERIALS

Restricted materials are local and state historical materials and certain expensive and/or rare items.

Back issues of periodicals are available for reference and research. Newspapers are kept for 6 months. Back issues of magazines are available for checkout and stored as space allows

Patrons desiring to access back issues must ask a staff member.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS

FINANCIAL GIFTS – Financial gifts are welcomed and accepted. Monetary gifts given by donors who wish to place restrictions on their use are accepted upon approval by the Library Director.

BOOKS AND MATERIALS – Gifts of books and other library materials are accepted by the library with the understanding that they are not necessarily added to the collection.

If the gift, in the judgment of the staff, will add value to the library's collection, it will be cataloged and made available to library users. Otherwise, it will be sold, given to another organization, or sent to the Recycling Center.

The Library Director, or other designated members of the staff, will decide which action is appropriate.

When gift materials are deemed no longer useful, the Library will discard them on the same basis that it discards other materials.

PROJECTS – Individuals or organizations wishing to donate time and/or projects which involve physical improvements to the library building or its grounds should understand that there are several steps which must be taken before actual work can begin. These requirements will apply regardless of the reason the individual or group wishes to donate the work.

The Library Director should be consulted as to whether the project will enhance the building or grounds; because the library building belongs to the City of Athens, preliminary approval must also come from the Mayor's Office.

PROCTORING TESTS

Library staff will proctor tests and exams by advance appointment for cardholders in good standing. Appointments should be scheduled ahead of time with library staff and will be scheduled in accordance with staff availability.

Fees must be paid when the appointment is scheduled.

Level I Fees apply to exams requiring only ID check, test return, and minimal supervision:

1. Staff Proctor - \$20 for first hour plus \$10 for each additional hour
2. Degreed Proctor (B.S. Degree or higher) – \$30 for first hour plus \$15 for each additional hour

Level II Fees apply to exams which involve the monitoring of time limits, more than minimal supervision, and/or additional tasks on the part of the Proctor: Normal fees plus surcharge of \$5- \$15 per hour, depending on work involved.

SEVERE WEATHER ACTIONS

In order to give staff and patrons time to find safe shelter during severe weather situations, the library will consider if closing is necessary when:

1. A Tornado Warning has been issued in any surrounding county.
2. Athens City Hall is closed due to weather concerns.

When a lightning storm is in the area, computers and other electronic equipment are to be shut down. One circulation computer may be left up if it is deemed necessary. The library equipment, patrons and staff are to be protected from lightning strikes.

The Chairman of the Board may be contacted in case of library closing due to weather concerns.

CHILDREN ON LIBRARY PREMISES

Any child visiting the Library age 12 and younger must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Children under the age of seven must be accompanied and directly supervised at all times by a responsible adult. For the purpose of the policy, a responsible adult is the child's parent or another caregiver aged 18 or over.

All children visiting the Library are expected to display appropriate behavior. Persistent inappropriate behavior is grounds for suspension of library privileges. Disorderly conduct, fighting, harassment or any illegal activity will result in immediate suspension from the Library.

Children in grades seven or above may visit the Library unattended, subject to the Library's Rules of Conduct and definition for appropriate behavior. Definitions for appropriate and inappropriate behavior and the procedures for handling inappropriate behavior can be found in the Library Rules of Conduct.

All children must be picked up by the Library's closing time. If the child is not picked up by closing time, City of Athens police will be notified. Two Library staff members will stay with the child until the police arrive. Under no circumstance will staff take children home. In case of a medical emergency, library staff will call 911.

SERVICE ANIMALS

The rules concerning service animals define such animals as dogs or other common domestic animals trained to perform tasks for an individual with a disability.

The word 'trained' is important. To qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the animal must be trained to perform the tasks listed below and to behave

properly in public. If the animal barks, is not housetrained, or is otherwise disruptive it may be restricted from the library. The person must also make provision for cleaning up after the animal outside the library.

