

Royal Oak Public Library Policies

Collections Section 4.20 - Binding and Replacement

Candidates for either rebinding or replacement must meet selection criteria just as they did when purchased initially. In addition, several factors need to be considered, including the general condition of the damaged book, the nature of the damage, availability of a replacement, the costs of rebinding or purchasing another copy, and the costs of staff time to re-process and re-link the rebound or replaced item. Damaged books are not automatically rebound; lost or missing books are not automatically replaced.

I. Definitions

Mending consists of taping or gluing pages and spines in-house; it is less costly and less durable than binding.

Binding involves sending the item to a vendor who binds it for a fee*. The vendor also trims the pages and adds a new cover. Replacing means discarding the item and purchasing another copy, or using a donation.

II. Mending Criteria

Generally books are mended if the damage is relatively small, for example, loose pages or a loose spine. Books that are expected to have short shelf-life (such as high-demand paperbacks, or travel guides) and books of a limited topical interest are also good candidates for mending.

III. Binding Criteria

The library does not bind magazines or pamphlets into volumes, and books described in “Mending Criteria” (above) are not considered for re-binding. Damage to the book must be relatively severe so that mending is not an option. Criteria for re-binding include valid content, and pages in good useable condition with sufficient allowance for trimming when rebound..

IV. Replacement Criteria

Damaged, missing or lost books may be considered for replacement if they meet selection criteria just as they did when acquired initially. Standard/classic titles (as listed in bibliographic tools) will be replaced depending on collection needs. Current editions will be purchased to replace dated or superceded editions. Circulation figures may be checked for an indication of demand. If the cost of replacing is less than or equal to the cost of rebinding, the title will be replaced, if available. If the cost of replacing is significantly greater than the cost of rebinding, the damaged book must be unsuitable for re-binding to be considered for replacement.

V. Government Documents

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Librarians follow the same criteria for government documents that apply to binding, mending and replacement of other library materials. Documents are unique, and U.S. Government regulations about the retention and disposal of documents affect decisions about binding and replacement. Some documents must be retained permanently, others are routinely superseded after a few months or years, and the majority may be disposed of only after the mandatory five-year retention period.

Some documents require special preparations for the public to use them. The library may need to provide binders, covers, cases or other packaging supplies so the materials can be shelved.

Replacement of documents is less likely because sources and supplies are limited; the government may no longer sell the item, and there may not be a copy available from another depository. There is the possibility, however that the document may be available in an electronic version or online with a government PURL (persistent uniform resource locator).

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