



SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This policy is for application to those libraries within the City of Buffalo (Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries).

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) in support of its mission collects, preserves, and houses original manuscripts, books, artifacts, and other items that focus on local history. The Special Collections Department is responsible for the items which are housed at the Central Library and in the Buffalo Branch Libraries. The B&ECPL is committed to sharing these works with the public through display, exhibit, publication, and by other appropriate means.

II. SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Special collections of the B&ECPL including but not limited to manuscripts, scrapbooks, scored music, maps, genealogy resources, rare books, the William A. Miles Center for African and African-American Studies collection, and certain reference and rare materials represent unique resources for research. Therefore special conditions may apply to the management of these collections as determined by the Library Director.

III. RARE BOOK COLLECTION

The rare book collection is housed in the Central Library's Rare Book Room. The rare book collection is evaluated and maintained by specialized staff, trained in rare book collection and care, based on established rare book collection development procedural guidelines and in keeping with the strategic plan of the B&ECPL.

IV. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

A. Acquisitions

1. The B&ECPL acquires items for its special collections, including the rare book collection, through:
 - a. Donations, solicited and unsolicited;
 - b. Purchase;
 - c. Exchange with other repositories or collectors; and
 - d. Transfer from other collections.

2. Items accepted will supplement existing collecting areas or strengthen areas that have been identified as areas of interest.
3. Efforts will be made to ensure that items accepted will be housed in appropriate containers and stored in secure, climate-controlled areas.

B. Responsible Collecting

1. A responsible level of collecting will be maintained by staying within the constraints of available storage space, ability to process items within a reasonable amount of time, and ability to provide for the care, preservation of, and access to the items.
2. Consideration will be given to the best placement of the items.
3. Collected items must be in a condition that is stable for long-term storage and/or not detrimental to surrounding collections. Items must be free of mold or pests.
4. B&ECPL will make every attempt to avoid acquiring items known to be primarily collected by another institution, unless there is a strong connection with an existing B&ECPL special or rare book collection or another compelling reason exists to accept the items.
5. B&ECPL will not knowingly acquire items that have been stolen or illegally obtained.

C. Nature of Ownership

1. Items may be accepted by deed of gift, bequest, and/or other forms of documentation by which full and absolute title is transferred to the B&ECPL.
2. The B&ECPL reserves the right to determine retention, location, cataloging, treatment, and other considerations relating to the use or disposition of the items. Any limitation on use must be approved by the Library Director at the time of accession.
3. The Special Collections Department may accept temporary deposits or loans for the purposes of exhibits/displays, research, or other, as deemed within the mission of the B&ECPL.

4. The B&ECPL may accept items on permanent deposit or loan if the intent is for the B&ECPL to become the owner of the items.
 - a. Permanent deposits and/or loans without the intent of the B&ECPL becoming the owner of the items require approval by the B&ECPL Board of Trustees.

D. Deaccessioning

1. Items designated as special collections may be deaccessed from the collection using standards as set in Section II.B. of B&ECPL's Collection Development Policy.
2. Items designated as rare books are intended to remain a permanent part of the B&ECPL collection.
 - a. Proposals regarding deaccessioning/exchange of materials in the rare book collection must be presented in writing to the Library Director and the B&ECPL Board of Trustees Special Collections Committee for review and recommendation to the B&ECPL Board of Trustees.
 - b. Any and all deaccessioning and/or exchange of materials from the rare book collection must be approved by the B&ECPL Board of Trustees.

Adopted July 21, 2016 per Resolution 2016-29.

Amended September 19, 2019 per Resolution 2019-33.

Amended July 20, 2023 per Resolution 2023-22.