Tasks for individuals with a disability:

- Guiding persons who are blind or have low vision
- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds
- Pulling a wheelchair or fetching items
- Assisting an individual during a seizure
- Retrieving medicine or the telephone
- Providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability
- Assisting individuals, including those with cognitive disabilities with navigation.

Animals specifically excluded as service animals are:

- Wild animals, including those born in captivity.
- Monkeys
- Reptiles, rabbits, amphibians, rodents
- Farm animals, including horses, ponies, pigs, & goats.
- Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, comfort, or companionship.

ABUSIVE AND DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

The Library does not expect employees to accept verbal abuse from any patron. An employee may request that a supervisor intervene when a patron is abusive or disrespectful, or the employee may defuse the situation themselves, including ending the contact.

If there is a concern over the possibility of physical violence, a supervisor should be contacted immediately.

When extreme conditions dictate, 911 may be called.

Employees should leave the area immediately when violence is imminent unless their duties require them to remain.

Employees must submit a written report to their supervisor about the incident as soon as possible.

The following types of behaviors cause a disruption in the workplace and are often

unlawful:

- Violent behavior – including the use of physical force, harassment, bullying or intimidation.
- Discriminatory behavior – including inappropriate remarks about or conduct related to a person’s race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, gender, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or familial status.
- Offensive behavior – that may include such actions as rudeness, yelling, angry outbursts, inappropriate humor, vulgar obscenities, name calling, disparaging language, or any other behavior regarded as offensive to a reasonable person based upon violent or discriminatory behavior as listed above. It is not possible to anticipate in this procedure every example of offensive behavior.

LIBRARY RESPONSE TO ABUSIVE AND DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

Except in extreme cases such as violence, discriminatory behavior, or physical damage to the library, the Library Director will issue a warning letter to the patron reviewing the incident and possible repercussions for repeat incidents. The letter will be mailed to the patron and a copy kept in the library. The patron will be required to sign the library’s copy of the letter in acknowledgement that it was received.

The Library Director will notify the Board of Trustees of incidents of warnings and suspension of library privileges. It is not possible to anticipate every type of response required. Patrons have the right to formally request the Board of Trustees to reinstate library privileges or to change library policy.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PHOTOCOPYING

- Payment must be made for all copies produced, except in the case of machine error.
 - Black and white photocopies cost \$0.20 per page.
 - Color copies cost \$0.50 per page.
- The library is not responsible for bad photocopies due to user error.
- Users should immediately report any machine errors after the first bad copy to the nearest staff member.
- Users are any individuals who use a photocopier in the Athens-Limestone County Public Library.
- User Errors are mistakes made by individuals using the photocopier incorrectly.
- Machine Errors are blemishes, lines, toner defects, or other mistakes caused by the photocopier.

PROMOTION OF MATERIALS TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

The Library Director must give advance approval of any materials recommended, displayed, or otherwise actively promoted to children or youth. The same standards and discretion shall be applied to such promotion as are applied to the materials selection process.

ATHENS-LIMESTONE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



3. MATERIALS SELECTION PROCESS

Policy adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 14, 2024
Athens-Limestone County Public Library
603 S Jefferson Street | Athens, AL 35611 | 256.232.1233

ATHENS-LIMESTONE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

PURPOSE

In order to meet the policy objectives and to conform to the principles stated within the Materials Selection Policy, the ALCPL Board of Trustees approves the following general processes and procedures for selection of materials.

MATERIALS SELECTION PROCESS

Selection for the Athens-Limestone County Public Library collection is an ongoing process. The ALCPL staff of library professionals uses diverse, established, and reputable sources to maintain and develop the library's wide-ranging collection. Importantly, the overriding principle guiding the selection process is to ensure that the collection reflects the community's beliefs, standards, growth, and diversity as understood from the staff's day-to-day and ongoing relationships with the patrons and citizens of Athens and Limestone County.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library Board of Trustees has legal responsibility for library operations. The Board has delegated the day to day work of collection development and the selection of library materials to the ALCPL Director.

The ALCPL Director has authorized collection development staff members, who are library professionals and who are knowledgeable in their areas of selection, to purchase materials for their departments.

