



# **HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD**

## **POLICY MANUAL**

October 2025

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## **Library Board By-Laws for the Regulation of the Business of the Board**

Author: Hamilton Public Library Board

Approval Date: June 2020

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The Hamilton Public Library Board is duly constituted as a corporation and governed by the provisions of the Public Libraries Act, Statutes of Ontario, 1990, Chapter P. 44 and is established by the provisions of City of Hamilton By-Law 04-019.

The Hamilton Public Library Board, hereinafter called “the Board”, enacts the following by-laws for regulation of the business of the Board.

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### **Section 1.0 Governance Vision of the Hamilton Public Library Board**

The Hamilton Public Library Board oversees the purpose, plans and policies of the Hamilton Public Library. It is the responsibility of the Library Board to ensure that the funding it receives provides the best possible library service to Hamilton residents. In addition, it is committed to providing effective governance for the Hamilton Public Library to ensure services and programs offered by HPL remain relevant to the changing needs of the communities we serve. The Library Board has four main functions:

1. To establish the mission and strategic directions.
2. To hire and evaluate the Chief Executive Officer/Chief Librarian.
3. To ensure resources are in place to achieve the mission.
4. To monitor and audit results of programs and resources.

## Section 2.0 Corporation

In accordance with the Corporations Act, the Board shall have a corporate seal, which shall be under the control and responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer. This seal shall be affixed under the direction of the Board to all deeds, contracts, or documents requiring the seal, which seal shall be attested to by the signatures of the Chair and the Secretary, or by such other member and/or other officer as the Board shall direct.

The Head Office of the Board shall be at the Central Library, 55 York Boulevard, Hamilton, Ontario L8R 3K1.

## Section 3.0 Officers

The Board shall have the following officers:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Chief Executive Officer

### 3.1 Chair

The Chair shall hold office for one year and may be re-elected for a maximum of one additional consecutive year (See **Elections Section 5.0**).

The primary role of the Chair of the Board is to ensure the proper functioning of the Board and the proper conduct of Board business, in accordance with all relevant legislation and with the rules of procedure adopted by the Board.

The Chair's responsibilities include:

1. Presiding at regular and special meetings of the Board in the manner and extent prescribed by the Board.
2. Preparing the Board agenda with the Vice-Chair and Secretary.

3. Committing the Board to no course of action unless specifically authorized by the Board to do so.
4. Serving as an ex officio member of all Board committees.
5. Only the Chair may represent and speak for the Board in an official capacity to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions and in stating Chair decisions.
6. Acting as one of the authorized signing officers of all documents pertaining to Board business.
7. Representing the Board, alone or with other members of the Board, at any public or private meetings for the purpose of conducting, promoting or completing the business of the Board.
8. Notifying the Vice-Chair and the Secretary, if for any reason, the Chair is unable to perform these functions.

### **3.2 Vice-Chair**

The Vice-Chair shall hold office for one year and may be re-elected for a maximum of one additional consecutive year.

The Vice-Chair, in the absence or illness of the Chair, shall act in the place and stead of the Chair and while so acting has all the powers of the Chair.

The Vice-Chair shall participate in agenda review with the Chair and Secretary.

If both the Chair and Vice Chair are unavailable, the Secretary will assume the duties of the Chair.

### **3.3 Secretary**

The Secretary of the Board shall be the Chief Executive Officer.

### **3.4 Treasurer**

The Treasurer of the Board shall be the Chief Executive Officer.

### **3.5 Chief Executive Officer**

The Board shall appoint the Chief Executive Officer, who shall be its Chief Librarian, and who shall hold office until the Board rescinds the appointment or a new appointment is made. The Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible, under the supervision of the Board, for the general conduct and management of the Hamilton Public Library.

Only decisions of the Board are binding on the CEO.

1. Decisions or instructions of individual Board Members, officers or committees are not binding on the CEO except in rare circumstances when the Board has specifically authorized or delegated such exercise of authority.

2. In the case of Board Members or committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorization, the CEO can refuse such requests.

Operational achievement and conduct of library staff are the responsibility of the CEO, to whom the Board has delegated authority over and accountability for staff performance.

1. The Board will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the CEO.
2. The Board will refrain from evaluating, either formally or informally, any staff other than the CEO.

Systematic and rigorous monitoring of the CEO's job performance will be conducted in accordance with the Chief Librarian/ CEO Performance Appraisal document.

(<http://www.hpl.ca/articles/chief-librarianceo-performance-appraisal-policy>)

## **Section 4.0 Board Members' Code of Conduct**

Board Members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility by adhering to the regulations of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter M.50 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m50>))

There will be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any Board Member and the organization except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity and equal access to inside information.

Board Members will not use their positions to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members or close associates. In the event that a Board Member accepts employment with either the City of Hamilton or the Hamilton Public Library during their term, they shall resign immediately upon acceptance of said employment.

Any Board Member who declares their candidacy for public office, whether at the municipal, provincial or federal level, shall resign from the Board upon public declaration of their candidacy. This provision does not apply, however, to the Councilors of the City of Hamilton who are appointed to serve on the Hamilton Public Library Board.

Members will annually disclose their involvements with other organizations, with vendors, or any other associations that might produce a conflict.

Members will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and understand that it is the Chair's role to represent and speak on behalf of the Board.

## 4.1 Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy occurring on the Board, the Secretary, upon instructions from the Board in session, shall advise the Clerk of the City of Hamilton and request that a new member be appointed to fill the vacancy under the conditions contained in the Public Libraries Act.

In the event of a vacancy occurring during the year in the office of Chair or Vice-Chair, the Board at its first regular meeting thereafter shall elect a new Chair or Vice-Chair to serve for the remainder of the elected time in that office.

## 4.2 Resignation

Members of the Board who must resign before the end of their term of appointment on the Board shall inform both the Clerk of the City of Hamilton and the Secretary of the Board in writing, specifying the effective date of their resignation.

# Section 5.0 Inaugural Meeting and Elections

## 5.1 Inaugural Meeting

In the first year of its term, the Board shall hold its inaugural meeting at a place and time to be determined by the Chief Executive Officer, provided that such meeting shall be held within 30 days of the appointment of a majority of its members.

## 5.2 Elections

In the first year of a new Board's term the Officers shall be elected at the inaugural meeting of the Board and serve until the following January, when there will be the election of the Officers for that year. In each subsequent year of a Board's term, the election of the Officers shall take place in January.

The Secretary of the Board shall take the chair and shall call for the Nominating Committee Report with the full slate of nominations for the Chair, Vice-Chair and members of the standing committees. The Chief Executive Officer shall introduce the nominee for each position individually and then ask if there are any nominations from the floor for the same position.

Any member of the Board has the right to make nominations from the floor. This can either be a self-nomination for any position - Chair, Vice-Chair or member of a standing committee – or the nomination of someone else.

1. Nominations shall be made with no seconder required.
2. Nominations shall be closed by a motion made and seconded.
3. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

4. The nominee receiving a clear majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected by the Chief Executive Officer.
5. Should no member receive a clear majority, balloting shall proceed with the nominee's name receiving the smallest number of votes being dropped.

## **Section 6.0 Meetings and Notice of Meetings**

The Library Board shall meet, at least 7 times a year. Board meetings will take place in the Board Room at the Central Library, 55 York Boulevard and be live streamed. Normally, the Board will hold its regular meetings on the third Wednesday of each month, except July and August, at the Central Library and through Live Stream. The Board may agree to reschedule a meeting to another time or place.

The dates of Board and committee meetings will be listed on the Library's website. The upcoming meeting dates will be posted as they get scheduled; however, a minimum of three days' advance notice on the website is required. Written notice of all regular meetings together with the proposed agenda and the minutes of the immediately preceding regular meeting and of any special meetings shall be communicated to each member of the Board at least three days in advance of such meetings.

### **6.1 Electronic Participation**

All Board meetings will be live streamed. Except during declared emergencies, Board members are encouraged to participate in-person, however, they may opt to participate electronically. Members of the public will be able to watch the meetings live by following the link on the website. Instructions for public participation in the electronic meeting will be posted on the website.

### **6.2 Attendance**

Board Members are expected to attend all scheduled monthly meetings of the Board, either in person or through online participation. Any member who must be absent from a meeting must advise the Secretary in advance. In any event, absence from three consecutive scheduled meetings (according to the Public Libraries Act, section 13 (c)) will result in the member's disqualification from the Board unless the member is 'excused for cause' by a motion of the Board. Library Board members that are City Councilors are excused for Council duties. Board members may be excused for longer periods for medical reasons or other personal emergencies.

The Secretary shall record the names of members in attendance in each meeting of the Board and of its committees.

### 6.3 Quorum

A quorum, which shall be a majority of the Board, must be present for the transaction of business at a meeting. If a quorum is not present within fifteen minutes after the hour for which any Board meeting has been called, the Secretary shall record the names of such members present and the Board shall stand adjourned. Any member declaring a conflict of interest in a matter to be discussed during the meeting will not be counted in establishing the quorum for that matter.

Nothing in the foregoing shall prohibit the members in attendance for a regular meeting, when no quorum is present, from constituting themselves as a committee dealing with such agenda items as they see fit.

However, no decisions taken at such a meeting may be executed until ratified by motion at a regular meeting of the Board or, when time is of the essence, written approval of such decisions may be obtained from a majority of the members of the Board.

### 6.4 Voting

All members of the Board (including the Chair) - unless they have declared a conflict of interest on a matter and are therefore ineligible to vote on that matter - shall vote on all questions. Any motion on which there is an equality of votes shall be deemed to be lost. Abstentions are counted as a negative or no vote. Board members may request their vote be recorded in the minutes.

Motions shall be carried by a simple majority (more than one half the total members present eligible to vote), except as otherwise provided for in this By-Law.

Notice of motion given at the previous meeting and two-thirds majority vote is required for:

1. A motion to reconsider a lost motion.
2. A motion to amend the by-laws.

### 6.5 Agenda Procedure

The Secretary will work with the Chair and Vice Chair to determine the Agenda for any meeting of the Board. The standard process for getting items added to the agenda is for Board Members to communicate with the Chair and Secretary, preferably with a ten (10) day notice prior to a meeting.

The Secretary and Chair will then develop draft motions, presentations and reports as needed. Other than routine business or those arising out of reports from committees, the Chair may rule items out of order.

Board Members, in extraordinary circumstances where they deem the standard process unsatisfactory, may submit a formal notice of motion to the Chair and Secretary who will ensure their motion is attached to the Board package unedited. Notice of such a motion will be sent to the Chair and Secretary with at least ten (10) days' notice before the meeting.

## 6.6 Meeting Procedural Rules

The rules and practice set out in *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern wherever applicable in all cases not specifically provided for in these by-laws.

## 6.7 Order of Business

The order of business at regular meetings of the Board shall be as follows, subject to the discretion of the Chair:

1. Discussion
2. Acceptance of the Agenda
3. Minutes
4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
5. Presentations
6. Consent Items
7. Business Arising from the Minutes
8. Correspondence
9. Reports
10. New Business
11. Private and Confidential
12. Date of Next Meeting
13. Adjournment

## 6.8 Delegations

Members of the public may make verbal presentations to the Board as a delegation with the permission of the Chair or upon written notification to the Secretary, received seven (7) days in advance of the meeting.

## 6.9 Minutes

The Secretary or designate shall keep Minutes of every meeting of the Board. The Minutes shall be confirmed by motion at the next following Board meeting.

## 6.10 In Camera Sessions

An *in camera* session of the Board shall be held when it is expedient to consider all or part of an agenda *in camera* because “intimate financial or personal matters” may be disclosed in debate and the desirability of protecting against the consequences of such disclosure outweighs the desirability of holding the meeting in public.

The decision must be confirmed by the Board or Board Committee in the form of a motion “THAT item(s) #\_\_\_be considered during an *in camera* session”. Such a motion shall be non-debatable and, if it is carried, the Chair shall designate a time for the session to be held. An *in camera* session shall be ended by a motion that the regular session be resumed.

Any actions determined during an *in camera* session must be authorized by a Board motion passed during the regular open session and recorded in public minutes. However, the Board’s Secretary may designate the minutes of *in camera* sessions as confidential if Section 28(2) of the Public Libraries Act applies.

## 6.11 Committees

The Board has two standing Committees: The Nominating Committee and the Audit Committee, but may also appoint Ad Hoc Committees.

1. Ad Hoc Committees may be appointed by the Board to deal with special issues assigned by the Board. Such committees report to the Board and shall be dissolved immediately upon making their final report to the Board.
2. A committee may have any number of members. The Board shall name a chair for each Ad Hoc committee.

A quorum for all committees shall be the majority of members. Committees meet when required at the call of the committee chair.

The Chair of the Board shall be a member of all Committees of the Board *ex officio*.

The Secretary of the Board (or designate) shall attend all committee meetings and shall be the Secretary of all committees.

## 6.12 Standing Committees

### 6.12.1 Nominating Committee

The **Nominating Committee** will be composed of four (4) members, - the Secretary of the Board plus three (3) elected Board Members. It shall be established annually during the election of Officers.

In a municipal election year, the outgoing Chair of the Board shall appoint the Nominating Committee from among the members of the new Board immediately following the appointment of the new Board by City Council.

In each year, the Nominating Committee shall meet before and report to the January Meeting following its appointment.

Duties of the Nominating Committee:

1. To select from the nominations received for each position or standing committees, the most appropriate candidate. In their selection across the whole slate, the Committee will endeavour to balance candidates with expertise and new Board Members with a view to succession planning over the term of the Board.
2. To recruit candidates for those positions where no nominations have been received.
3. If any member of the Nominating Committee intends to stand for election as Chair or Vice Chair, they shall inform the Nominating Committee and withdraw from it.
4. To ensure that their report indicating the full slate of candidates is ready to be included with the January Board meeting package.
5. To ensure that the right of any member to either self-nominate or nominate someone else for any of the positions from the floor during elections in January is clearly outlined in their report.

#### 6.12.2      Audit Committee

The **Audit Committee** oversees the financial reporting process, monitors the choice of accounting policies and procedures and monitors internal control procedures to ensure the effective development and maintenance of adequate financial controls and reporting.

The Committee is independent of the auditing function and ensures appropriate actions are taken with audit findings. The Committee has no direct responsibility for the operations and functions of audit areas. It does, however, make recommendations to the Board regarding both factors.

The Audit Committee will be composed of four members of the Hamilton Public Library Board, one of whom shall be the Chair of the Hamilton Public Library Board. Preference will be given to Library Board Members who are financially literate with relevant background in financial matters (i.e. prior experience as a business person, recognized accounting designation, work in the accounting profession, or in the financial accounting department of a current or past organization). Committee members will have no current business relationship or financial interests with the Library or its management.

Members will be appointed at the first meeting in each year of the Board's term and will serve until the end of the year. The members of the Audit Committee will appoint one of the members as Chair who will chair the meeting of the Audit Committee and perform such other duties as required to ensure the proper functioning of the Committee. (See Audit Committee Terms of Reference, Appendix 1, for further information about the duties and responsibilities of this committee).

## **Section 7.0 Payment of Board Expenses**

Citizen appointees shall be paid no salary, fees or honorarium for their services. However, any member of the Board may be reimbursed for their actual, out of pocket expenses and travel costs, incurred as a result of their acting either within or outside the municipality in their capacity as members of the Board. Such payments must be allowed for in the budget that is approved by the Board and Council and the expenses must have been incurred with the prior approval of the Board.

## **Section 8.0 Amendment of the By-Laws**

Amendments to these by-laws may only be made at a regular meeting provided that Notice of Motion in writing shall have been given at the previous meeting. Such amendments shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the Board.

