

Archival Collection Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines the principles and procedures governing the establishment, management, preservation, and provision of access (both physical and online) to the Archival Collection of the Newark Public Library (hereafter referred to as "the Library"). The purpose of this collection is to preserve and make accessible records of enduring historical, cultural, social, and informational value to the community served by the Library. This collection serves as a vital resource for researchers, local historians, students, and the general public, providing insights into the region's past and present.

2. Scope of the Collection

The Archival Collection will encompass materials that document the history, culture, and development of the Newark Public Library, the Village of Newark, and the Town of Arcadia. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Local Government Records: Minutes, reports, ordinances, and other significant documents from local municipalities (where agreements exist for their preservation and where the Library is the best possible repository).
- Organizational Records: Constitutions, meeting minutes, newsletters, reports, and other records of local businesses, non-profits, and community organizations.
- Personal Papers: Diaries, letters, photographs, scrapbooks, and other materials that document the lives and experiences of individuals and families within the community.
- Photographic and Audiovisual Materials: Photographs, films, video recordings, and audio recordings documenting local events, people, places, and activities.
- Oral Histories: Recorded interviews with individuals who have significant knowledge or experiences related to the community.
- Maps and Architectural Drawings: Maps, plats, and architectural plans relevant to the local area.
- Local Publications: Newspapers, newsletters, brochures, pamphlets, and other published materials related to the community.
- Digital Records: Digitized versions of physical archival materials, born-digital records (e.g., websites, digital documents, social media archives related to local events), and other digital assets of enduring value.

- Artifacts: Select objects (e.g., commemorative items, tools, clothing) that have significant historical value and sufficient provenance and documentation, where the Library has the resources for their proper storage and preservation.

3. Selection and Appraisal Criteria

The Library will appraise donated and potentially acquired materials to determine their archival value based on the following criteria:

- Historical Significance: Does the material document significant events, individuals, organizations, or trends in the history of the community?
- Informational Value: Does the material contain unique or important information not readily available elsewhere?
- Evidential Value: Does the material serve as primary evidence of local activities, policies, and cultural heritage?
- Rarity and Uniqueness: Is the material unique or are copies scarce?
- Condition: Is the material in a condition that allows for preservation and access (both physical and digital)?
- Resource Implications: Are the resources (staff time, storage space, preservation costs, digitization costs, online platform maintenance) required for the material justified by its value and potential use?
- Connection to the Community: Does the material have a clear and demonstrable connection to the history and people of the Village of Newark, Town of Arcadia?

Materials deemed to have temporary or limited value may not be accepted into the Archival Collection. The Library reserves the right to decline donations that do not meet these criteria or for which the Library cannot provide adequate care and access or for which repositories other than the Library (eg. local historical societies, government offices, dedicated museums, etc.) would be more appropriate. Materials encompassing a broader scope than the Newark Public Library, the Village of Newark, and the Town of Arcadia will only be considered as they directly relate to those three subjects.

4. Acquisition and Accessioning

- Materials will be acquired primarily through donations from individuals, families, organizations, and local government entities. The Library may also actively seek out significant materials.
- All acquired materials, whether physical or digital, will be formally accessioned. Physical materials will be assigned a unique identifier and recorded in an accession register or

database, including information about the donor, date of acquisition, description of the contents, and initial condition assessment.

- Digital materials will be accessioned with appropriate metadata, file naming conventions, and documentation of their origin and technical specifications.

5. Arrangement and Description

- **Physical Materials:** Archival materials will be arranged and described in a manner that facilitates their use while maintaining their original order whenever possible to preserve context. Finding aids (e.g., inventories, registers, guides) will be created to provide intellectual access to the collection. The level of description will be appropriate to the volume and significance of the materials. The Library will strive to adhere to relevant archival standards and best practices for arrangement and description (e.g., Describing Archives: A Content Standard - DACS).
- **Digital Materials:** Digital archival materials will be organized logically within the Library's digital asset management system or online platform. Metadata will be created using appropriate standards (e.g., Dublin Core) to ensure discoverability and provide contextual information. Efforts will be made to link digital surrogates to their physical counterparts where applicable.

6. Preservation and Maintenance (Physical and Digital)

- **Physical Materials:** The Library will take appropriate measures to ensure the long-term preservation of physical archival materials. This includes maintaining suitable environmental conditions (temperature, humidity, light control), providing secure storage, using acid-free and archival-quality materials, and implementing appropriate handling procedures. Conservation treatment will be undertaken as needed and as resources allow, prioritizing materials in poor condition and those of high significance.
- **Digital Materials:** Digital materials will be managed according to best practices for digital preservation to ensure their ongoing accessibility and integrity. This includes regular backups, monitoring file formats for obsolescence, planning for data migration, and maintaining appropriate metadata. The Library will strive to adhere to relevant digital preservation standards and guidelines.

7. Access and Use (Physical and Online)

- **Physical Access:** The Archival Collection is available for research by appointment during designated hours. Researchers may be required to complete a registration form and agree to abide by rules governing the use of archival materials, including proper handling and citation. Photocopying, scanning, or other forms of reproduction of physical materials may be permitted at the discretion of the Library staff, taking into

account the condition of the materials, copyright restrictions, and available resources. Fees may apply for reproduction services.

- **Online Access:** The Library will strive to provide online access to digitized archival materials through its website or other appropriate digital platforms. Access may be provided through searchable databases, online exhibits, or digital collections. Metadata will be used to enhance discoverability. The Library will clearly indicate any terms of use, copyright restrictions, and citation guidelines for online materials.
- **Restrictions:** Access to certain materials, both physical and digital, may be restricted due to legal requirements (e.g., privacy laws), donor agreements, or the fragile condition of the materials. Any restrictions will be clearly documented in finding aids and on the online platform where applicable. When possible, the Library will strive to provide access to digital copies of physical items that are in too fragile condition to allow for public access.
- **Interlibrary Loan:** Archival materials are non-circulating and not available for interlibrary loan due to their unique and often fragile nature. Digital reproductions may be available to researchers at other institutions depending on copyright restrictions, staff availability to facilitate interlibrary access, and file size.
- **Rights and Reproductions:** The Library will clearly outline its policies regarding the use, reproduction, and publication of archival materials, including any fees and required permissions.

8. Deaccessioning

Deaccessioning is the process of permanently removing materials from the Archival Collection. This will be undertaken only in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the following principles:

- Materials may be considered for deaccessioning if they fall outside the scope of the collection policy, are duplicates of other holdings (unless the duplicates offer significant differences in condition or annotation), are in irreparable condition with no informational value, or if their continued retention poses an undue burden on Library resources (including digital storage and maintenance).
- All deaccessioning decisions will be made by designated Library staff in consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g., donors, local historical societies) and will be documented in writing, including the reasons for the deaccessioning and the disposition of the materials.
- Deaccessioned materials will be disposed of in an ethical and appropriate manner, considering options such as transfer to another repository, return to the donor (if

applicable), or destruction if no other viable option exists. Proceeds from the sale of deaccessioned materials (if any) will be used to support the Archival Collection.

9. Intellectual Property and Copyright

The Library will adhere to all applicable copyright laws and will make reasonable efforts to inform researchers of any known copyright restrictions on archival materials, both physical and digital. Researchers are responsible for obtaining any necessary permissions for publication or other uses beyond fair use. The Library may hold copyright to some of its born-digital materials or digitized content.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically (at least every three to five years) and updated as needed to reflect changes in the Library's mission, resources, legal requirements, archival best practices, and technological advancements in providing online access.

Adopted by Newark Public Board of Trustees August 14, 2025