- The Youth Services Librarian is responsible for selection of materials for particular area/s of service subject to approval by the Director.
- All staff members are expected to review books and to suggest titles for inclusion or exclusion.

Suggestions from the public are very important and are given serious consideration.

The decision of the Library Director is requested in cases of unusual difficulty or in the interpretation of policy.

STEPS IN THE SELECTION PROCESS

This process is based on professional standards and includes these steps:

- Evaluate the existing collection and assess needs;
- Solicit and consider patron recommendations for acquisitions;
- Consult reputable, professionally prepared sources such as selection aids and vendor sites (examples of such sources are given below);
- Keep abreast of high interest titles that are reviewed in popular media as well as best seller and awards lists;
- Remove obsolete materials from the collection (see the "Collection Maintenance / Weeding Policy").
- Gift materials are evaluated according to standards outlined in the "Policy for Gifts to ALCPL".

SOURCES OF MATERIALS

Patron requests and the engagement of patrons and citizens strongly influence the selection process, which is carried out largely through vendors that provide thorough product descriptions. These descriptions can include cover art, reviews, excerpts, release dates, sales, print run, or box office figures, all of which facilitate the selection process.

Vendor sites and other reputable, professionally prepared selection aids help the ALCPL staff meet the diverse reading and information interests that inform the ongoing cultural, social, educational, and economic activities of Athens and Limestone County. Additional materials are selected from review journals, print and online catalogs, awards lists, best seller lists, and promotional mailers.

EXAMPLES OF SOURCES

Staff members in charge of collection development use a variety of resources to respond to and advance community involvement and community interest. These include:

- **Professional journals** – such as School Library Journal, Booklist, Publisher's Weekly, Kirkus Reviews;
- **Popular media** – such as People Magazine, Oprah's Book Club, Book Riot website;

- **Best seller lists** – such as the New York Times, USA Today, Amazon;
- **Vendor catalogs/selection lists** – such as Baker & Taylor, Ingram, Midwest Tape, Overdrive;
- **Awards lists** – such as National Book Awards, Pulitzers;
- **Social reviewing sites** – such as Goodreads, Common Sense Media, YouTube, TikTok.

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES

The Board of Trustees endorses these broad, comprehensive guidelines for evaluating and selecting books, materials, and other resources for Athens-Limestone County Public Library. These guidelines are designed to facilitate the selection of books, materials, and resources of the highest quality and that resonate with and reflect the diverse public of Athens and Limestone County.

The evaluation and selection of books, materials, and resources for Athens-Limestone County Public Library should consider:

- the reputation and qualifications of the creators, publishers, or producers;
- our community’s needs, interests, and demand;
- the current and potential relevance to community needs;
- the relevance to today’s world – reflecting problems, aspirations, attitudes, and ideals of society;
- the representation of differing viewpoints on controversial subjects;
- the clarity and accuracy of the work and whether the scope of the text or the presentation of the audiovisual material are appropriate to the needs of the users;
- the quality of the format and whether the value added to the collection is commensurate with cost and/or need;
- the authenticity of voice;
- the representation of diverse points of view;
- a judgment of the work as a whole.

TYPES OF MATERIALS NOT GENERALLY PURCHASED BY THE LIBRARY

- textbooks or curriculum materials;
- workbooks or journals;

- collector's editions;
- non-fiction books published more than 5 years ago or that are no longer factually accurate or historically significant;
- out of print materials;
- items not available through library vendors.

Items requested by patrons that are in these categories or that cannot be purchased due to budget constraints or other considerations will be requested for the patron through the Interlibrary Loan (ILL) program.

SELECTIONS BY SUBJECT

FICTION

Athens-Limestone County Public Library selects fiction in order to satisfy a public that varies greatly in education, interests, taste, and reading skill.

Athens-Limestone County Public Library's collection includes novels and short stories in a variety of types. The library maintains a basic collection of standard novels, classics, and the semi-classics of world literature.

