

**TO:** Public Library Directors  
**FROM:** John Wahl, Chair  
APLS Executive Board  
**SUBJECT:** Definition of “Sexually Explicit”  
**DATE:** May 12, 2025

Dear Library Directors,

Over the past few months, there have been ongoing questions regarding what qualifies as sexually explicit material under APLS code. The APLS Board is committed to providing libraries with the clarity and support needed to navigate this issue confidently.

At its meeting on May 8, 2025, the APLS Executive Board approved the following definition of “sexually explicit” for the purposes of APLS code and policy compliance. This definition is based on existing state and federal guidelines and is intended to serve as a clear and practical reference as you address this matter in your libraries. In order to comply with state code, please move all books with these ‘sexually explicit’ topics to the adult section of the library effective immediately, as they do not require a patron reconsideration form to be submitted or individual library board’s review.

Thank you for your service to Alabama libraries.

Definition of “Sexually Explicit”

**“Sexually explicit” is defined as any visual, written, or audio content that depicts or describes sexual conduct, including:**

**Sexual intercourse, including genital-genital, oral-genital, anal-genital, or anal-anal contact, whether between persons of the same or opposite sex;**

- **Sexual excitement;**
- **Nudity;**
- **Bestiality;**
- **Masturbation;**
- **Sadistic or masochistic abuse; or**
- **Lascivious exhibition of the anus, genitals, or pubic area of any person.**