## **Section 9.0 Board Self-Assessment**

A Board self-assessment demonstrates that it believes in the values of accountability, learning and development and establishes its credibility not only with the funding agencies, but also with the public being served. In order to monitor how well it is fulfilling its responsibilities, there will be periodic self-assessments carried out by the Board according to the procedures/ processes and timing agreed upon by the Board.

## **Section 10.0 Effective Date**

These By-Laws shall come into effect on June 17, 2020 and all former By- Laws and Rules of Procedure of predecessor Boards are hereby repealed.

## **Appendix 1: Audit Committee Terms of Reference**

### **Purpose**

The Committee is to oversee the financial reporting process, to monitor the choice of accounting policies and procedures and to monitor internal control procedures to ensure the effective development and maintenance of adequate financial controls and reporting. The Committee is to be independent of the auditing function and ensure appropriate actions are taken with audit findings. The Committee has no direct responsibility for the operations and functions of audit areas. It does, however, make recommendations to the Board regarding both factors.

## Appointment of External Auditors

Under the authority of the Municipal Act, the City of Hamilton shall appoint the external auditor for the Hamilton Public Library.

## Membership

The Audit Committee will be composed of four members of the Hamilton Public Library Board one of whom shall be the Chair of the Hamilton Public Library Board. A quorum shall be two members.

Preference will be given to Library Board Members who are financially literate with relevant background in financial matters (i.e. prior experience as a business person, recognized accounting designation, work in the accounting profession, or in the financial accounting department of a current or past organization). Committee members will have no current business relationship or financial interests with the Library or its management.

Members will be appointed at the first meeting in each year of the Board's term and will serve until the end of the year. The members of the Audit Committee will appoint one of the members as Chair who will chair the meetings of the Audit Committee and perform such other duties as required to ensure the proper functioning of the Committee.

## Meetings

The Committee will meet at least twice in each year – to meet the external auditors to review the scope of the audit and, after the audit has been done, to review the results.

Additional meetings may be held at the Call of the Chair of the Audit Committee, request by a Committee member or by the external auditors. Notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date of the meeting together with an agenda of items to be discussed shall be forwarded to each member of the Committee prior to the date of the meeting in a timely manner.

The external auditors, Chief Librarian and the Director, Finance and Facilities will be invited to attend meetings and, at least once a year, the Committee will meet with the external auditors without Library staff present. The Audit Committee may invite such other persons to its meetings as it deems necessary.

## Duties

The duties of the Committee will be:

1. To meet with the external auditors before the audit commences and to discuss and approve the nature and scope of the audit.
2. To discuss with external auditors' issues such as compliance with accounting standards and proposals by external auditors.

3. To monitor the integrity of the financial statements of the Library and to review, and challenge where necessary, the actions and judgements of management in relation to financial statements before submission to the Board, focusing particularly on:
  - a. Significant accounting policies and practices and any changes in them.
  - b. Major judgmental areas.
  - c. The extent to which the financial statements are affected by any unusual transactions in the year and how they are disclosed.
  - d. The clarity of disclosures.
  - e. Significant adjustments resulting from the audit.
4. To meet with the external auditors' post-audit, at the reporting stage, to discuss the audit, including problems and reservations arising from the audit, and any matters the auditor may wish to discuss.
5. To review the management representation letter, the external auditors' management letter and management's response.
6. To monitor and review the internal audit program (if any) and its effectiveness.
7. To monitor and review the Library's systems for internal financial control, financial reporting and risk management.
8. To consider any major audit recommendations and to consider the major findings of internal investigations and management's response.

## Reporting

The Chair of the Committee shall report to the Board on all meetings of the Committee.

The Committee shall make whatever recommendations to the Board it deems appropriate on any area within its responsibility where action or improvement is needed.

The Committee members shall conduct an annual review of their work and these *Terms of Reference* and make recommendations to the Board.

## APPROVAL HISTORY

March 2005; November 2007; December 2016; June 2020

## CEO/Chief Librarian Performance Appraisal

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Human Resources and Information Services  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: October 2019

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### Introduction

One of the responsibilities of the Library Board is to employ a competent CEO/Chief Librarian (henceforth CEO). This Policy has been developed to ensure that the process is fair, is transparent to Board members, protects confidentiality and is focused on improving the CEO's performance and adherence to Hamilton Public Library's strategic priorities, the basis for the CEO's goals.

### Principles

- The Library Board is responsible for the CEO's Performance Appraisal (PA) process.
- The CEO Performance Appraisal will be conducted consistent with Library Board mission, values and strategic priorities.
- The CEO goals will be the organizational goals that are approved every year as part of the business planning process.

### Criteria for Evaluation

- The purpose of evaluation is to ensure alignment between the Library Board and the CEO and to ensure feedback systems are in place to support ongoing improvement.
- The Library Board will monitor the degree to which Board policies and strategic priorities are met. Monitoring of the CEO's job performance will be solely against expected job outputs. Data that does not do this will not be considered to be monitoring data.
- The Board may acquire monitoring data by one or more of three methods:
  - o Internal reports, in which the CEO discloses performance and compliance information to the Board.
  - o External reports, in which a disinterested, external third party selected by the Board, assesses compliance with Board policies.
  - o Direct Board inspection, in which a designated member or members of the Board assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.
- The standard for performance/compliance shall be a reasonable interpretation of the Board policy or priority being monitored.

## Frequency of Appraisals

The standard period for evaluation will be annually.

## Schedule and Process

The schedule provides a checklist for the steps of the process

- **Establishing Goals: November**
  - o The organizational goals are the CEO's goals and the CEO will draft goals for the coming year.
  - o The goals will follow the standard two-stage process, being received for comment at one meeting, then brought back the following month for approval.
- **Mid-Year Progress Report: June**
  - o CEO presents to the Board a mid-year progress report that includes any needed adjustments to the goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year.
- **Final Report for the year: December**
  - o CEO works with the Board to complete report for the year.
  - o The goals will follow the standard two-stage process, being received for comment at one meeting, then brought back the following month for approval.

## Board Discussions

- The establishment of the annual goals and the reports on their progress will normally be done in open sessions.
- During the process there may be questions or the need for a Board discussion about performance at any point during the year. Board members wishing such discussion should request that through the Board Chair.
- The item will appear under Private and Confidential as "HR Matter."
- The CEO may remain for the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the *in-camera* discussion to make a statement or answer questions; however, the main Board discussion will happen with the CEO not present. The Director of Human Resources will remain in attendance to take notes and advise on process.
- The discussion with the CEO related to their performance appraisal will be done by the Chair and Vice-Chair.

## APPROVAL HISTORY

March 2015, May 2016; October 2019

## Advocacy and Political Participation Policy

|                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board           |
| Author:        | CEO and Chief Librarian |
| Review Period: | 4 years                 |
| Approval Date: | February 2020           |

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### POLICY PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance for Hamilton Public Library (HPL) staff and the Library Board in respect to advocacy and participation in elections and political parties.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- A core HPL value is intellectual freedom and our role is to facilitate the expression of a wide range of ideas.
- HPL needs to ensure we preserve the public's trust in us as an independent organization by being careful to avoid the perception of bias or partnership.
- HPL will make it a priority to encourage democratic participation and awareness in non-partisan ways.
- HPL will advocate locally for broad support from Council by actively engaging with all Councillors and avoiding activities during election season that could be seen as favouring a specific candidate.
- HPL will actively work with the broader library community and key associations to advocate higher levels of government for policies beneficial to our mandate and funding that lessens the funding burden on the City of Hamilton.

### POLICY DETAILS

#### Guidance for Staff

#### Promoting Democratic Awareness and Participation

The Library Board encourages staff to support non-partisan activities that encourage political participation and voter awareness. Approved activities include things like the following:

- Using library space to serve as polling stations.
- Using library space for non-partisan voter registration tables.
- Using library space to host all candidates' meetings.
- Using library space to host programs and discussions about relevant current issues.

Approval for using the library space or website for non-partisan activities requires approval of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

### **Maintaining Public Trust and Independence**

The Library Board requires staff to refrain from activities that could erode our position of trust and independence. The Library will not support, endorse, or advocate the viewpoints or beliefs of any one candidate, political party, partisan organization or group. The following activities are not permitted:

- The posting or distribution of partisan election or campaign material in or around library facilities or on the website.
- Renting library space for partisan events, election or campaign activities.
- While at work staff will not wear anything that promotes a specific issue, candidate or party. They will not post, distribute or promote any election candidate, issue or party while on library property.

### **Guidance for Library Board Members**

#### **Advocating on Behalf of Libraries**

Public Libraries, like the Hamilton Public Library, provide tremendous value and play an essential role in promoting literacy and the love of reading. Libraries help individuals overcome barriers that limit their ability to participate in the economy and in society. Advocating and promoting public libraries and HPL is an important role for all staff and Board members. While advocacy is important, it is also critical that these efforts are done in a thoughtful way that strengthens the depth and breadth of support for libraries over the long term. Some key points around advocacy:

- The goal of advocacy is to promote awareness of the impact and value of public libraries. Our efforts in Hamilton are naturally focused on the impact and value HPL has on our community.
- HPL has a long history of nurturing as wide a support as possible. In the process of advocating for HPL, we will focus on the positive merits of our value and avoid criticism of individuals not sharing our perspective.
- Where appropriate, HPL will participate in advocacy efforts with provincial and national library organizations. We will partner with the library community to support independent research that improves and deepens our understanding about the impact of libraries and the best practices to achieve that impact.
- The timing and nature of our advocacy will be careful to avoid the appearance that we are endorsing a specific candidate or political party.
- In general, HPL's formal advocacy efforts will focus on issues that are related to our mission as a public library. For example, efforts to influence the Ontario and Canadian governments will focus on funding or legislation that impact public libraries or libraries in general. This, however, does not in any way preclude HPL from participating in or supporting awareness campaigns on issues consistent with our values of respect and inclusion, or, in general, support of issues related to health and wellness and democratic participation.

The **Chair** is the official spokesperson for the Library Board. Only the Chair may represent and speak for the Board in an official capacity to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions and in stating Chair decisions. (from Board By-Laws).

All **Board members** are encouraged to promote the value of the Hamilton Public Library and its impact on the community. This is done by:

- Sharing stories and relevant information about library programs, services and impact.
- Sharing information about the Board's values, vision and strategic plans.
- Being an excellent ambassador for HPL and advocating consistent with this policy.
- When requested, assisting the Board Chair in officially representing HPL at meetings or other events.
- Respecting the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and understand that it is the Chair's role to represent and speak on behalf of the Board.
- If contacted by the media, coordinate with the Board Chair and Chief Librarian to ensure appropriate information is shared. Because of their roles the Board Chair and Chief Librarian are responsible for responding to media inquiries. This role is often delegated to others, but the delegation requires the approval of the Board Chair or Chief Librarian.

### **Guidance for Chief Librarian and Library Management Team**

The **Chief Librarian** speaks on behalf of the HPL in matters relating to the operation and procedures of the HPL and may speak on behalf of the Board in cooperation with the chair of the Board.

- The Chief Librarian identifies and maintains effective relationships with appropriate stakeholders such as other libraries, universities, research organizations, governments, agencies, businesses, media, non-governmental organizations, community leaders and related institutions on a provincial, national and international scale. (from Chief Librarian role description)
- The Chief Librarian is responsible for ensuring procedures are in place to support effective coordination with media.
- The Chief Librarian will work with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Management Team to ensure advocacy strategies are developed and implemented.
- The Chief Librarian will periodically report to the Library Board on the status of advocacy efforts and priorities.

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

October 2014; December 2016; February 2020

## Policy Development Framework

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: CEO and Chief Librarian  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: May 2021

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To specify a formal mechanism to create, approve, publish, rescind and periodically revise Library policies and procedures.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- HPL's body of policy/procedures will be as simple as possible and clearly communicated.
- There are clear responsibilities and steps to follow in getting policies/procedures approved and published.
- Board policies provide the overall direction for the organization.
- Senior Leadership Team policies are administrative policies that are developed to ensure regulatory compliance and effective operations.
- Senior Leadership Team develops administrative policies and procedures consistent with the direction provided by the Library Board in the strategic plan, Board policies and other directions provided.

### DEFINITIONS

**Policy:** A policy is a governing set of principles that guide Library practice. It helps to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, promotes operational efficiencies, enhances the Library's mission and values, and reduces institutional risks. It has broad application, provides a basis for consistent decision making and resource allocation.

**Procedure:** The operational processes or practices required to implement library policy. Operating procedures can be specific to a department or applicable across the entire library. Policy generally defines "what" the institution does operationally, while procedures define "how" the library intends to carry out those policies.

### Differences between Policies and Procedures

The distinctions between policy and procedures can be subtle and vary depending on the level of operations being described. Nevertheless, there are common characteristics that can help discern policy from procedures. (Source: <http://policy.calpoly.edu/cappolicy.htm>)

| Policy                             | Procedures                                             |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Widespread application             | Narrow application                                     |
| Changes less frequently            | Prone to change                                        |
| Usually expressed in broad terms   | Often stated in detail                                 |
| Statements of "what" and/or "why"  | Statements of "how," "when" and/or and sometimes "who" |
| Answers major operational issue(s) | Describes process                                      |

## POLICY DETAILS

The Hamilton Public Library is committed to having clearly written and understandable policies and procedures. Core principles and rules that shape HPL's policy and procedure body of work include:

- 1. Simplicity:** We live in a time of rapid change with the need for HPL to continually evolve and change and to respond to changing individual and community needs. In this environment, complex rules and processes are less likely to be consistently followed and effectively communicated than simple ones. Our goal therefore in developing policies and procedures will be to aim for as much simplicity as practical.
- 2. Clear Language and Presentation:** Policies and procedures will be written in clear language. Wherever possible formatting tools such as lists, tables, graphs, and other visual aids will be used to assist with communicating the information.
- 3. Accessibility:** Policies and procedures will be available in accessible formats. Policies and procedures will be published using different channels to ensure they are readily available for staff and members as needed.
- 4. Consolidation:** Wherever practical, related information will be contained in the same policy/procedure. When new circumstances require additional policy development, the goal will be to update existing policies without adding new ones.
- 5. Schedule of Review:** A schedule will determine the minimum frequency of review. Where policy/regulatory changes or other special circumstances arise, priority will be given to addressing those over the normal schedule. The standard review cycle will be developed to ensure these goals are met:
  - All policies/procedures get reviewed at a minimum every 4 years (term of the Library Board)
  - The frequency of review does not create unnecessary work that does not advance our mission or service.
  - We meet all regulatory requirements.

- 6. General Rules:** Policies and procedures are meant to provide guidance to ensure we approach similar situations consistently and appropriately. In developing them the goal is to address most but not all situations (80/20 rule). Policies/procedures that try to capture rules that address every possible situation often become counterproductive because the core-important rules get lost in too much detail and complexity.
- 7. Incremental Changes:** Occasionally legislative changes or other external influences require major changes to our policy/procedures; however, when not facing such pressures the priority will be to adjust and improve rather than radical changes.

### Responsibility for Maintaining Policies/Procedures

Different levels of policy/procedures have different rules around where they need to be published and when they need to be reviewed. While work may be delegated, the responsibility for ensuring policies/procedures are up to date, follow at least the minimum review cycle and are published in the appropriate places lies with the CEO/Chief Librarian or Senior Director responsible for the policy/procedure.

### Policy Levels

- 1. Library Board Policies** – Core policies that set the broad direction for the organization. They articulate priorities for service development, define core service levels and specify fee structures.
- 2. Senior Leadership Team Policies** – Policies that are required for administrative or regulatory purposes. These policies are developed consistent with the intention of Board policies and other direction provided by the Library Board.
- 3. System Procedures** – Organization procedures developed to ensure effective and efficient operation of the Hamilton Public Library.
- 4. Departmental Procedures** – Departments develop internal procedures to ensure effective and efficient operations of their department.