Because each novel is judged on its individual merits, there is, as a rule, no attempt made to maintain an author's complete works in the library's collection.

Novels that are widely promoted or in continuing demand because of the popularity of the author's other works, their conversion into film, appearance on television, or the timeliness of their themes, are purchased if they will further efforts to serve a larger segment of the reading public and if they meet other selection criteria. Demand is only one criterion in the selection process.

NONFICTION

In general, the library nonfiction collections:

- are general and not comprehensive in any major subject area;
- provide a breadth of subject coverage as a first emphasis followed by an attempt for depth, particularly in the more widely useful categories;
- contain a core collection of standards, essential works (as characterized by selection from Public Library Catalog, Fiction Catalog, and Children's Library Catalog);
- are built with the interests, and needs of the community in mind;
- are geared toward the layman rather than the specialist.

LOCAL HISTORY

LIMESTONE COUNTY

The first priority of the local history collection is books on Limestone County. The coverage is comprehensive on historical aspects and extensive on contemporary social, cultural, and economic aspects.

NORTH ALABAMA AND THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

The main focus of this part of the collection is also historical and has less coverage on contemporary social, cultural, and economic aspects. The strength of the remainder of the local history collection is in the following descending order: Alabama-statewide coverage, Southeastern United States, and Southern states.

ALABAMA COLLECTION

- a. One non-circulating copy of all selected books will be acquired; duplicates for circulation will be acquired as budget allows.
- b. Fiction works written by authors from Alabama or works pertaining to the state of Alabama are also acquired for research purposes. Some are collected for archival purposes. Some consideration is given to autographed copies.
- c. The Alabama Collection is not strictly a “local author” collection. The works of local writers on Alabama and non-Alabama subjects are added or rejected in accordance with the Library's general principles of selection.
- d. The Library collects biographies of Alabamians, people who have played an important role in Alabama history, and namesakes.

GENEALOGY

The genealogy collection is one of the Library's many services and responsibilities. The Library may acquire those works that will be useful to a number of people. Handbooks of procedure, reliable guides to genealogical materials, general genealogical reference works, and historical material of value to the genealogical worker are provided. Emphasis is placed on Alabama and Southeastern U. S. materials and on common areas of origin. Consideration is given to major migration trends.

A few individual family histories are bought. Privately published individual family histories are usually added as gifts.

Books on heraldry and standard armories may be provided.

RELIGION

Standard works relating to the world's major religions, such as the Bible, the Talmud, and the Koran are provided. Important versions of the Bible and other religious texts and scriptures are also added to the collection.

Costly ornamental editions of religious classics are not purchased. It is not guaranteed that the latest interpretation or translation will be added or replace current holdings.

Reference works which introduce, explain and interpret the scriptures and religious classics are selected with care being taken that works written from the various major religious points of view are represented where they are available and pertinent. The history of religion, theology, the beliefs and practices of the religions of the world, comparative religion, mythology, atheism, and agnosticism, and the psychology and philosophy of religion are presented by authoritative works.

Practical non-denominational books on church administration, preaching, worship, and Sunday School teaching may be added.

Books of devotion, meditation, and inspiration are selected with special emphasis on quality.

Donated works are evaluated for quality and accuracy prior to being added to the collection.

MEDICINE

The Library strives to provide the public with authoritative, up-to-date medical materials. Special regard is given to the author's credentials and manner of treating the subject. Attention is also given to the publisher, format, and type of illustration. The presence of certain illustrations would not preclude adding or weeding a work.

Most works collected are for use of students and the layperson. Occasionally more technical works are bought for additional depth and coverage.

Reference works such as medical dictionaries, encyclopedias, and handbooks are frequently added to the collection and usually updated every five years or less.

Medical sources are not intended to be a substitution for the advice of a physician.

LAW

In statute law, the Code of Alabama and the codes of some of the cities in our service area may be provided.

Dictionaries, encyclopedias, and phrase books which are useful in general reference

work are purchased.

