
Board Policy

Works of Art in Library Facilities

Policy Statement

The Pierce County Library System (“Library”) strives to make its buildings welcoming, inspiring, and reflective of the community’s culture and history. The Library may accept works of art as a gift, purchase, commission, or include it in building projects.

Purpose

This policy explains how the Library chooses and manages works of art in its buildings or on its properties.

Policy

The Library will consider prospective gifts, loans, and/or purchases of artwork for inclusion and display in Library facilities in accordance with the terms and criteria outlined in this policy. Art may be acquired through open competitions, limited competitions, direct selection or artists, or direct selection of artworks as part of new building projects or renovations.

- The Executive Director (or designee) may accept art donations that support the Library’s mission in accordance with the [Donations and Sponsorships Policy](#).
- Art accepted or purchased by the Library, or has its ownership transferred to the Library becomes Library property.
- The Library decides where and how to display, move, or remove the art.
- The Library may decline any art donations or purchases.
- The Library will insure, repair, and maintain its art collection, as needed.
- Artwork is not guaranteed to remain permanently on its current method of display and may be removed or relocated.

When selecting or accepting art, including gifts, the Library considers but is not limited to:

- **Condition** – the materials used, functionality, technical concerns, and any safety risks.
- **Design** – the artwork fits within the theme, concept, or aesthetics of the environment. The art should enhance the space, create a focal point, or reflect the community’s identity. All art forms are considered.
- **Subject** – the work of art is appropriate for all audiences, may have historical or cultural significance, and aligns with the Library’s mission, vision, or values.
- **Suitability** – the size, materials, and theme are suitable and safe for display in a public library setting.

Donations of art may be refused for any reason determined by the Library, including but not limited to; the art is culturally insensitive, there is no suitable place for it, it is too expensive to display or maintain, or it doesn’t align with the Library’s mission.

Artwork may be declared surplus and disposed of pursuant to the Library's [Surplus Policy](#). Reasons for removal may include the work's condition, lack of space, renovations, display issues, or if it no longer serves its purpose. For works of art that are affixed into a structure, such as stained glass windows, structural carvings, and murals, methods of surplus may include destructive and non-destructive removal, such as covering it up or destroying it. If the Library transfers ownership of art, the new owner is responsible for all costs, such as transportation. Once ownership changes, the Library no longer has any claim to the art.

Adopted by the Pierce County Rural Library District Board of Trustees, January 21, 1988. Revised September 16, 1999. Revised January 12, 2011. Revised September 14, 2022. Revised January 8, 2025.

By the enactment of this policy the Board of Trustees of Pierce County Library System is concurrently rescinding any prior policy or procedure within PCLS that is either in conflict with or expansive of the matters addressed in this policy.