### Standard Schedule for Review Guidelines

Note: This schedule is intended as a broad guideline for review.

| Library Board Tenure         | Sections to be Reviewed                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Year of Term | <i>Board Orientation – overview of the entire policy manual</i><br>Section 1: Governance<br>Section 2: Core-values<br>Section 3: Policies Regarding Members (selected)<br>Section 4: Library Management Policies (selected) |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year of Term | Section 3: Policies Regarding Members (Continued)<br>Section 4: Library Management Policies (Continued)                                                                                                                     |

|                              |                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Term | Section 5: Policies Relating to Staff<br>❖ <i>Update Strategic Plan &amp; Core Values</i>           |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Year of Term | Targeted policy reviews to update for the next Board, review any outstanding items not yet covered. |

## Publishing Rules for Policies

| Policy Level           | Approval               | Published           |             |                         |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
|                        |                        | Board Policy Manual | Website     | Staff Intranet (HPLNET) |
| Library Board          | Library Board          | Required            | Required    | Required                |
| Senior Leadership Team | Senior Leadership Team | Listed in manual    | When needed | Required                |

## Policy Template

Policies will be developed consistent with principles and commitments outlined in the Policy Development Framework. The following fields will provide the standard template for the structure of policies.

*Note: Information from policies will be extracted and incorporated in online and print communications. This structure only applies to policies as they appear in the official policy manuals.*

- **Title:** Use a descriptive title that makes sense on its own. HPL or Hamilton Public Library should not be included in the standard title.
- **Policy Level:** Library Board, Senior Leadership Team or Procedure.
- **Author:** Title of the director responsible for maintaining policy, not personal name.
- **Review Period:** Standard review period in years. The maximum is 4 years.
- **Approval Date:** Date of approval.
- **Policy Purpose:** A brief description of the purpose of the policy
- **Key Points Summary:** A summary of the most important information contained in the policy or procedure. This should be in the form of a list of items or table. Recommended not to exceed 7 points.
- **Definitions:** An alphabetical listing of definitions that are important to understanding the context of the policy or procedure. Generally simple or well understood concepts do not require a definition.
- **Policy Details:** Details of the policy. Remember to keep as simple as possible and format in ways that make it easy to scan for key information.
- **Approval History:** Date(s) of past reviews and approvals.

## APPROVAL HISTORY

November 2016, May 2021

## Rules for Going In Camera Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: CEO and Chief Librarian  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: June 2025

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The Hamilton Public Library Board is governed under provincial legislation, namely the Public Libraries Act (PLA). The legislation outlines specific reasons the Library Board may go *in camera* to protect the Library's interests and legal responsibilities. The Board follows the practice of using the right to go *in camera* as sparingly as possible. This policy elaborates on the PLA rules and specific rulings from the Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) of Ontario.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The PLA records the following reasons for going *in camera*:
  - The security of the property of the board;
  - Personal matters about an identifiable individual;
  - A proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the board;
  - Labour relations or employee negotiations;
  - Litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the board;
  - Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
  - A matter in which a board or committee of a board may hold a closed meeting under another Act.
  - If the subject matter relates to the consideration of a request under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- Before holding a meeting or part of a meeting that is to be closed to the public, a board or committee of the board shall state by resolution the fact of the holding of the closed meeting and the general nature of the matter to be considered at the closed meeting.
- Voting in camera is allowed in the PLA if the matter concerns instruction to a board member, an employee of the library, or of the board. Board Bylaws state that any action must be passed in a regular open session, although the minutes may be kept confidential.

## DEFINITIONS

**In-camera** describes closed board meetings, or sections of board meetings that are closed. Which cover information not recorded in the minutes or divulged to the public. Such sessions may discuss personnel, financial, or other sensitive decisions that must be kept confidential.

**Public Libraries Act (PLA)** is the statute which governs public libraries in Ontario. First passed in 1990, with latest amendment in 2009.

**Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario** is an officer established by the Ontario Legislature in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA, 1987). This office is independent of the government and upholds and promotes open government and the protection of privacy in Ontario.

## POLICY DETAILS

The City of Hamilton's Procedural By-Law has been developed consistent with the Municipal Act and other relevant legislation. Council tried to limit the number of times it goes in camera; however, there are legal reasons mainly covered in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) that at times require in-camera discussions. The City minutes the general nature of the reason for going in camera. Wherever possible, they provide some specificity in the reason for going in camera in the agenda without revealing confidential information.

Before holding a meeting or part of a meeting that is to be closed to the public, a board or committee of the board shall state by resolution the fact of holding the closed meeting and the general nature of the matter to be considered at the closed meeting.

In camera may be used under the PLA for:

- The security of the property of the board;
- Personal matters about an identifiable individual;
- A proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the board;
- Labour relations or employee negotiations;
- Litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the board;
- Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
- A matter in respect of which a board or committee of a board may hold a closed meeting under another Act.
- If the subject matter relates to the consideration of a request under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Voting on a matter in camera is allowed under the PLA if: the vote is for a procedural matter or for giving directions or instructions to officers, employees or agents of the board or committee of the board or persons retained by or under contract with the board. In practice, when a formal decision is required, the motion is recorded after the Board leaves in camera. The Board Bylaws state: Any

actions determined during an in-camera session must be authorized by Board motion passed during regular open session and recorded in public minutes. However, the Board's Secretary may designate the minutes of in camera sessions as confidential if Section 28(2) of the Public Libraries Act applies. In-camera discussions are an important tool for the board to successfully discuss personal or financial confidential matters in open and public meetings, which are filmed and archived at [hpl.ca](http://hpl.ca).

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

October 2016; June 2020, June 2025

## Hamilton Public Library Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: CEO and Chief Librarian  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: May 2023

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### LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

**“Freedom to Belong and Discover”**

### CORE VALUES

- **Accountability** – Ensuring services remain relevant and that resources are managed both effectively and transparently. We listen to the community and we communicate our rationale for decisions
- **Inclusion** – Created trusted services and spaces that welcome and value everyone. We celebrate the varied cultures and histories of Hamiltonians. Equity informs our program design, so we can create fairer access to opportunities and help build a more just society.
- **Innovation** – Anticipating and responding to changing needs and technology by continually adapting our work to remain relevant. We meet new challenges by gradually shifting resources to build capacity in areas of growing need. We are a leader in integrating sustainability into our planning and actions.
- **Intellectual Freedom** – Providing free access to a wide range of ideas and artistic expressions. Ensuring residents have appropriate digital access and skills to flourish in the current economy and society. We nurture conversations that enhance mutual understanding and learning.
- **Respect** – Supporting the value and dignity of all individuals. We work to support residents in overcoming the legacies of colonization, racism and other forms of discrimination.

### BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2023-2026

#### Connecting to Community

The Hamilton Public Library is a place that welcomes everyone and strives to create spaces where people feel respected and included. We will continue to be a leader in fostering belonging and enhancing mutual understanding. Our physical and digital spaces will be inviting and accessible. Our

collections, programs and services will be reflective of the communities we work with. We will actively pursue partnerships with aligned organizations to increase our impact in sustainable ways.

### **Relevant and Responsive**

The Hamilton Public Library advances our core library values as we embrace our evolving role in supporting digital access and literacy. We maintain strong physical collections as we grow digital services. Our spaces will be modern, accessible and increasingly energy efficient, as we use our operations to model sustainable solutions. We are engaged provincially and nationally as a leading library that works collaboratively to create policies and agreements that ensure fair access to copyrighted works in all formats.

### **Learning Organization**

The Hamilton Public Library continuously seeks more effective ways to create a resilient and learning organization. Staff development in a continuous focus, so we can meet the changing societal, technology and information needs of residents. We continue to focus on reducing barriers and ensuring our services are simple to navigate. We look for new ways to do outreach and promote awareness and use of our services.

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

November 2003; February 2008; May 2012; February 2018; May 2023

## Intellectual Freedom Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director, Collections and Program Development  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: June 2024

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to affirm Hamilton Public Library's (HPL) commitment to intellectual freedom, ensuring access to diverse ideas, opinions, information, and cultural expressions, as well as promoting the principles outlined in the [Constitution Act, 1982, Part 1, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Section 2b](#). HPL has a core responsibility to support, defend, and promote the universal principles of intellectual freedom and privacy. Only the Courts may abridge free expression rights in Canada.

As a gathering place for ideas, HPL has an important role in protecting access to content through its collections, programs, events, classes, exhibits, displays, use of space, and services. The intent is to represent a wide range of topics, beliefs and opinions that reflect the varied interests of the communities we serve. HPL recognizes its role as a key institution for providing access to expressive content and promoting literacy, lifelong learning, social engagement, and cultural enrichment.

HPL recognizes that not all content offered will align with everyone's values and opinions. We have processes in place to encourage open conversations with our Members when one encounters an item, program, or service that concerns them. People have the right to reject, for themselves, the items, programs or services of which they do not approve, but they do not have the right to restrict the freedom of access for others. The presence of an item, program or service does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Hamilton Public Library, but rather is an affirmation of the principle of intellectual freedom.

### STATEMENTS ON INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

The Hamilton Public Library Board endorses the:

[Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](#) as set out by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA), and Ontario Library Association (OLA) [Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual](#).

### DEFINITIONS

**Parent:** The person or persons who have lawful custody of the child.

**Guardian:** A person who has lawful custody of a child, other than the parent of the child.

**Caregiver:** Anyone providing care to a child outside of the home.

**Responsible Party:** Refers to the parent or legal guardian required for library cards for youth from birth to 15 years old. Information about a child's library account should only be disclosed to the Responsible Party(s) listed on the account. Staff should always verify the responsible person prior to sharing information about a child.

**Child, Children and Youth:** Terms used for library users up to the age of seventeen (17).

**Hamilton Resident:** Individual who lives, work, attends school or owns property in Hamilton, or has a Six Nations address in Ontario, and has appropriate identification. For full details refer to the [Borrowing Policy](#).

## KEY POINTS SUMMARY

HPL's Intellectual Freedom Policy outlines the key objectives of the Library's role in upholding the principles of intellectual freedom in the services, programs, and resources it provides. HPL has a reconsideration process in place to address, investigate, and follow-up on intellectual freedom challenges.

HPL complies with any law enacted at the federal, provincial or municipal levels, and therefore will not deliver resources, programs, or services that are unlawful, and/or have been banned by the Courts.

**This Policy supersedes the Intellectual Freedom Policy Statement.**

## POLICY DETAILS

### Access to Information, Knowledge and Expression

HPL is dedicated to providing open access to information and fostering an environment that encourages exploration of diverse perspectives. HPL protects and facilitates access to constitutionally protected expressions, including those considered unconventional, unpopular, or unacceptable.

Library resources, services, and programs are curated to reflect a wide range of ideas and viewpoints. HPL ensures access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, allowing individuals to express their thoughts publicly.

HPL provides access to public spaces, resources, and services without discrimination, ensuring safe and welcoming conditions for individuals and groups.

Physical access to items, displays or technology will not be restricted except for the express purpose of protecting an item from damage or theft. Examples include:

- Access to the Makerspace is limited to members 14 years of age and older. Users under 14 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

In keeping with the Library's [The Rights of Children and Youth in the Public Library Statement](#), there is no restriction on the material that may be borrowed by children. Parents and/or those responsible for the child are responsible for the selection, usage and safe return of materials borrowed by their children.

## **Library Service, Collections and Resources**

HPL has a responsibility to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and expression by implementing it consistently in the selection of books, films, periodicals, recordings, archival materials and other materials, including the provision of access to e-resources and access to the internet.

Materials are not excluded from library collections based on:

- Race, religion, nationality or political views of an author.
- Frankness or coarseness of language.
- Controversial content.
- Endorsement or disapproval of an individual or group.
- Language in which the work is written or spoken.

HPL complies with any law enacted at the federal, provincial, or municipal levels, and therefore does not collect or maintain items which have been judged obscene or pornographic or have been banned by the Courts. Relevant sections of the [Criminal Code of Canada](#) are sedition, hate propaganda, and obscenity.

The presence of an item in any collection does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by HPL, but rather is an affirmation of the principles of intellectual freedom as embodied in the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries.

## **Library Programming, Events, Exhibits and Space Bookings**

HPL has a responsibility to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and expression by implementing it consistently when developing and hosting programs, events, and exhibits within library spaces including rented public space by individuals and community organizations.

Speakers, performers and Library partners will be selected based on the merit of their ideas, expertise, or contributions to cultural enrichment, in accordance with HPL's [Working with Us Policy](#).

HPL creates welcoming community spaces where Members are free from discrimination and may engage in peaceful assembly. The Library may cancel or deny permits to individuals or organizations when speech or displays are used in a way that is unlawful or in contradiction to HPL's [Member and Service Commitment Policy](#). To ensure the health and safety of users and equipment, age restrictions are put in place for specific services and noted in separate guidelines (e.g., Makerspace).

## **Internet Access**

HPL provides open, secure, and equitable access to technology resources to promote digital literacy and provide equitable, open access to information and online resources to everyone. Wireless access is available to the public to access Library resources and the Internet using their personal devices.

The Internet is an unregulated resource that contains material which may be illegal, offensive, or controversial. HPL uses software tools to reduce the risk that the public may encounter malicious or illegal material. As per the Library's [Access and Security Control Policy](#), the Library works to balance open access with security by ensuring access controls are not overly restrictive. However, the Library cannot guarantee that these tools are always effective in blocking malicious activity or that legitimate content may not be unintentionally restricted. The Library assumes no responsibility for any material accessed on the Internet.

## **Role of Parents, Guardians and Caregivers for Children**

Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for guiding their children's access to Library materials, programs, and exhibits in accordance with their family's values. They are encouraged to discuss with their children what is appropriate for them to read, listen to, view, and in which activities to participate. Responsible parties are expected to supervise their children's borrowing decisions and Library use. We encourage healthy dialogue and will ensure that HPL carries and delivers a range of content and programs to help parents, guardians, and caregivers explore difficult or sensitive topics with children. No materials are excluded from HPL's collection because they may come into possession by a child.

Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for the child(ren) in their care and their use of digital devices and services, including the use of the Makerspace equipment, studios, the Internet, and wireless access through personal devices. Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for managing the child's access privileges to materials or online content and for any damage or loss that may result from the child's use of technology resources.

## Reconsideration Process

HPL recognizes the right of individuals to express opposition to an author, presenter, performer, or creator's ideas or to their creative expression in items selected and programs delivered by the Library. While individuals have the right to reject for themselves items or programs of which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom of others. HPL is a resource where many points of view and modes of expression can be examined without hindrance. No ideas or opinions have universal acceptance and the use of language and visual depiction, either descriptive or expressive, can itself stimulate controversy.

If an individual feels that an item, program, or exhibit falls outside the criteria outlined in this policy, they can share their concerns with a Library Staff member. If they are unsatisfied with the response and are a resident of Hamilton they are invited to complete a [Resident Request for Reconsideration Form](#).

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#): Section 2(b) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects "freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication."

[Criminal Code](#): Section 63 pertains to Unlawful Assemblies and Riots. Section 163.1 pertains to Child Pornography. Section 297 pertains to Defamatory Libel. Section 318 pertains to Hate Propaganda.

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#): Sub-section 13 pertains to infringing on freedom from discrimination.

[Resident Request for Reconsideration Form](#)

[Access and Security Control Policy](#)

[Borrowing Policy](#)

[Member and Service Commitment Policy](#)

[The Rights of Youth in the Public Library Policy](#)

[Working with Us Policy](#)

## APPROVAL HISTORY

June 2024

## Rights of Children and Youth in the Public Library Statement

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director, Collections and Program Development  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: April 2025

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### POSITION STATEMENT

The Hamilton Public Library provides library service for children and youth to support and foster a lifelong love of reading and learning. The Hamilton Public Library Board fully endorses the **Children's Rights in the Public Library** adopted at the Ontario Library Association Annual General Meeting, November 1998 and the **Teen's Rights in the Public Library** adopted at the Ontario Library Association General Meeting, June 2010.