Standard texts by recognized authorities on special phases of law, e.g. corporate, criminal, domestic relations, bankruptcy, and copyright law are purchased.

The Library, as a rule, will not duplicate the professional law materials collected by the county law libraries.

Popular works explaining the law to the layperson are provided. Also, books for the general reader on jurisprudence, legal history, legal ethics, and jury duty are provided.

Legal forms are available to the public, free of charge, through Gale LegalForms courtesy of the Alabama Virtual Library.

Legal sources are not intended to be a substitution for the advice of a licensed attorney.

HUMAN CONDITIONS AND EXPERIENCES

It is the responsibility of the library to provide authoritative and up-to-date information that investigates what is known and recorded regarding human conditions and experiences. These books will include a broad range of physiological, psychological, moral, ethical, and scientific treatments of human conditions and experiences, including works that express positions and theses that depart from traditional mores as well as books that reflect diverse social and religious backgrounds.

Books are acquired which are designed for all age levels of readers and of varying levels of education. Highly specialized and clinical works written for specialists are generally outside the scope of the Library's collection, but are added occasionally to add depth to the collection.

Judgment of fiction is made on the total book rather than on parts that might in themselves be considered objectionable.

SELECTION BY MATERIAL TYPE

PAPERBACKS

Paperbacks are increasingly considered in selection and purchased in this format when:

1. The title is only available in paperback
2. The added value of the title to the collection is justified only at the paperback cost
3. The subject is anticipated to be of current interest only and a permanent copy is not deemed necessary
4. Duplicates are needed to satisfy demand

5. The inherent design and appeal of this format is considered especially important

GRAPHIC NOVELS

The graphic novel collection is made up of recreational reading and informational titles in book form for adult readers. These are books that are primarily pictorial, with text and dialog working together to propel the narrative.

Selection is based upon reviews in literary and trade journals. Preference is given to graphic novels in hardback though paperbacks will be purchased when that is the only available format. Specific selection criteria for these materials are the same as for works of fiction.

PERIODICALS

General policies and objectives cited for book selection are applied to periodicals also. The Library strives to build a periodical collection whose scope encompasses a variety of recreational and educational interests of adults and children. A periodical is purchased or accepted as a gift, for one or more of the following reasons:

1. It reflects the interests of the community
2. It is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature
3. It is needed for reference purposes
4. It supplements the book collection
5. It serves the staff as a book selection aid or for professional reading. This also includes magazines that give guidance to adults in working with children.

Periodicals may supplement the book collection in several ways, including:

1. Providing current reporting to enhance the book collection;
2. Presenting information not available in the book collection;
3. Presenting points of view not otherwise found in the collection.

Other types of periodicals which contain material not found in books are:

1. "Little" literary magazines, of which representative titles are bought;
2. Magazines of local interest.

Other considerations:

1. The Library will not try to duplicate specialties of the Calhoun Community College Library or the Athens State University Library.
2. Accuracy in reporting is considered a very important criterion in the purchase of periodicals

NEWSPAPERS

The newspaper collection is intended to provide news coverage at all levels from local to international. Accordingly, the Library attempts to subscribe to most local newspapers, a representative list of Alabama newspapers, and a selected list of out-of-state newspapers.

AUDIO-VISUALS

General policies and objectives cited for book selection are also applied to audio-visual resources, and additional considerations such as quality of sound, photography, color reproduction are also used as criteria where appropriate. Gifts are handled in accordance with gift policies pertaining to books.

DVDs

Each item in this collection is chosen for suitability in relation to content and purpose. A variety of subjects of interest to adults, teens and children are represented; the purpose of the collection is both recreational and educational.

DVDs are judged for suitability for addition to the collection based on the same guidelines as are new selections in printed fiction and nonfiction.

Sponsored films, which are little more than advertisements or propaganda for special interest groups, are not acquired.

Audio-visual materials are withdrawn from the collection because of poor condition or obsolescence and newer and better materials are sought when replacements are being considered.

AUDIO-BOOKS (FICTION AND NONFICTION)

Audio-books are judged for suitability for addition to the collection based on the same guidelines as are new selections in printed fiction and nonfiction.

Titles are purchased for all age groups.

Electronic books and electronic audio-books are not selected by the library, but are made available to patrons.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

SPECIAL AGE LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS

The Library's objective in selecting these materials is to build a collection that meets the informational, recreational, and cultural needs from the age of earliest word and picture awareness through the elementary school years.

Materials are included that have general appeal to the majority of children, as well as materials with qualities and content that make them valuable to children with special needs, talents, limitations, or interests.

Materials for the young adult collection are selected to meet the unique needs of patrons ages 13 to 17. Selection criteria for young adult materials are the same as for adult materials.

The Library will provide books for the actual and potential reader in a wide range of reading levels and a large variety of interests. The Library considers readability, popular appeal and quality of writing.

BASIC SELECTION

1. The Juvenile and Young Adult collections are continuously evaluated. Materials are added, duplicated, replaced, and withdrawn as necessary to maintain the effectiveness of the collection.
2. General criteria for selection of materials include literary and artistic worth, suitability of content and vocabulary to the age of the readers, and the contribution of the material to the balance of the total collection.
3. The Library does not provide basic textbooks. It accepts as its responsibility the providing of supplemental materials of varied kinds to enrich the resources available to the individual student and teacher.

SELECTION IN SPECIFIC AREAS

1. According to Users Served

Juvenile – The Juvenile Collection serves the age group from infancy through age 12.

Young Adults – The Young Adult Collection serves from age 13 and extended upwards to age 17, expecting maturity levels to vary greatly between individuals.

Adults – Materials which will help adults in gaining knowledge of children's literature are considered appropriate purchases for the Children's Collection.

This would include materials on reading guidance, children's literature, storytelling, authors, and artists.

2. According to Form and Nature of Material

Nonfiction

- The collection includes a broad range of subjects and a variety of levels of difficulty and depth. Additional criteria include accuracy of facts and clarity of explanations.
- Juvenile and Young Adult nonfiction materials are shelved adjacent to their corresponding fiction materials. Large Print nonfiction is shelved with the rest of the Nonfiction collection.

Fiction

- A broad scope of fiction includes both imaginative and realistic works.
- Fiction is chosen for its entertainment value, its theme, and for outstanding character portrayal and emotional appeal.
- A book in current demand with adequate literary quality is also valuable to the collection.

Encyclopedias and Reference Books

- Encyclopedias for children's use are essential to the reference collection.
- Periodically old sets are re-evaluated for timeliness and new sets are purchased if necessary and if the budget allows.

Textbooks and Readers

- Textbooks are not bought to meet student demand but only when they provide the best coverage of a subject or when there is little or no material available in any other form.
- The Library makes no attempt to support the school curriculum by buying reading primers.
- The Library considers that its responsibility lies primarily in supplementing the reader.
- Trade book easy-readers and beginning reader series that have the same vocabulary and interest levels of the readers and also meet library standards of literary and artistic quality are added to the collection.

Abridgements

- Adaptations and abridgements are carefully evaluated and are added on their own merits.

Award Books

- The Library buys all Newbery, Coretta Scott King and Caldecott Award and Honor books.

Periodicals

- A select group of standard periodicals may be purchased consistent with general selection policy and the basic selection criteria for children's materials.
- The Library does not subscribe to children's periodicals that are intended to be expendable.

Audio-visuals

- Audio-visuals for the young adult and children's collections are selected by the same guidelines set for audio-visuals in the general selection policy.

3. According to Subject and Current Concerns

The Library strives to provide materials that will promote an enlightened understanding of human, social, civil rights, and current problems.

Current books which are well written and portray an honest picture of a problem or a way of life are added in spite of the use of profanity, slang, dialect, or frank language.