### DEFINITIONS

In the absence of definitions provided by OLA, and for the purpose of this statement, the following definitions apply:

**Children:** A person who is under the age of 18.

**Teen:** A person who is between the age of 13 and 17.

**Youth:** While the City of Hamilton identifies Youth to be a person between the ages of 14 and 29, for the purpose of this statement Youth refers to Teens (a person who is ages 13 to 17).

### STATEMENT DETAILS

#### Ontario Library Association's Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library

##### Children in Ontario Public Libraries have the right to:

1. Intellectual freedom.
2. Equal access to the full range of services and materials available to other users.
3. A full range of materials, services and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their needs.
4. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs.
5. A library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages.

6. Trained and knowledgeable staff specializing in children's services.
7. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service from birth through the transition to adult user.
8. An advocate who will speak on their behalf to the library administration, library board, municipal council and community to make people aware of the goals of children's services.
9. Library policies written to include the needs of the child.

## **Ontario Library Association's Position on Teen's Rights in the Public Library**

### **Teens in Ontario Public Libraries have the right to:**

#### **1. Intellectual freedom**

The library establishes clear policy statements concerning the right to free access by young adults to library resources and information sources; and respect for the rights of young adults to select materials appropriate to their needs without censorship. The library's teen collection, policies and services should be consistent with the concepts of intellectual freedom defined by the Canadian Federation of Library Association, Ontario Library Association and Ontario Human Rights code.

#### **2. Equal access to the full range of materials, services, and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their unique needs**

The Library integrates library service to teens into the overall plan, budget and service program for the library. Library service to teens is integrated with those offered to other user groups.

#### **3. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs**

The Library incorporates funding for materials and services for teens in the library operating budget and ensures there is equitable distribution of resources to support programs and services for young adults.

#### **4. Collections that specifically meet the needs of teens**

The Library provides a wide spectrum of current materials of interest to young adults to encourage lifelong learning, literacy, reading motivation, and reader development.

The library endeavors to develop collections that encourage leisure reading, support homework and school success and responds to gender and cultural diversity. The library provides unfettered access to technology including social networking, licensed databases, and other online library resources for teens.

#### **5. A library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages**

The Library provides identifiable spaces for teens that are separate from children's spaces where possible, reflects their lifestyle and allows for teens to use this library space for leisure or study, either independently or in groups.

#### **6. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service at every service point**

The Library promotes friendly, positive, non-biased customer interactions with teens, providing staff development and training and ensures that services for teens embrace cultural and gender

## Ontario Library Association's Position on Teen's Rights in the Public Library

### Teens in Ontario Public Libraries have the right to:

#### 1. Intellectual freedom

The library establishes clear policy statements concerning the right to free access by young adults to library resources and information sources; and respect for the rights of young adults to select materials appropriate to their needs without censorship. The library's teen collection, policies and services should be consistent with the concepts of intellectual freedom defined by the Canadian Federation of Library Association, Ontario Library Association and Ontario Human Rights code.

#### 2. Equal access to the full range of materials, services, and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their unique needs

The Library integrates library service to teens into the overall plan, budget and service program for the library. Library service to teens is integrated with those offered to other user groups.

#### 3. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs

The Library incorporates funding for materials and services for teens in the library operating budget and ensures there is equitable distribution of resources to support programs and services for young adults.

#### 4. Collections that specifically meet the needs of teens

The Library provides a wide spectrum of current materials of interest to young adults to encourage lifelong learning, literacy, reading motivation, and reader development.

The library endeavors to develop collections that encourage leisure reading, support homework and school success and responds to gender and cultural diversity. The library provides unfettered access to technology including social networking, licensed databases, and other online library resources for teens.

#### 5. A library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages

The Library provides identifiable spaces for teens that are separate from children's spaces where possible, reflects their lifestyle and allows for teens to use this library space for leisure or study, either independently or in groups.

#### 6. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service at every service point

The Library promotes friendly, positive, non-biased customer interactions with teens, providing staff development and training and ensures that services for teens embrace cultural and gender diversity and economic differences. Library staff will endeavor to respect the teen's need for privacy and nonjudgmental service and assist young adults in acquiring the skills to effectively access all library resources and become information literate.

#### 7. Library Programs and Services appropriate for Teens

The Library fosters youth development by providing programs for teens that contribute to literacy, life-long learning and healthy youth development. The library endeavors to provide volunteer opportunities for helping others through community service hours including participating on Library Advisory Boards, and other projects that help develop a sense of responsibility and community involvement. The library's teen services initiatives are effectively managed according to best practices in the field of Youth Services.

**8. Trained and knowledgeable staff specializing in teen services**

Library staff is knowledgeable about adolescent development and age-appropriate resources for young adults inclusive of those with special needs. The library provides services by teen specialists as well as by others who are trained to serve teens.

**9. An advocate who will speak on their behalf to the library administration, library board, municipal council and community to make people aware of the goals of teen services**

The Library works in partnership with other community agencies and organizations to support all aspects of healthy, successful youth development.

**10. Library policies are written to include the needs of the youth**

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

Replaces the Children's Rights in the Public Library Policy – First Approved June 18, 1999; April 2001; September 2015; May 2021

## Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement

|                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board           |
| Author:        | CEO and Chief Librarian |
| Review Period: | 4 years                 |
| Approval Date: | April 2020              |

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## POLICY PURPOSE

To ensure that the Hamilton Public Library recognizes and affirms the dignity of those it serves and works with, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, income, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental abilities.

## KEY POINTS SUMMARY

The Hamilton Public Library is committed to fostering an environment of understanding and respect. As a public library we support everyone's learning regardless of their backgrounds or personal beliefs.

- The Hamilton Public Library acts to ensure that people can enjoy services free from attempts by others to impose values, customs or beliefs.
- The Hamilton Public Library pursues mutual respect, inclusion and celebrations of differences by embracing ***cultural humility***<sup>i</sup> as a key foundation to our approach.
- The Hamilton Public Library makes ***equity, diversity and inclusion***<sup>ii</sup> a priority in planning and decision making for staffing, collections, training and service development. We strive to develop services and programs in partnership with others. As we deliver our services, we embrace the fact that we have much to learn from those we work with.
- We work with our city's many communities to develop inclusive consultation and engagement processes and to develop services in appropriate ways. We seek to understand how diverse community groups define and describe themselves and we listen directly with communities rather than relying on indirect sources.
- In the spirit of diversity and inclusion for all members, the Hamilton Public Library welcomes the exhibit of displays and provision of programs that fit into the location's communities at the appropriate times (e.g. seasonal Christmas displays, menorahs displayed during Hanukkah, programs celebrating other cultures or religious backgrounds).

## DEFINITIONS

- **Cultural Humility:** The process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust.

- **Diversity:** the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs.
- **Equity-** Definitions of equity can vary but all focus on the ideals of justice and fairness. Social equity has traditionally focused on ensuring the administration of services are delivered equitably. The key difference with equality is that equity requires taking into account historical and current inequalities among groups and individuals.<sup>iii</sup>
- **Inclusion:** is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can feel welcomed, valued, respected, supported and can fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.<sup>iv</sup>

## POLICY DETAILS

The Hamilton Public Library is committed to fostering an environment of understanding and respect. As a public library we support everyone's learning regardless of their backgrounds or personal beliefs. Our belief in the inherent dignity of all individuals is grounded in the United Nation's [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), Canada's [Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) and Ontario's [Human Rights Code](#). The Hamilton Public Library Board endorses the [Statement on Diversity and Inclusion](#) as set out by the **Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA)**.

The Hamilton Public Library recognizes and affirms the dignity of those it serves and works with, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, income, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental abilities. HPL understands that an acceptance of differences can sometimes place individual and collective values in conflict.

The Hamilton Public Library believes that respectful dialogue builds understanding and stronger communities. We strive to encourage mutual respect, inclusion and celebrations of differences by embracing **cultural humility** as a key foundation to our approach. We encourage the community to recognize, respect and embrace each individual's diversity. We believe that by working together we can move from the acknowledgement of diversity and inclusion to enabling an environment that is supportive, accessible and equitable in its practices.

### **CFLA Position Statement on Diversity & Inclusion<sup>v</sup>**

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) believes that a diverse and pluralistic society is central to our country's identity. Libraries have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that recognizes diversity and fosters social inclusion.

Libraries strive to deliver inclusive service. Canada's libraries recognize and energetically affirm the dignity of those they serve, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, or income.

Libraries understand that an acceptance of differences can place individual and collective values in conflict. Libraries are committed to tolerance and understanding. Libraries act to ensure that people can enjoy services free from any attempt by others to impose values, customs or beliefs.

## APPROVAL HISTORY

Replaced Religious Seasonal Displays Policy - March 1997; April 2001; May 2015; March 2017; April 2020

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<sup>i</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_humility](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_humility)

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/EDI>

<sup>iii</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_equity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_equity)

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.hamilton.ca/sites/default/files/media/browser/2019-02-28/equity-diversity-inclusion-handbook-draft.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> <http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/programs/guidelines-and-position-papers/position-statement-on-diversity-and-inclusion/> Approved February 1, 2017.

## Statement on Race and Social Equity

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: CEO and Chief Librarian  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: October 2024

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### POSITION STATEMENT

The Hamilton Public Library Board endorses the following **Statement on Race and Social Equity** from the *Canadian Urban Library Council (CULC)* and the *Urban Library Council (ULC)*.

### STATEMENT DETAILS

As leader of North America's public libraries, we are committed to achieving racial and social equity by contributing to a more just society in which all community members can realize their full potential. Our libraries can help achieve true and sustained equity through and intentional, systemic and transformative library-community partnership. Our library systems are working to achieve equity in the communities we serve by:

- Eliminating racial and social equity barriers in library programs, services, policies and practices.
- Creating and maintaining an environment of diversity, inclusion and respect both in our library systems and in all aspects of our community role.
- Ensuring that we are reaching and engaging disenfranchised people in the community and helping them express their voice.
- Serving as a convener and facilitator of conversations and partnerships to address community challenges.
- Being forthright on tough issues that are important to our communities.

Libraries are trusted, venerable and enduring institutions, central to their communities and an essential participant in the movement for racial and social equity.

### REFERENCES

<http://www.culc.ca/advocacy/positions/>

<https://www.urbanlibraries.org/initiatives/statement-on-race-and-social-equity>

APPROVAL HISTORY June 2020, Oct 2024

## Access to Information and Communication Technology Statement

**Policy Level:** Library Board  
**Author:** Director Digital Technology and Creation  
**Review Period:** 4 years  
**Approval Date:** January 2021, January 2025

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### POSITION STATEMENT

The Hamilton Public Library Board adopts and endorses the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA/FCAB) Position Statement on Access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

### STATEMENT DETAILS

#### Preamble

CFLA/FCAB views the Internet and other publicly available ICT networks as public goods essential to participation in a democratic and information-driven society. Therefore, CFLA/FCAB recognizes that access to ICT is an essential part of the universal access to information that Canadian libraries provide and support.

CFLA/FCAB and its members will co-operate with governments, agencies, industry, and other organizations to ensure that these fundamental rights are represented in all policies and laws governing access to and dissemination of information via ICT.

The Hamilton Public Library Board endorses **that all Canadians have the right to:**

#### **1. Universal, Equitable, and Affordable Access to Robust ICT networks**

- Access to high-speed ICT networks should be available and affordable to all regardless of factors such as age, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, social and political views, national origin, economic status, location, and level of information literacy.
- Special efforts should be made to ensure equity of access in rural and remote areas and access to inclusive technologies for people with disabilities.
- A public policy framework should support the development of ICT infrastructure that meets high standards of speed, reliability and universality.

#### **2. Access to Information Literacy**

- Everyone should have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to find and use information using ICT.

#### **3. Open Access to Information**

- Open access to information should be encouraged at all levels of government and in all publicly funded institutions. This information should be available free of charge with as little restriction on re-use and modification as possible.
- Government and public institutions should take responsibility for archiving information in order to preserve collective memory.

#### **4. Freedom of Expression**

- Individuals have the right to create, share, exchange, access and receive the widest range of ideas, information and images.
- Public policy should encourage neutrality of traffic flow on ICT networks, neither privileging nor restricting information based on content or type. Libraries and other knowledge organizations should encourage the development and use of neutral search and retrieval mechanisms.

#### **5. Privacy**

- Privacy of personal information on ICT networks should be carefully protected by legislation.
- In all situations, there should be a written statement outlining the purpose for which personal data is collected. The collection of personal information should be limited to that which is necessary for the purposes identified by the organization. Consent should be required for the collection of personal information and the subsequent use or disclosure of this information.
- This data should not be traded or sold without the express written permission of the individual affected. Information about privacy policies and mechanisms should be easily accessible and all changes to these should be made on an “opt-in” basis.
- Individuals should have the right to examine their own personal information collected by government, public bodies and corporations and to have mistakes corrected, both without charge.

**Source:** <http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/programs/guidelines-and-position-papers/access-to-information-and-communication-technology-ict/> Adopted August 26, 2017

### **APPROVAL HISTORY**

Last Approved on May 2017, January 2021, January 2025

## Access and Privacy by Design Policy Statement

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Digital Technology and Creation  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: November 2021

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The Hamilton Public Library endorses the principles of **Access by Design (AbD)** and **Privacy by Design (PbD)** as developed by the **Ontario Privacy Commissioner**.

As library systems, programs and policies are reviewed or developed, the principles outlined in AbD and PbD will be incorporated into the planning process.

### DEFINITIONS

**Access** the right or opportunity to use or look at something.

**Privacy** is a person's right to keep their personal matters and relationships secret.

**Proactive** taking action by causing change and not only reacting to change when it happens.

**Reactive** taking action after a request is made or after a change happens.

**Security** the method, tools, and personnel used to protect computer systems and information systems from harm.

### POLICY DETAILS

#### Privacy by Design (PbD) - The 7 Fundamental Principles

##### 1. Proactive not Reactive; Preventative not Remedial

The Privacy by Design (PbD) approach is characterized by proactive rather than reactive measures. It anticipates and prevents privacy invasive events before they happen. PbD does not wait for privacy risks to materialize, nor does it offer remedies or resolving privacy infractions once they have occurred - it aims to prevent them from occurring. In short, Privacy by Design comes before-the-fact, not after.

##### 2. Privacy as the Default Setting

We can all be certain of one thing - the default rules! Privacy by Design seeks to deliver the maximum degree of privacy by ensuring that personal data are automatically protected in any given IT system or business practice. If an individual does nothing, their privacy still remains intact. No action is required on the part of the individual to protect their privacy - it is built into the system, by default.

### **3. Privacy Embedded into Design**

Privacy by Design is embedded into the design and architecture of IT systems and business practices. It is not bolted on as an add-on, after the fact. The result is that privacy becomes an essential component of the core functionality being delivered. Privacy is integral to the system, without diminishing functionality.

### **4. Full Functionality - Positive-Sum, not Zero-Sum**

Privacy by Design seeks to accommodate all legitimate interests and objectives in a positive-sum “win-win” manner, not through a dated, zero-sum approach, where unnecessary trade-offs are made. Privacy by Design avoids the pretense of false dichotomies, such as privacy vs. security, demonstrating that it is possible to have both.

### **5. End-to-End Security - Full Lifecycle Protection**

Privacy by Design, having been embedded into the system prior to the first element of information being collected, extends securely throughout the entire lifecycle of the data involved - strong security measures are essential to privacy, from start to finish. This ensures that all data are securely retained, and then securely destroyed at the end of the process, in a timely fashion. Thus, Privacy by Design ensures cradle to grave, secure lifecycle management of information, end-to-end.