4. The Library should not place any materials in the Juvenile or Young Adult section that, in the honest and good faith discretion of the staff, are sexually explicit, obscene, or harmful to minors. As used herein, "harmful to minors means all of the following: (a) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the material, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest of minors; (b) the material depicts or describes sexual conduct, breast nudity, or genital nudity in a way which is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community with respect to what is suitable for minors; and (c) a reasonable person would find that the material, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors. As used herein, "obscene" means all of the following: (a) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the material, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; (b) the material depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual content, actual or simulated, normal or perverted; or (c) a reasonable person would find that the material, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. The Library will avoid the placement of obscene materials in any section of the Library. The exercise of discretion in this regard does not constitute a denial of service based on age.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE / WEEDING PROCESS

The Athens-Limestone County Public Library's staff will review and evaluate the library print and non-print materials at regular intervals to determine if they should remain in the current collection. As the final step in the library's overall selection process, collection maintenance and weeding ensure the library offers materials that are factual, undamaged, and in-demand

The Library believes timely and adequate availability of significant materials is necessary and, therefore, it may duplicate selected titles even though they may soon be weeded.

The Library does not replace all books withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear. The need for replacement in each case is considered in relation to several factors: number of duplicate copies; existence of adequate coverage of a subject; other similar material in the collection, especially more up-to-date and better material; and demand for the specific title or subject.

GUIDANCE FOR MAINTENANCE / WEEDING

- Staff members in charge of collections consider space, budget, and user needs when deciding how much and how often to weed.
- Staff members actively search for replacement items for dated materials.
- Depending on condition, materials that are withdrawn from the collection may be offered for sale through the Friends of the Library.
- Donations and other items that are not added to the collection may also be included in Friends of the Library sales.
- Damaged or factually inaccurate materials may be disposed of.

CRITERIA TO BE CONSIDERED FOR WEEDING THE COLLECTION

ALCPL continually withdraws items from its collection based on regular reviews and the weeding decisions are based on well-defined factors, including:

- **Currency** – the subject matter is out-of-date, factually inaccurate, or no longer relevant to current times; illustrations are outmoded or perpetuate gender, racial, or cultural stereotypes.
- **Technical Quality** – non-print materials with poor, faded, or off-color visuals; faulty or inferior sound reproductions.

- **Dispensability** – duplicate copies no longer needed in the collection.
- **Physical Condition** – the item is torn, soiled, or worn; pages or parts are missing.
- **Poor Purchases** – materials purchased that were not quality items and/or items not appropriate to the overall implementation of ALCPL’s mission.
- **Reliability** – non-fiction items presenting as factual information that is inconsistent with other known and reliable sources.
- **Short-lived Topics** – the item is faddish and no longer of interest.
- **Subject Areas** – the information is not timely.
- **Dewey Decimal Balance** – the item is not needed in order to maintain a balanced collection based upon the standard organizational structure provided by the Dewey Decimal System of material classification.

Careful consideration is practiced before weeding an item that:

- is a work of historical significance in the field of literature;
- has unusual illustrations or the illustrations are by a well-known artist;
- is a work by a local author or illustrator;
- describes local history or personalities;
- is a memorial gift.

Athens-Limestone County Public Library is not an archive or research library and no items are kept indefinitely when they meet criteria for weeding.

MATERIALS SELECTION RECONSIDERATION PROCEDURES

Athens-Limestone County Public Library unconditionally supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

The Board of Trustees has endorsed the policy that while any one individual is free to reject any books or materials that don't meet their individual approval, this right of individual censorship cannot be used to restrict the freedom of other individuals to read the materials they choose. The Library will make efforts to properly categorize materials in such a way that certain materials as stated herein are not placed in Juvenile or Young Adult sections, however, the responsibility for the choice of library material for minors rests with their parents or legal guardians.

However, patrons of Athens-Limestone County Public Library who are in good standing with the library may request materials be withdrawn or reconsidered and should be afforded every opportunity to express their concerns. **A work will be evaluated as a whole, not by excerpts taken out of context.**

An item in the collection will not be removed or relocated at the request of anyone who disagrees with the content or format unless it can be proved that the item is in violation of the Athens-Limestone County Public Library Material Selection Policy or by final judgments or rulings by a court of competent jurisdiction.