### **6. Visibility and Transparency - Keep it Open**

Privacy by Design seeks to assure all stakeholders that whatever the business practice or technology involved, it is in fact, operating according to the stated promises and objectives, subject to independent verification. Its component parts and operations remain visible and transparent, to users and providers alike. Remember, trust but verify.

### **7. Respect for User Privacy - Keep it User-Centric**

Above all, Privacy by Design requires architects and operators to keep the interests of the individual uppermost by offering such measures as strong privacy defaults, appropriate notice, and empowering user-friendly options. Keep it user-centric.

## **Access by Design (AbD) - The 7 Fundamental Principles**

### **1. Proactive, not Reactive**

Many public institutions are still reactive and wait until a request for information is received before deciding to release it; this can be a slow, cumbersome process, easily used as a mechanism to deny access to information. With Access by Design, government institutions can take a proactive approach to promote full transparency, while at the same time, achieving cost-savings by eliminating a costly and cumbersome disclosure process.

### **2. Access Embedded into Design**

When access is embedded into the design of public programs from the outset, it delivers the maximum degree of access to government-held information by making proactive disclosure the default. The benefits are twofold: the public can access information more directly; and government institutions can save significant resources by making their information available on a routine basis – by default.

### **3. Openness and Transparency = Accountability**

A transparent and open government is vital for a free and democratic society. The essential purpose of access to information legislation is to support the democratic process by ensuring that citizens have the information required to hold their governments accountable – which is not possible if government activities and documents are hidden from public view. When government proactively provides routine access to government-held information, it creates a “culture of accountability.”

### **4. Fosters Collaboration**

The Internet has given impetus to a new phenomenon where more and more community groups are coming together online with the power to engage government policy makers directly. Government institutions need to embrace this new culture by making data readily available to these groups as part of the social contract to serve their citizens. Further, there are new opportunities for the private sector to work collaboratively with government in utilizing public data, with many potential benefits for the economy as a whole.

### **5. Enhances Efficient Government**

The demand for government services continually increases, while governments constantly face the need for cost reduction measures. By embracing Access by Design, public institutions can improve their information management practices by eliminating the inefficient process of “reactive” disclosure, and yet provide more streamlined access to public information. Further, citizen groups can also utilize public data to spot inefficiencies in, and improvements for, government services – increasing efficiency by reducing demand on government resources.

### **6. Makes Access Truly Accessible**

Simply releasing more data is not enough. Access by Design also requires that public information be easily found, indexed and presented in user-friendly formats. There is little value in proactively disclosing public information if it is quietly placed online in obscure locations, using uncommon software which cannot be widely utilized. In addition, public institutions need to ensure that their IT systems are up-to-date and can meet increased public demand by extracting information quickly, in a cost-effective manner.

### **7. Increases Quality of Information**

Information has been called the lifeblood of the 21st century economy. This is no less true when it comes to meaningful citizen participation in public life. Not only is it essential for government institutions to place public data on public databases, they must also ensure that the information is accurate, reliable and up to date. Quality control and assurance protocols are vital to ensure that public participation in the democratic process remains relevant and meaningful.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Source: Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. [www.ipc.on.ca](http://www.ipc.on.ca)

Cavoukian, Ann. Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. *Privacy by Design: The 7 Foundational Principles*. January 2011. <https://www.ipc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/resources/7foundationalprinciples.pdf>

Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. *Privacy by Design*. January 2018.  
<https://www.ipc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/pbd-1.pdf>

## APPROVAL HISTORY

June 2013, November 2021

## Library Board Statement on Service Continuity

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: CEO and Chief Librarian  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: November 2020

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### POLICY STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of the Hamilton Public Library Board to ensure that the funding it receives provides the best possible library service to Hamilton residents. It is the responsibility of the library to ensure that all residents have access to the information and the resources required to enhance their lives. Libraries thrive when five core elements are present. These elements are:

1. Collections that are relevant and that are available when people need them.
2. Facilities that are busy, attractive, accessible and open sufficient hours to maximize community benefit.
3. Technological infrastructure that is robust and capable of adapting to changing member demands and expectations.
4. Staff that are knowledgeable, trained and who perform work that provides relevant value to those they serve.
5. Services and programs that remain relevant to those they serve and that are modified, added or eliminated to reflect changing member needs.

When too much or too little of the available funding is disproportionately spent on any single element or elements, a library system cannot operate effectively or provide relevant on-going service to the municipality it serves.

The Hamilton Public Library Board is committed to seeking a delicate balance between these elements when it sets budgets and when it reviews the operations of the library system.

### APPROVAL HISTORY

September 2010, November 2020

## Member and Service Commitment Policy

|                |                                                                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board                                                                    |
| Author:        | Director, Public Services and Director, Human Resources and Information Services |
| Review Period: | 4 years                                                                          |
| Approval Date: | June 2023                                                                        |

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## POLICY DETAILS

**At Hamilton Public Library, our goal is to deliver an exceptional library experience for our library users. Library employees commit to:**

1. Provide professional, knowledgeable and quality customer service.
2. Be engaged with our members and our community. We welcome feedback to continually improve our services, programs and spaces.
3. Strive to meet the expectations of our members for timely delivery of materials and provisions of relevant services and programs. We are lifelong learners and ready to provide our members with informed answers and appropriate referrals. We do not provide advice, interpretation or advocacy especially when dealing with questions which may require professional expertise.
4. Provide welcoming and inclusive spaces and be sensitive to the individual needs of our members. We maintain confidentiality and privacy of our members. Everyone has the right to enjoy the services of the Hamilton Public Library.

**As a Member of the Hamilton Public Library, we ask you to:**

1. Be courteous and respectful  
Please minimize disturbance to others and use respectful language and conduct at all times. Be mindful of personal hygiene and always wear appropriate attire, including shirt and footwear.
2. Follow library policies and procedures.  
Employees make every effort to apply these library rules in a fair, dignified and positive manner for the benefit of all. You can assist by providing the library with your up-to-date contact information as well as offering comments and feedback on our service.
3. Treat library materials, resources and spaces with care and respect.  
Please keep library materials clean and in good condition so that they may be enjoyed again. When visiting the library, please use resources and spaces for their intended purpose to ensure a positive experience for all.
4. Be responsible for those in your care.

Do not leave a child or vulnerable person unattended. Supervise all individuals for whom you are responsible.

Failure to comply with the Member and Service Commitment Policy may result in a suspension of library privileges.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Accessibility for Individuals with a Disability](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- [OLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [Photography and Filming Policy](#)
- [Privacy Policy for Library Members](#)
- [Safety of Children in the Library Policy](#)

## APPROVAL HISTORY

May 2015; December 2018; March 2019; June 2023

## Borrowing Policy

|                |                             |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board               |
| Author:        | Director Service Excellence |
| Review Period: | 4 years                     |
| Approval Date: | June 2025                   |

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## POLICY PURPOSE

To ensure that Hamilton Public Library facilitates broad utilization of library collections and serves its Members in a fair and consistent manner. The borrowing policy outlines:

- Requirements for obtaining a library membership card
- Library's commitment to member confidentiality
- Borrowing responsibilities of the library cardholder and
- Borrowing privileges and loan periods

## KEY POINTS SUMMARY

**Summary:** This policy defines who is eligible for a Library card and under what terms. A library card is not required to enter the library or use most of its resources. Members may create a library card in person at a library branch or online through the library website.

The Library issues the following types of cards for Adults and Youth:

1. Discovery card (Full Resident Card)
2. Non-Resident card
3. Inspire card
4. Reciprocal Borrowing card
5. Burlington Reciprocal card
6. Community card
7. Post-secondary eCards

**Customer Confidentiality:** The Library protects personal information about a borrower consistent with the Privacy Policy for Library Members.

**Borrowing Responsibilities:** Library cardholders are responsible for the materials they have borrowed. *Returning items on time enables others to share the library's collection and provides greater opportunities to browse items at the location.*

**Borrowing Privileges:** Loan periods vary based on the kind of materials borrowed and the type of library card. Borrowing privileges can be suspended under certain circumstances, such as having fees higher than the suspension limit. Suspensions only apply to physical borrowing. Digital collections and resources remain accessible.

## Borrowing Overview

|                           | Card Valid | # of Physical Items Out | # of Physical Item Holds | Borrowing Period and Limitations**                                                                            | Suspension Limit | Digital Resources | Eligible for Extended Access |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Discovery Cards</b>    |            |                         |                          |                                                                                                               |                  |                   |                              |
| <b>Youth</b>              | 0-17       | 50                      | 50                       | 21 days                                                                                                       | \$50             | Yes               | Yes                          |
| <b>Adult</b>              | 18+        | 50                      | 50                       | 21 days                                                                                                       | \$50             | Yes               | Yes                          |
| <b>Non-Resident Cards</b> |            |                         |                          |                                                                                                               |                  |                   |                              |
| <b>Youth</b>              | 0-17       | 50                      | 50                       | 21 days                                                                                                       | \$50             | Yes               | Yes                          |
| <b>Adult</b>              | 18+        | 50                      | 50                       | 21 days                                                                                                       | \$50             | Yes               | Yes                          |
| <b>Inspire Cards</b>      |            |                         |                          |                                                                                                               |                  |                   |                              |
| <b>Youth</b>              | 0-17       | 5                       | 5                        | 21 days                                                                                                       | \$50             | Yes               | Yes                          |
| <b>Adult</b>              | 18+        | 5                       | 5                        | 21 days                                                                                                       | \$50             | Yes               | Yes                          |
| <b>Reciprocal Cards*</b>  |            |                         |                          |                                                                                                               |                  |                   |                              |
| <b>Youth</b>              | 0-17       | 8                       | 2                        | 21 days                                                                                                       | \$10             | No                | No                           |
| <b>Adult</b>              | 18+        | 8                       | 2                        | 21 days                                                                                                       | \$10             | No                | No                           |
| <b>Community Cards</b>    |            |                         |                          |                                                                                                               |                  |                   |                              |
|                           |            | 200                     | 99                       | 90 days Games, Express Items, periodicals and non-traditional formats such as Parks passes cannot be borrowed | \$300            | Yes               | No                           |

| Online Cards (eCards) |                                                                  |    |    |         |      |     |     |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---------|------|-----|-----|
| <b>Youth</b>          | 0-17                                                             | 0  | 50 | 21 days | \$50 | Yes | No  |
| <b>Adult</b>          | 18+                                                              | 0  | 50 | 21 days | \$50 | Yes | No  |
| <b>Inspire</b>        | 18+                                                              | 0  | 5  | 21 days | \$50 | Yes | No  |
| Post-Secondary eCard  |                                                                  |    |    |         |      |     |     |
|                       | Student and faculty at participating post-secondary institutions | 50 | 50 | 21 days | \$50 | Yes | Yes |

\* Burlington Reciprocal Cards – have the same parameters as Discovery cards, except Digital (only Libby). \*\*Loan periods and limitations vary when borrowing Express materials, magazines, and special items such as Park Passes.

### Limitations on Borrowing Express Items

A limit of two (2) DVD Express and two (2) Bestseller Express items can be checked out at any one time on a Discovery or Non-Resident Card. A maximum of one (1) Express item can be checked out at any one time on an Inspire Card.

### Limitations on Borrowing eBook and eAudiobook Digital Resources

Digital resource access for eBooks and eAudiobooks is limited to:

- A maximum of 10 digital loans checked out in Overdrive at one time.
- A maximum of 10 digital holds in Overdrive at one time.
- A maximum of 5 digital loans per month in Hoopla.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Community cards** are available to Hamilton daycare centres, institutions, schools, corporations, businesses, government agencies, associations, charitable and non-profit organizations or group homes.
- **Discovery cards** have full borrowing privileges and are issued to individuals who live, work, attend school or own property in Hamilton, or have a Six Nations address in Ontario, and have appropriate identification. Retired HPL Staff and Board Members are eligible for a Discovery card, regardless of home address.
- **Youth** is the term used for library users up to the age of seventeen (17). Staff may refer to this library card as a Youth card.
- **Non-residents** are those who live outside Hamilton and do not qualify for a Discovery card.

- **Inspire cards** are designed for individuals with limited identification. They have limited borrowing privileges and other parameters.
- **Reciprocal borrowing** and **Burlington Reciprocal** are services coordinated, by formal agreement, with surrounding library systems.

## POLICY DETAILS

The public may visit any library location, use its in-house resources, and use catalogue stations. A library card is required to borrow materials, access digital collections and resources, use Extended Access facilities and Makerspaces, and log on to public computers. The Hamilton Public Library Board establishes who may obtain a Hamilton Public Library card.

**Library cards are issued free of charge to eligible individuals.**

### Types of Library Cards

#### Discovery Card (Adult)

Discovery cards are issued to individuals who are residents of Hamilton with identification containing their name and address. They are also extended to applicants who have related identification that indicates they: work, pay taxes in the City of Hamilton or are a student who attends a Hamilton educational institution. Discovery cards are also available to any person who has a Six Nations address in Ontario, retired HPL Staff and Board members in accordance with the Staff Borrowing Privileges Policy.

#### Discovery Card (Youth)

Youth cards are issued to individuals from birth up to and including the age of seventeen (17) who live or go to school in Hamilton. The library card or application form must be signed by the responsible party if they are not present when the card is created for children under the age of 14.

In keeping with the Library's [The Rights of Children and Youth in the Public Library Statement](#) [1], there is no restriction on the material that may be borrowed by children. Parents and/or those responsible for the child are responsible for the selection, usage and safe return of materials borrowed by their children.

#### Inspire Cards

Inspire Cards are available to individuals with limited identification or who choose to have more basic borrowing privileges. These cards have limited borrowing privileges for physical materials but full access to digital resources. Short-term visitors to Hamilton (one month or more) can also request an Inspire Card.

#### Online Cards

Online cards allow anyone who lives, works, or is a member of Six Nations, to register for a card online. An online card allows library Members to access online resources, and place holds on library materials. Library Members will be asked to verify their identity with one piece of identification during their first visit to a local library when borrowing materials.

### **Non-Resident Cards**

Non-residents can purchase an annual library membership:

- There is an annual non-refundable fee effective from the date of registration. Cardholders will be asked to verify their address and phone number at that time. (see [Service Fees Policy](#) [2])
- Non-resident cards have the same privileges as a Discovery card.
- It is noted that non-residents who are eligible for a reciprocal card may wish to pay the annual fee to obtain access to our full digital and physical collections.
- Expired cards will be removed from the system after approximately 1 month.

### **Reciprocal Borrowing Cards**

Hamilton Public Library has several formal reciprocal borrowing agreements with neighbouring municipalities. Reciprocal borrowing agreements require library Board approval. Individuals from outside of Hamilton require a valid library card from a participating library system, along with identification showing their name and address. This card may be used to borrow, but a Hamilton Public Library card is not issued.

Participating Systems:

- Burlington Public Library has a separate reciprocal borrowing agreement that gives access similar to the HPL Discovery card, but without Extended Access privileges.
- Cambridge Public Library
- County of Brant Library System
- Grimsby Public Library
- Haldimand Public Library
- Milton Public Library
- Region of Waterloo Library
- Waterloo Public Library
- Wellington County Public Library

### **Community Cards**

- Staff employed by a Hamilton daycare centre, institution, school, corporation, business, government agency, association, charitable and non-profit organization, or group home may apply

for a Community card. A Community card application requires the signature of an executive, administrator or any Staff who has received authorization from the organization to create a Community Card. By signing the application as the authorized person, the individual acknowledges that they have authorization from the organization and takes responsibility, on behalf of the organization listed, for any loss or damage incurred to materials. In the case of schools, the application can be signed by a teacher on behalf of an individual classroom.

These specialty cards carry additional conditions:

- A Library card must be in hand to borrow materials.
- The individual signing the form is responsible for all lost or damaged materials.
- The Card cannot be used by Staff for personal use.
- The Manager of the lending location reserves the right to limit the amount and type of material available, or to shorten the loan period if necessary.
- Community cards are verified annually to confirm all information. Verification may be done by phone.
- HPL Digital Media, DVDs and Blu-ray are for personal use only. Customers who access these resources and show content to anyone outside of their home or a personally deeded residence are infringing copyright if they do not have a public performance license.

## **Post-secondary eCards**

Students and faculty at some post-secondary institutions are eligible to apply online with their school email address for a post-secondary eCard. This card enables students to borrow digital and physical materials immediately without ever visiting a physical HPL branch. Hold items are delivered to campus weekly by the HPL courier.

## **Member Confidentiality**

Library registration is carried out in accordance with the [Privacy Policy for Library Members](#) [3], which provides full information about the collection and use of personal information.

- Information about what a person has borrowed is not kept in the Member's account after the item is returned, except where fines and fees may have occurred, or when the Member has activated the borrower history feature, which keeps a list of returned items. Staff may access the last borrower's information for library business purposes only.
- Home Library Service (HLS) customers' information is retained for the period they are enrolled in the service.

## **Notifications**

Library cardholders receive notifications regarding their borrowing from the Library. Members are notified by email or automated telephone calls/voicemail messages regarding items that are overdue or are on hold and ready to be picked up. Members who provide an email address will additionally receive emails about items that will be automatically renewed or are coming due. If Members prefer not to receive library notifications and opt to manage their borrowed materials, this can be requested.

### **Inactive Cards**

Inactive cards are deleted on a four (4) year cycle.

### **Borrowing Responsibilities**

Signing the library card implies the cardholder's acceptance of and adherence to the rules and regulations of Hamilton Public Library. All cardholders are responsible for:

- Materials checked out on their card
- Returning materials to the Library by their due date
- Promptly reporting changes in registration information such as name, address or contact information, and
- Promptly reporting the loss or theft of a library card
- Fines and replacement fees accrued on their library account as set out in the [Service Fees Policy](#) [2].

Cardholders also authorize the Library to collect personal information for the purpose of providing service.

**Verification:** Discovery, Inspire and Reciprocal cardholders are required to verify their contact information every three (3) years. Non-Resident, Reciprocal and Community Cards require annual verification.

### **Borrowing Privileges**

A valid Hamilton Public Library card is required to borrow materials. Loan periods vary based on the materials borrowed and the type of Library card used. Loan periods also vary when borrowing Makerspace items or technology equipment.

### **Loan Periods**

- 21-day loan period - applies to most materials except Express DVDs, magazines, and specialty items.

Staff can offer extended loans to 21-day loan material, excluding new or requested items (items "on hold" for another customer). The maximum due date can be extended up to the maximum renewal limit for the item (i.e. up to twelve (12) weeks from the date of original checkout). The Manager may impose restrictions on the number of items that can be extended. **Renewals**

Most items may be renewed up to three (3) times following initial checkout. Items that are eligible for renewal will be automatically renewed on the due date. Customers with email notifications will receive an email informing them of which items have been renewed and which items will be due. There are no renewals permitted on the following items:

- Magazines
- Express Books and Express DVDs
- Items requested by another Library Member

Renewal of **Interlibrary loan** materials is subject to the guidelines of the lending library.

## Holds

Members with a valid Hamilton Public Library card may reserve an item that someone else is currently borrowing or that is available at any HPL location. This is referred to as placing an item on “hold.” The following circulating items cannot be reserved:

- Magazines
- Express Books, Express DVDs, and Express Passes

Upon notification that a hold is available, customers have **7 open days** to pick up the item. eBook users have three (3) days (72 hours) to download their hold. Customers can choose to turn on an automatic borrowing feature that checks out the eBook copy as soon as it becomes available.

## Returns

Borrowed items from the Hamilton Public Library need to be returned to one of its locations. Drop boxes are available for the return of items when the location is closed. If a Hamilton Public Library item is returned to another library system in error, the cardholder is responsible for any associated charges or limits placed on future borrowing. Certain items may need to be returned during open hours.

## Related Documents

[1] [The Rights of Children and Youth in the Public Library Statement](#)

[2] [Service Fees Policy](#)

[3] [Privacy Policy for Library Members](#)

## APPROVAL HISTORY

February 2017; April 2019; November 2019; June 2020; May 2021; April 2022; June 2025



## Service Fees Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Public Services - Branches  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: February 2023

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To ensure that staff and the public are aware and can easily access the parameters regarding - fees for a variety of services, as well as the associated recovery costs of damaged equipment.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- Fees are charged for services such as printing, room rentals and the recovery costs for lost or damaged equipment
- Borrowing privileges for physical materials are suspended once a designated number of overdue materials have not been returned to the library. Please see the [Borrowing Policy](#).
- Fees are set by the Library Board as stipulated by the Public Library Act. A summary of fees is provided for the following categories:
  - Non-resident fees.
  - Damaged or lost equipment.
  - Printing, photocopying and Makerspace fees.
  - Local History & Archives image reproduction fees.
  - Program room and space rental fees are identified in the [Working with Us Policy](#).

### DEFINITIONS

**Commercial Use** applies to images that are intended for resale or reproduction in advertising, items for resale or other revenue generating enterprises. Examples include, but are not limited to: merchandise, books for sale (including textbooks and academic publications), periodicals and journals with paid subscriptions, commercial websites, etc. Purchase of images for commercial use provides non-exclusive, one-time use **for 1 year**. Hamilton Public Library and its designates retain the right to solely determine if the intended use is non-commercial or commercial.

**Digital Equipment** refers to technology devices and accessories available for loan or use at a Makerspace, Library collections or at any Library location.

**Fees** are charges related to service fees, room rentals, or recovery costs for damaged equipment. Fines are daily charges that are applied to a borrower's card after a book or other borrowed item is returned past its due date. *As of June 2020, youth fines and fees on physical collection materials have been permanently eliminated. As of April 2021, adult fines and fees on physical collection materials have also been permanently eliminated.*

**Library Materials** are items that can be borrowed from the Library, such as books, DVDs, magazines or video games.

**Services** are resources or programs that the Library offers, such as printing and Local History and Archives image reproduction.

**Makerspace** refers to a range of digital creative services such as 3D printing, and digitization including sound and photo studios that are available at many Library locations.

**Non-Commercial Use** applies to images intended for artistic, educational, and/or personal projects that will not be marketed, promoted, or sold for monetary compensation. Examples include, but are not limited to: presentations, personal research, websites/blogs (personal, civic and/or non-profit), remix projects, academic research papers (theses/dissertations), newscasts, newsletters, brochures, etc. Hamilton Public Library and its designates retain the right to solely determine if the intended use is non-commercial or commercial.

## POLICY DETAILS

### How to pay fees:

Members can pay fees online or at a service desk at any location.

### Service Fees

#### Cards and other Service Fees

- Non-resident Card - Annual – in 2020 - \$60; 2021 - \$80; 2022 - \$100
- Hamilton Public Library does not charge fines on overdue materials borrowed from its collections. However, **interlibrary loan materials** borrowed from other libraries outside of the Hamilton Public Library will incur fines charged by the loaning library.
  - Interlibrary Loan - \$25

#### Printing and Photocopying Fees

- Black & white - \$0.10 per page
- Colour - \$0.25 per page
- The first five pages of B&W **or** two coloured page of print or photocopy are free with the library card. The number of free print/photocopy pages are reset daily and cannot be accumulated.

Note: Number of free prints or photocopies may be temporarily increased due to special circumstances such as the pandemic.

## **Makerspace Service Fees**

### **Printing**

- 3D Printing - \$0.10 per gram for filament - \$0.30 per gram of resin
- Large Format Printing 36 inch wide – cost of ink per ml + cost of material per foot
  - \$0.75 per ml of ink
  - \$2 per linear foot for Matte paper
  - \$2.0 per linear foot for premium and photo paper

### **Vinyl Cutting**

- Vinyl Cutting - \$1 per foot for vinyl
- Vinyl Printing & Cutting – cost of ink per ml + cost of material per foot
- \$0.75 per ml of ink
- \$2.00 per foot for standard vinyl
- \$3.00 per foot for premium vinyl

### **Cricut**

- \$1.00 per sheet of vinyl
- \$0.50 per sheet of cardstock

### **Textiles**

- Embroidery
  - \$2 per 10,000 stitches (\$2 minimum) – thread
  - \$0.50 per foot (1-foot minimum) – backing material
- Sewing – Standard sewing \$1.5 per 30 min – Serger sewing \$3 per 30 min

### **Laser Cutting and Engraving**

- \$10 per 12x19 in board - \$5 per 12x9 in board

### **Lamination**

- \$1 per sheet (letter size)

Members are required to use Library-supplied materials for print and Makerspace services, to reduce damage to equipment. Exceptions are allowed for some items i.e., fabric for embroidery and vinyl/veneer and paper for Cricut.

New makerspace and digital services are added from time to time. Fees for new additions will be consistent with other rates in this policy, where possible, and must cover Library costs.

## Local History and Archives Service Fees

### Image Reproduction

- Non-Commercial Use - \$20/image (300 DPI JPEG); \$30/image (600 DPI TIFF)
- Commercial Use - \$40/image (300 DPI JPEG); \$50/image (600 DPI TIFF)

### Additional Fees

- New Digital Image - \$20 per scanned image
- Rush Orders (2 business days)
- 1-5 images: \$20 per order
- 6-20 images: \$50 per order
- 21+ images: \$100 per order
- Shipping Fees within Canada - \$5 per order
- Shipping Fees international - \$15 per order

## Lost or Damaged Materials/Equipment Fees

Members are responsible for paying fees to cover the cost of loss or damage of:

- o makerspace equipment or other digital devices that are borrowed for use inside or outside a library location.
- o Interlibrary Loans at the full rate assigned by the lending institution at the time the item is determined lost or missing.

The Library does not accept substitutes for lost or damaged material in lieu of fees for lost costs.

### Makerspace and other Digital Equipment

- Auxiliary items: Cables, Drumsticks, Microphone stands/SD Card - \$25
- Tripod, Video Camera/Elgato, etc. - \$90
- Speakers, BluRay Burner, USB Microphone, etc. - \$130
- Wacom tablet/Scanner, etc. - \$225
- Camera, GoPro, Drum Kit, Keyboard, Guitars, Cricut - \$500
- Devices with data plans - \$200
- Kiosk iPads - \$500
- Kiosk Laptops - \$1100

Fees for loss or damage of newer equipment that is added to the Makerspace from time to time will be consistent with other rates in this policy, where possible, and must cover the cost of repair or replacement of the items.

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

June 2021 1<sup>st</sup> Review, previously Fines and Fees Policy approved March 2019; December 2019; December 2020; February 2023

## Library Service Hours Policy

|                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board           |
| Author:        | CEO and Chief Librarian |
| Review Period: | 2 years                 |
| Approval Date: | December 2021           |

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## POLICY PURPOSE

This policy provides the framework for the service hours at HPL locations.

## KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The Library Board establishes the standard service hours
- To ensure we maintain our facilities properly and safely, the Chief Librarian/CEO or designate is authorized to temporarily close locations or adjust opening and closing times
- Disruption in service hours requires prompt notification and the priority is to restore service promptly and safely
- Several core principles inform decision making about Library Service Hours

## DEFINITIONS

**Central Library** – a main location where Members can attend to get access to materials not available at other locations, and also distinguished by its large size.

**AskHPL**- a library service Members can access by phone (905.546.3200), email ([askhpl@hpl.ca](mailto:askhpl@hpl.ca)) or chat during open hours.

**Virtual Branch**- a virtual library Members can access 24/7 at <https://www.hpl.ca/> to read, watch, listen or learn.

**Branch** - a physical library location situated in a Hamilton neighbourhood. There are 22 locations distributed throughout the City from Stoney Creek to Freelon, and Lynden and Binbrook. These physical locations have smaller footprints compared to the Central Library.

**Regional Branches** – a physical library location with additional services and resources available beyond physical collections, such as Makerspaces, ample study space and a greater number of public computers. It is staffed for full public hours, with study halls covered by security staff. They are the largest branch locations in square footage.

**Community Branches** – a physical library location with services and resources available such as study spaces, public computers, and physical library collections. The Library is staffed for full public hours. They are mid-sized locations in square footage.

**Rural Branches** – a physical library location with services and resources available in a smaller footprint compared to Community branches. Staffed for public hours with some locations also using Extended Access technology to extend service hours to members who opt-in for the service. Supported video reference available during Extended Access periods.

**Extended Access** – a service available at some rural locations that allows members who opt-in for the service access to the physical location when staff are not present on site, before or after hours. Supported video reference available provided from its paired branch.

## POLICY DETAILS

- The Library Board determines the standard service hours of the Hamilton Public Library
- With disruptions to standard service hours the priority is to provide prompt notification and restore service as soon as it safe to do so.
- To protect the safety of Staff and Library members during special circumstances (facility emergencies, inclement weather, declared emergencies) the CEO/Chief Librarian is authorized to temporarily suspend standard library service. The Chief Librarian/CEO will ensure the Library Board is properly informed about service changes.
- Planned closures that are discretionary in nature (i/e: Staff Learning & Development Day) will require prior Board approval.
- Planned closures that are mandatory to ensure facility maintenance or to complete Board approved capital projects will require the Board is informed.
- With potential longer-term disruptions, such as a major renovation of existing space, staff will work with the Library Board to determine appropriate alternatives.

## Core Principles Governing HPL Service Hours

When determining Library Service Hours, HPL will balance factors to ensure service hours are appropriately assigned to support our long-term positive impact on individuals and the communities we serve. The following are core principles that will be used to inform decision making:

- **Financial Sustainability** – Library Service hours requires operating funds to adequately staff our Libraries. The overall allocation of Service Hours will be sustainable to support within the annually approved operating budget.
- **Community Needs and Impact** – HPL provides a strong base level of service everywhere, while we use our largest/busiest facilities to offer the most hours of service.
- **Geographical Distribution** – HPL ensures the mix of hours creates a fair distribution of services in all regions of the City.
- **Simplicity and Consistency** – We focus on establishing service hours that are easily understood and simple to communicate.

- **Serving Priority Neighbourhoods** – we will monitor demographics and reports like Code Red<sup>iii</sup> and Vital Signs<sup>iii</sup> to ensure we place an emphasis on providing extra supports in parts of the City where more people have less resources and access.
- **Evaluation and Responding to Changes** – Changes to Library Service hours often takes time to show impacts on usage and can easily create confusion from the members of the public. HPL will aim to offer relative stability with service hours but will ensure periodic reviews to ensure the balance of service remains appropriately allocated.

## Other Services

HPL has a long history of providing innovative services that enable us to extend our reach. Library Programs, outreach and attending community events are covered in other policies. Specific areas of service that impact our overall service delivery include the following:

**Bookmobiles** – Bookmobiles offer an alternative to Library Branch service that enables HPL to reach to areas where we lack an adequate physical presence.

- Staff will report annually on the Bookmobile schedule and provide updates when schedule changes are required.

**Rural Extended Access** – HPL uses a combination of technologies and remote staff support to extend Library Service hours in less densely populated rural areas. The following are commitments on how HPL uses the Extended Access (EA) model:

- EA will be used at branches in rural areas. Currently this includes Carlisle (planned), Freelon, Greensville, Lynden and Mount Hope (planned).
- EA hours will only be offered when other HPL staff are able to respond to Members using a two-way video phone or other alternative.
- EA locations will have staff scheduled to be present every day the location offers this service.
- Members accessing EA locations will agree to Terms of Use and sign the Agreement in advance of accessing the space when staff are not present. Members keep the signed agreement but the staff member witnessing the signature update their system account to turn on this access.