If a complaint is made, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. If possible, the patron should be referred immediately to the department head or the Library Director. The department head or Director should have a discussion with the patron about the material in question informing the patron of the selection policies and the procedures for questioning materials. If the Library Director agrees that the item should be removed or relocated, then the Library Director will do so.
2. If the patron wishes to pursue the complaint further, they must submit a request for reconsideration form to the Library Director. The patron will be provided with a written copy of the Materials Selection Policy and a copy of the ALCPL reconsideration form.
3. Staff should inform the Library Director when a form is given out.
4. Each request form will be limited to a single title.
 - Multiple requests may be submitted by the same patron, but the library staff

will determine which material will be reviewed first and will generally conduct only one review at a time.

- Library materials shall only be subject to review once every three years.
 - A maximum of three book complaints is allowed per household per 12 months.
5. The challenged materials will remain in circulation during the reconsideration process, unless the Library Director, in the director's discretion, determines that there is a reasonable likelihood that the challenge will be successful. The library will not purchase additional copies but will take all steps possible to obtain copies from other libraries.
 6. Upon receipt of the completed complaint form, the Library Director will respond to the patron within two business days to inform them of the process.
 7. The Director will then request a review of the challenged material by a Review Committee within 15 business days.
 8. The Review Committee, facilitated by the Library Director, will meet after all members have been able to review the material in its entirety.
 9. The Library Director will inform the patron and the Board of Trustees of the decision made by the Review Committee within two business days of the decision.
 10. The patron may make a written appeal to the Board of Trustees at least 14 days in advance of a scheduled Board meeting.
 11. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.
 12. Reconsideration committee decisions are reported to appropriate agencies and archived in official Board Meeting documents.

Once submitted, the Citizens Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form becomes public record and is subject to Freedom of Information Act requests.

The forms will be held in the Director's office indefinitely.

REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Review Committee is called by the Library Director and approved by the Board of Trustees. The Review Committee consists of five members. The Library Director serves as facilitator but does not vote. Persons to be called for a Review Committee shall be:

- One Alabama-certified K-12 educator
- One member of the Foundation or Friends of Athens-Limestone County Public Library
- One Athens-Limestone County Public Library staff member
- One member of the Athens-Limestone County Public Library Board of Trustees
- One library patron who is in good standing with the library.

The Review Committee's responsibilities include:

- reading, viewing, or listening to the material in its entirety;
- meeting with the other members of the Review Committee;
- checking general acceptance of the material by reading reviews and consulting recommended reading lists from reputable sources such as Booklist, Common Sense Media, or other libraries
- determining the extent to which the material supports the Materials Selection Policy
- evaluating material for its strength and value as a whole and not in part

At the conclusion of its meeting, the Review Committee will make one of the following decisions:

- Retain the material
- Move the material to a different collection in the library
- Withdraw the material from circulation

CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

The Board of Trustees of Athens-Limestone County Public Library has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library resources to the ALCPL Director and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources.

Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures.

If you wish to request reconsideration of library resources, please return the completed form to Library Director, Athens-Limestone County Public Library, 603 South Jefferson Street, Athens, AL 35611.

Request initiated by _____

Library Card Number _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Complainant represents: Himself / Herself or

Name of organization _____

Author _____ Hardcover ___ Paperback ___ Other ___

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Have you examined (read/heard/seen) the material in its entirety? Yes ___ No ___

If you did not read or view the item, what resource brought the item to your attention?

What concerns you about this resource? (Please be specific; cite pages, etc.)

What do you feel might be the result of reading or viewing this material?

Are you aware of the judgment of this item by literary critics? _____

For what age group would you recommend this item? _____

What would you like your library to do about this item?

- Do not lend it to my child
- Withdraw it from all library users
- Send it back to the staff for reevaluation

Are there resources you recommend that provide additional information and viewpoints on this topic?

Signature of Complainant: _____

Upon submission, this document becomes public record and is subject to Freedom of Information Act requests.