**Study Halls** – Supporting learning and educational advancement is an important goal of HPL. Evening Study Halls provide a place for individuals to use the Library's space and computers for quiet independent study. Study halls are located regionally to support learning and are self-service.

- Study Halls are supervised by a Security Guard.
- Members (14 years and older) accessing Study Hall locations need to show their Library card and one piece of additional identification.

| Target Open Hours 2022 |     |     |     |       |     |     |      |                |                |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|------|----------------|----------------|
|                        | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat | Sun  | Open Hrs/ Week | 2019 Hrs/ Week |
| Central                | 8-9 | 8-9 | 8-9 | 8-9   | 8-6 | 8-5 | 12-5 | 76             | 69             |

| Regional Branches*                |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |             |             |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-------------|
| Dundas                            | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-6 | 9-5 | 1-5 | 65          | 60          |
| Red Hill                          | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-6 | 9-5 | 1-5 | 65          | 60          |
| Terryberry                        | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-6 | 9-5 | 1-5 | 65          | 55          |
| Turner Park                       | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-6 | 9-5 | 1-5 | 65          | 63          |
| Waterdown                         | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-6 | 9-5 | 1-5 | 65          | 55          |
| Valley Park                       | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-8 | 9-6 | 9-5 | 1-5 | 65          | 47          |
| Community Branches                |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |             |             |
| Ancaster                          | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 56          |
| Barton                            | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 43          |
| Kenilworth                        | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 43          |
| Binbrook                          | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 51          |
| Concession                        | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 43          |
| Sherwood                          | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 53          |
| Locke                             | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 35          |
| Westdale                          | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 56          |
| Parkdale                          | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | --          |
| Saltfleet                         | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 53          |
| Stoney Creek                      | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-7 | 9-6 | 9-5 | --- | 57          | 35          |
| Rural (Extended Access)           |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |             |             |
| Freelton                          | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-5 | 8-5 | --- | 66          | 60          |
| Greensville                       | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-5 | 8-5 | --- | 66          | 17          |
| Lynden                            | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-8 | 8-5 | 8-5 | --- | 66          | 60          |
| Rural (Without Extended Access)** |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |             |             |
| Carlisle                          | 1-6 | 1-6 | 1-6 | 1-6 | 1-6 | 1-5 | --- | 29          | 32          |
| Mount Hope                        | 1-6 | 1-6 | 1-6 | 1-6 | 1-6 | 1-5 | --- | 29          | 18          |
| Total Hours                       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | <b>1349</b> | <b>1064</b> |

\* **Evening Study Halls** run from Closing until Midnight Monday – Thursday. In 2022 the goal is to phase back in Study Halls and expand to include Central and Regional Branches.

\*\*Carlisle when construction is completed on the new location it will move to 66 open hours like the other Rural Extended Access branches. The same is planned for Mount Hope.

## APPROVAL HISTORY

December 2014; December 2017; December 2018; December 2021

## APPENDIX I – LIBRARY SERVICE HOURS PRE-COVID-19

\*Sunday hours run all year with the exception of select holiday closures.

**Green = Study Hall**

**Blue = Extended Access**

| Location     | Hrs/<br>Week                 | Mon                           | Tues                    | Wed                     | Thurs                   | Fri                    | Sat                  | Sun    |
|--------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Ancaster     | 51                           | 9 - 9                         | 9 - 9                   | 9 - 9                   | 9 - 9                   | ---                    | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Barton       | 43                           | 1 - 8                         | 10 - 5                  | 1 - 8                   | 10 - 5                  | 10 - 6                 | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Binbrook     | 51                           | 10 - 8                        | 10 - 6                  | 10 - 8                  | 10 - 6                  | 10 - 6                 | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Carlisle     | 32                           | 2 - 8                         | 2 - 8                   | 2 - 8                   | 10 - 5                  | ---                    | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Central      | 69*                          | 9 - 9                         | 9 - 9                   | 9 - 9                   | 9 - 9                   | 9 - 6                  | 9 - 5                | 1 - 5* |
| Concession   | 43                           | ---                           | 10 - 8                  | 10 - 6                  | 10 - 8                  | 10 - 6                 | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Dundas       | 60*                          | 10 - 6                        | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 6                 | 10 - 5               | 1 - 5* |
| Freelton     | 24<br><b>EA 60</b>           | 3:30-8<br><b>9 - 8</b>        | 1:30-5<br><b>9 - 8</b>  | 3:30-8<br><b>9 - 8</b>  | 1:30-5<br><b>9 - 8</b>  | 10-2<br><b>9 - 5</b>   | 1-5<br><b>9 - 5</b>  | ---    |
| Greensville  | 17                           | 4 - 8                         | 2 - 5                   | 4 - 8                   | 2 - 5                   | ---                    | 2 - 5                | ---    |
| Kenilworth   | 43                           | 10 - 6                        | 10 - 8                  | 10 - 6                  | 10 - 8                  | ---                    | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Locke        | 35                           | 10 - 5                        | 1 - 8                   | 10 - 5                  | 1 - 8                   | ---                    | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Lynden       | 30<br><b>EA 60</b>           | 3 - 8<br><b>9 - 8</b>         | 10 - 3<br><b>9 - 8</b>  | 3 - 8<br><b>9 - 8</b>   | 10 - 3<br><b>9 - 8</b>  | 10 - 3<br><b>9 - 5</b> | 12-5<br><b>9 - 5</b> | ---    |
| Mount Hope   | 18                           | 2 - 5                         | 2 - 8                   | 2 - 5                   | 2 - 8                   | ---                    | ---                  | ---    |
| Red Hill     | <b>60*</b><br><b>Study H</b> | <b>1 - 9</b><br><b>9 - MN</b> | 10 - 9<br><b>9 - MN</b> | 10 - 9<br><b>9 - MN</b> | 10 - 9<br><b>9 - MN</b> | 10 - 6                 | 10 - 5               | 1 - 5* |
| Saltfleet    | 48                           | 9 - 9                         | 9 - 9                   | 9 - 9                   | 9 - 6                   | ---                    | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Sherwood     | 48                           | 9 - 9                         | 9 - 6                   | 9 - 9                   | 9 - 9                   | ---                    | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Stoney Creek | 35                           | 1 - 8                         | 10 - 5                  | 1 - 8                   | 10 - 5                  | ---                    | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Terryberry   | 55*<br><b>Study H</b>        | 10 - 9<br><b>9 - MN</b>       | 10 - 9<br><b>9 - MN</b> | 10 - 9<br><b>9 - MN</b> | 10 - 9<br><b>9 - MN</b> | ---                    | 10 - 5               | 1 - 5* |
| Turner Park  | 63*                          | 10 - 9                        | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 6                 | 10 - 5               | 1 - 5* |
| Valley Park  | 47                           | 10 - 8                        | 10 - 8                  | 10 - 8                  | 10 - 8                  | ---                    | 10 - 5               | ---    |
| Waterdown    | 55*                          | 10 - 9                        | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 9                  | ---                    | 10 - 5               | 1 - 5* |
| Westdale     | 56                           | 10 - 6                        | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 9                  | 10 - 6                 | 10 - 5               | ---    |

<https://www.thespec.com/news/hamilton-region/2019/02/28/code-red-10-years-later.html>

<https://hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca/vital-signs/>

## Safety of Children in the Library Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director, Collections and Program Development  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: April 2025

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The Hamilton Public Library welcomes and encourages children of all ages to enjoy the library's programs, collections, services and spaces. Responsibility for the welfare and the behaviour of children using the library ultimately rests with the parent/guardian or an assigned caregiver.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

Library employees are obligated by the [Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14, Sched. 1](#) to call the Police or a Children's Aid Society if they have any concerns about the safety and well-being of a child.

Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult or caregiver while in the library.

Library employees will not give information to any person over the telephone as to whether a child is currently in the library or has been in the library recently.

Parents/guardians must ensure that children requiring supervision are brought to the library with a responsible caregiver.

Parents/guardians or caregivers are responsible for supervising their child's access to all library resources, including the Internet and Digital Media Lab technologies.

Children ages 10 and over are welcome to use the library independently on a regular basis, but parents/guardians are still responsible for the behaviour of any children while in the library.

### DEFINITIONS

**Parent:** the person or persons who have lawful custody of the child.

**Guardian:** a person who has lawful custody of a child, other than the parent of the child.

**Caregiver:** anyone age 12 or older to whom the parent / guardian has given responsibility for the care of the child.

**Children's Aid Society (CAS)** : In Hamilton, there are two Children's Aid Society agencies: Hamilton Child and Family Supports (HCFS) and the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton (CCAS). HCFS is formerly Hamilton Children's Aid Society. For the purpose of this policy, the term "Children's Aid Society" encompasses both agencies.

## POLICY DETAILS

The Hamilton Public Library welcomes and encourages children of all ages to enjoy the library's programs, collections, services and spaces. Library employees work to engage children, families and teens in positive ways, and provide support while they are in the library. All members are expected to abide by the library's [Member and Service Commitment](#). Library employees and members share a commitment to maintain a pleasant, safe and respectful environment for learning and leisure.

The Hamilton Public Library Board endorses the Ontario Library Association's statements on Children's and Teens' Rights in the Public Library. Library employees are trained to assist children in using the library but cannot assume responsibility for the safety and well-being of children left unattended in the building. Library policies and services are designed to provide a safe and welcoming environment for customers of all ages, but parents need to use the same caution with their children at the library as they would in any other public setting.

Responsibility for the welfare and the behaviour of children using the library ultimately rests with the parent/guardian or an assigned caregiver. The Hamilton Public Library recognizes the following terms as stipulated in the [Ontario Child and Family Services Act \(CFSA\)](#) regarding the supervision of children:

Section 79(4) "Where a person is charged with contravening Subsection (3) and the child is less than 10 years of age, the onus of establishing that the person made provision for the child's supervision and care that was reasonable in the circumstances rests with the person."

Library employees are obligated by the [Ontario Child and Family Services Act](#) to call the Police or the Children's Aid Society if they have any concerns about the safety and well-being of a child.

### General Guidelines

While in the library, children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult or caregiver in the immediate vicinity. If a child is left at the library at closing time, or in the event of an emergency or closure, the library employee in charge will attempt to contact the parent/guardian or caregiver. If the parent/guardian or caregiver cannot be contacted within 10 minutes after closing, the library

employee will notify the police. Parents/guardians must ensure that children requiring supervision are brought to the library with a responsible caregiver. Parents or caregivers are responsible for supervising their child's access to all library resources including the Internet and Digital Media Lab technologies.

When children under the age of 10 participate in a library program, parents/guardians or caregivers are either required to attend with their child or remain on the premises and return to the programming area at the end of the program. Library employees may also request that a parent/guardian or caregiver be present to sign a child in and out of a program.

Children ages 10 and over are welcome to use the library independently on a regular basis, but parents/guardians are still responsible for the behaviour of any children while in the library.

### **Unattended Children in the Library**

In most circumstances, the health and safety of children, particularly older children and teens, is not an issue. However, Library employees will intervene when they become aware that a child in the library is in these, or similar situations:

- A child is alone and visibly upset or ill.
- A child is asking for assistance.
- A child under the age of 12 is left alone with younger siblings.
- A child is alone and doing something dangerous or another person in the library seems to be a danger to the child.
- A child is alone and is not following library rules after reasonable warnings.
- A child is left alone at the library at closing time, during an unexpected closure or an emergency situation.

### **Requests for information regarding Truant Children**

As a public facility, the library does not monitor the activities of its members unless there is a problem with conduct, or a child is inappropriately left alone as outlined above.

If a school-age child is noticed to be spending considerable time in the library during the school day, library employees may check with the child and connect with Children's Aid Society for guidance if there are concerns about a child's well-being or if the child discloses abuse.

## Requests for Information regarding Children

Library employees will not give information to any person over the telephone as to whether a child is currently in the library or has been in the library recently. The library employee may offer to take a message and ask the child (if present in the library) to call the person back. In the case of a missing child or a child in danger the library employee will refer to their supervisor who will connect with the library's Senior Leadership Team to share information with the law enforcement agency requesting specific personal information.

### Phone Numbers:

- **Hamilton Child and Family Supports (formerly Hamilton Children's Aid Society):** 905-522-1121 or 905-522-8053 (after hours)
- **Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton:** 905-525-2012 or 905-522-8053 (after hours)
- **Hamilton Police Service:** 905-546-4925 (non-emergency line)
- **Kids Help Phone:** 1-800-668-6868

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

### Relevant Legislation:

- Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.11:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90c11#BK135>
- Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14, Sched. 1:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/17c14#BK176>

### Related Resources:

- Hamilton Child and Family Supports – What Happens When a Report is Made:  
<https://hamiltoncfs.ca/protecting-children/when-you-call/>
- Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton – Reporting Abuse:  
<https://hccas.ca/reporting-abuse/>
- Ministry of Children's Services – Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Brochure:  
<https://files.ontario.ca/pdf-3/mccss-report-child-abuse-and-neglect-en-2022-03-31.pdf>
- Hamilton Child and Family Supports – Recognizing Maltreatment:  
<https://hamiltoncfs.ca/protecting-children/recognizing-maltreatment/>

## APPROVAL HISTORY

Replaced the Unattended Children Policy – June 1995; April 2001; September 2015; April 2021; April 2025

## Technology Use Policy for Library Members

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Digital Technology and Creation  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: March 2023

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To provide open, secure and equitable access to library technology resources based on Hamilton Public Library values or Intellectual Freedom, Inclusiveness, Innovations, Respect and Accountability.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- This policy constitutes an agreement between Hamilton Public Library and individuals using the Library's digital devices and services. Violation of any of these terms may result in the suspension of the individual's library privileges and/or legal and financial actions against them.
- Hamilton Public Library provides open, secure and equitable access to technologies for everyone to promote its mission and in keeping with its core values and statements.
- Individuals are required to be respectful and consider other library members when accessing or using any public or personal technology resources within the library.
- Library members are responsible for any content they access online and for safe-guarding their information and privacy when using the library's digital devices and services.
- Library members assume full responsibility of their online activities and their use of digital devices and services including any damages that may directly or indirectly result from this use.
- Parents/adults are responsible for the children in their care and their use of digital devices and services including damage, loss and restricting access to materials and online.

### DEFINITIONS

**Digital devices:** are electronic devices provided by the Hamilton Public Library for use by library members, such as laptops, tablets, computers, printers, projectors, Makerspace equipment, musical instruments, cameras, coding robots, digital games/toys, self-checks, sorters, etc.

**Digital services:** are electronic services provided by the Hamilton Public Library for use by library members, such as high-speed Internet, wireless access, software, printing, music-mixing, photography and video, 3D printing, embroidery, computer training, etc.

**Technology resources:** is the collection of digital devices and digital services resources provided by Hamilton Public Library to advance digital literacy and achieve its mission, "Freedom to Discover".

**Library members:** are individuals who are with or without an active library card and use the library and its services at a physical library location, a bookmobile, online, or at external outreach locations.

**Digital literacy:** refers to the set of skills, knowledge and attitudes required by people to operate and utilize digital devices and information, so they can fully participate and thrive in society today.

## POLICY DETAILS

The Hamilton Public Library provides access to technology resources to fulfill its mission, “Freedom to Discover” in keeping with its values and core position statements on “Intellectual Freedom” and “Access to Information and Communication Technology”.

**Access:** The library provides open, secure and equitable access to technology resources to promote digital literacy and provide equitable, open access to information and online resources to everyone. Wireless access is available to members to access library resources and the Internet using their personal devices.

Digital devices, services, and work tables are located in public areas and are shared by all library members of all ages, backgrounds, and sensibilities. Individuals are required to consider other library members when accessing or using any public or personal resources within the library.

**Information Quality:** The Internet provides access to many resources for different age levels and reflects various points of view. Members should be aware that online information might not be accurate, complete, age-appropriate, or current. Library staff are available to assist members in finding and evaluating the quality of an Internet site.

**Internet Security Controls:** The Internet is an unregulated resource that contains material which may be illegal, offensive, or controversial. Hamilton Public Library uses software tools to reduce the risk that library members may encounter malicious or illegal material. As per the Library’s Access and Security Policy, the Library works to balance open access with security, by ensuring access controls are not overly restrictive. However, Hamilton Public Library cannot guarantee that these tools are always effective in blocking malicious activity or that legitimate content may not be unintentionally restricted. The Library assumes no responsibility for any material accessed on the Internet. Concerns about Internet Access can be directed to the Director of Digital Technology.

**Use by Children:** Parents/adults are responsible for the child in their care and their use of digital devices and services, including the use of the Makerspace equipment, studios, the Internet and wireless access through personal devices. Parents/adults are responsible for managing the child’s access privileges to materials or online content and for any damage or loss that may result from the child’s use of technology resources.

**Privacy and Security:** The Internet is not a secure medium and third parties may be able to access and obtain information about users’ activities. Hamilton Public Library is diligent in securing network traffic and guarding members’ privacy, however, library members are responsible for their security online and for protecting their information while using any of the library’s technology resources.

Library members are advised to use caution in sharing or providing any personal information over the Internet.

Library members should protect their security and not share sensitive information such as bank account and password, with library staff or other individuals assisting them with technology resources.

Library members are reminded to lock their computer session if away, and log-out of any device when finished to protect their privacy and security from unauthorized access by other people.

**Prohibited Uses:** Members using library digital devices or services, including wireless Internet access and Makerspace technology resources, are not permitted to:

- Participate in any illegal activity. Access and transmit materials or create content that violate any Canadian federal or provincial law such as defamatory, discriminatory, or obscene materials.
- Display, record or print overt sexual images.
- Send, record or print fraudulent, harassing, hateful or obscene messages or activities.
- Violate the privacy of anyone including another library member.
- Introduce computer viruses, malware or any similar software intended to circumvent security, cause disruption of service or infringe on the privacy of other people or organizations.

**Theft and Damage:** Library members are responsible for any damage or loss that may result from their use of technology resources, including Makerspace studios. Library members are required to pay the repair or replacement costs for damaged digital devices or studio spaces. Failure to return digital devices borrowed will result in lost fee charges. Removal of any digital device without authorization is considered theft and may lead to legal prosecution.

**Social Media:** Hamilton Public Library's social media channels are used to engage and update the public on services, events and programs, and respond to inquiries. The Library aims to respond to feedback and questions in a timely manner, however because we cannot participate in all discussions, we use our judgement to determine which messages require a response. Library members may not use offensive, racist, sexist or derogatory language or images when communicating with the Library. The Library reserves the right to report or remove language or images it deems offensive or in contradiction to its policies.

**Acceptance of Terms:** This policy constitutes an agreement between Hamilton Public Library and library members using the library's technology resources. Individuals violating any of these terms will have their library privileges suspended and will be held legally and financially responsible.

**Disclaimer:** Hamilton Public Library assumes no responsibility for Internet content or for damages, directly or indirectly, arising from its website or from its connections to other Internet services.

## Scope

The policy applies to all library members who may or may not have an active library card and are using technology resources at a physical library location, a bookmobile, online, or at external outreach locations.

## APPROVAL HISTORY

April 1998; April 2001; September 2008; January 2010; May 2014; November 2019: March 2023

## Accessibility Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Service Excellence  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: May 2025

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Hamilton Public Library provides library services, resources and facilities in ways that are accessible to persons with disabilities. It provides a framework for compliance with the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and addresses specific areas required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards regulation associated with the AODA. This Policy applies to all persons who provide library services including employees, volunteers and all other persons that provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Library.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The Hamilton Public Library is committed to providing Library services that are accessible to all persons who wish to obtain, use, and benefit from Library services. Library Services will be relevant, inclusive, and responsive to community needs. Each member of the community, including persons with disabilities, has an equal opportunity to use and/or to be employed by the Hamilton Public Library.
- The Library will provide accessible customer service that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The Library will strive to provide library services that meet the specific needs of persons with disabilities, and services that are convenient and accessible.
- The Hamilton Public Library will provide communication supports and accessible formats and it will incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.
- The Hamilton Public Library is committed to providing employment accommodation processes for library employees and job applicants. The Library will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for job applicants and for employees with disabilities.
- The Library will meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner. When communicating with a person with a disability, the Library will do so in a way that takes into account the person's disability, as directed by that individual.

## DEFINITIONS

- “Accessible formats” may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
- “Assistive devices” are any products, instruments, equipment or technological aids used by persons with disabilities to help prevent, compensate, relieve or neutralize a disability. They may include Braille recorders, recording devices, Bliss symbolics boards or devices, and more.
- A “barrier” is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.
- “Communication supports” may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.
- “Disability” means:
  - any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
  - a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
  - a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
  - a mental disorder, or
  - an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.
- “Service animal” refers to an animal used by a person for reason relating to their disability. An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if,
  - The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person’s disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
  - The person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:

- A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario; or
  - A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario. O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16
- A “support person” is another person who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.

## POLICY DETAILS

### Accessibility Plan and Report

The Hamilton Public Library endeavours to work with the City of Hamilton to complete and submit a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Report. As of 2021, Hamilton Public Library has completed its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Report independently from the City of Hamilton. The Multi-Year Accessibility Report details strategies, initiatives and activities to reach the organization’s goals of creating an accessible organization and delivering exceptional and accessible services. The document also reports on progress made during the year including measures the Library has taken to identify, remove and prevent physical and attitudinal obstacles and promote free movement of persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with regulations, standards or codes of practice. The report sets out measures and deliverables proposed for the year ahead. As the library reviews policies, practices and services accessibility for persons with disabilities will be considered.

### Consultation and Feedback

The Hamilton Public Library will consult with members of the public and community stakeholders when considering or reviewing customer service practices, service delivery channels, types of services and new buildings or renovations to current buildings. Public meetings for the purpose of consultation will be advertised in advance, will be held in accessible locations and accessibility services will be provided when a request is received in advance of the meeting. HPL welcomes feedback about how it provides library services to persons with disabilities. This can be shared in person, in writing, by telephone or through our website.

## **Inquiries**

Any inquiries related to this *Policy* or requests for documents related to this *Policy* may be directed to library employees at any public service point. Employees will respond as they are able and may refer the inquiry within the organization, including to the Chief Librarian.

## **Availability of Documents**

This *Policy* and related procedures and forms and the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Report will be available on the Library's website. Additionally, a copy of this *Policy* and related procedures and forms will be provided in an accessible format upon request. No fees will be charged for the provision of documents required by this *Policy*.

## **Assistive Devices**

Persons with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining or using library services and may have free access to assistive devices available in the Library designed to help a person with a disability to carry out activities or to gain access to library services.

Exceptions may occur in situations where the Library has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or to the health and safety of others on Library premises. In these situations, the Library may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist them in obtaining and using library services, where the Library has such other measures available. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

## **Service Animals**

Persons entering Library facilities may be accompanied by a service animal. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, Library employees may ask if an animal is a service animal and whether documentation of the animal's status is available. If documentation is not immediately available, the person and the animal, normally, will be allowed access to the Library for the current visit and asked to bring documentation for future visits.

Service animals are generally dogs but do include other animals. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their service animal is always kept under control.

A person with a disability, who uses a service animal, cannot be denied access or refused service because others have allergies or express a fear of the service animal. All efforts must be made to respectfully accommodate both individuals. Options could include creating a distance between the two individuals, eliminating in-person contact, changing the time the two receive service, using air purifiers, or any other measures that would allow the person to use their service animal on the premises.

## **Emotional Support Animals**

Emotional Support Animals provide comfort and security. However, they generally do not have training for specific tasks. Therefore, emotional support animals do not qualify as service animals under the AODA. Service providers are not required to allow emotional support animals on their premises. However, if the support animal remains within the person's control and does not pose a health and safety risk, the person and their support animal may be allowed access to the Library.

Currently, no law in Canada requires an individual to register or obtain certification for their emotional support animal. However, in some cases, a person may have a letter that is completed by a licensed mental health professional.

## **Support Persons**

Persons with a disability may enter Library premises with a support person to assist with communication, mobility or medical needs or with access to Library Services and may have access to the support person while on the premises.

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain or use Library services, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable. Persons with disabilities may provide their library card or its duplicate fob to a support person for use by the support person on their behalf.

The Library may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises. Before making a decision to require a support person, the Library will consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs, consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence and determine if there is any other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

## **Information and Communication**

The Library will provide access to or arrange for access to accessible materials where they exist and will provide library publicity and reports in alternate formats upon request. The Library complies with the Clear, Accessible and Large Print Guidelines developed by the City of Hamilton in conjunction with the City of Hamilton Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities. The Library will work to ensure the website and web content is accessible according to the appropriate Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.

## **Design of Public Spaces**

The Hamilton Public Library is committed to creating accessible, inclusive, and welcoming environments for all individuals, including persons with disabilities. All new construction, retrofits, renovations, and redevelopments of HPL facilities will adhere to the following standards working with the City of Hamilton:

**Compliance with Accessibility Standards:**

All library construction projects, alterations, and facility enhancements will comply with the **Ontario Building Code**, the **Hamilton Barrier-Free Design Guidelines**, and the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Design of Public Spaces Standards**.

**Barrier-Free Design:**

HPL will prioritize the identification, reduction, and elimination of barriers within its facilities to ensure equitable access. This includes but is not limited to:

- Accessible entrances, walkways, and pathways free from obstacles.
- Clear and visible signage with high-contrast lettering and Braille where applicable.
- Designated accessible parking close to building entrances.
- Accessible and inclusive washrooms equipped with appropriate assistive features.
- Emergency exits and evacuation routes that accommodate individuals with disabilities.
- Service counters, circulation desks, and help areas designed to accommodate all patrons, including those using mobility devices.

**Temporary Service Disruptions**

The Library will make reasonable effort to provide the public with notice of planned or unplanned disruption of library services to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of any alternative facilities or services that may be available. In the case of unplanned disruption, advance notice will not be possible.

Notice will be given to the public by posting the information at a conspicuous place on affected premises and by posting notice on the Library website, and by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances. The Library will have a procedure document that sets out the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption and, upon request, will give a copy of the document in an accessible format to any member of the public.

**Procurement of Goods, Services, Facilities and Equipment**

The Library will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, including self-service kiosks. Working with the City of Hamilton, accessibility considerations are outlined in the purchasing documents. If it is not possible or practical to incorporate accessibility criteria and features, an explanation will be provided upon request.

## Employment

The Hamilton Public Library will notify its employees, the public and applicants selected to participate in an assessment or selection process of the availability of accommodation for disability. The Library will provide information about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes. Additionally, if a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the Library will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

When making offers of employment, the Hamilton Public Library will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities. The Library will ensure that its employees are aware of its support for employees with disabilities including the provision of job accommodations. The Library will consult with its employees and will provide accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job and information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

The Library will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans, when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities.

The Hamilton Public Library has a return-to-work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. The Library works with employees with disabilities to develop individual accommodation plans. The Library documents its process for the development of such plans. The Library's Performance Management process takes into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities.

When redeploying employees, the Library will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans.

The Hamilton Public Library will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability. If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance in case of evacuation or other emergency, with the employee's consent, the Library will designate an employee to provide assistance and will provide the workplace emergency response information to the designated person. Workplace emergency response plans will be reviewed annually.

The Library will inform employees of their policies on supporting employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodation, both when they begin their employment and

whenever the policies change. Reminders of this information are included in the Library's regular program of AODA training.

Note: The Employment section of the Policy applies to the Library's recruitment activities and to Library employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

## **Training**

The Library will ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the AODA and its applicable regulations, and on the Human Rights Code (HRC) as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Training will be provided to all employees and volunteers, to all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies and to all other persons providing goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization. Training will be provided as part of orientation for new employees, volunteers and persons providing goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization and will be refreshed on a continuing basis, as required.

All employees will receive accessibility training. The training on the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards and on the Human Rights Code will be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons including employee role relating to policy development. The Human Resources Department will maintain a record of the training.

The training will include a review of the purpose of the AODA and the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards. Training will include information about how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities and what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty gaining access to Library services or employment. The training will help trainees develop understanding of how to interact with persons with disabilities including those who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a support person or service animal. The training will provide orientation to this Policy, related procedures and guidelines and to the use of equipment and devices available on Library premises or through the website that may help with the provision of Library Services to persons with disabilities. The training will also provide orientation to the Library's employment accommodation policies and procedures and to the Human Rights Code (HRC) as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Members of the Library's Management and any other persons that participate in the development of the Library's public and internal policies and procedures or in procurement processes will, additionally, receive training regarding their AODA and HRC related responsibilities.

## Privacy Policy for Library Members

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Digital Technology and Creation  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: April 2021, May 2025 (anticipated)

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To ensure that Hamilton Public Library protects the personal information and privacy of its library members, and that the Library Board complies with the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), and [Canada Anti-Spam legislation](#).

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

The library will:

- Collect only necessary personal information, with consent implied by obtaining a library card.
- Safeguard personal information against unauthorized access.
- Share or disclose information only with consent, as required by law, or through policy exceptions.
- Enforce this policy through staff and third-party organizations that may have legitimate access to this information to provide service.
- 

Library members have the right to access their personal information, provide or decline consent, maintain accuracy, request clarification or challenge practices.

### DEFINITIONS

**Personal information:** identifiable information about an individual such as name, phone, address, email, date of birth, financial transaction, etc. Exceptions such as personal information in context of doing business, or persons deceased for over 30 years, etc. are defined in the Act.

**Spam:** an electronic message sent without explicit or implied consent of the recipient.

### POLICY DETAILS

In the course of collecting personal information to conduct its business, the Hamilton Public Library Board will comply with the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), and [Canada Anti-Spam legislation](#) and the library adheres to the principles of the Canadian Standards Association Model Code for the Protection of Personal Information.

The library collects personal information under the authority of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for the purpose of conducting the library's business, which may include but is not limited to fines, holds, overdue and renewal notices, room rentals, fundraising, programs, and general communication.

**Accountability:** The library will ensure that all staff members and third-party organizations with legitimate access to personal information enforce this privacy policy in support of conducting the library's business.

Questions regarding the collection and use of personal information can be directed to the Chief Librarian.

**Identifying Purpose:** The library will state the purpose for collecting any personal information and obtain consent before collection.

**Consent:** Obtaining a library card in either physical or digital format implies the individual's consent to authorize the library to collect personal information for the purpose of conducting the library's business, which may include but is not limited to fines, holds, overdue and renewal notices, room rentals, fundraising, programs, and general communication. The possession of a library card, overdue notice or collection letter by another person implies written consent for the holder to pay fines or pick-up materials on behalf of the card owner but does not allow access to any personal records. Written consent is required for others to access personal records.

Any individual may choose not to allow the collection of their personal information, although such an action may affect their ability to use the affected library services.

**Limiting Collection:** Personal information shall be collected using only legal and lawful means and its collection, use and storage will be limited to that which is only necessary to conduct business for the purposes identified by the library.

**Use and Disclosure:** Personal information shall not be shared, used or disclosed for purposes other than that for which it was collected, except with the consent of the individual, exceptions in this policy or as required by law. The library may, on occasion, permit valid research which may include the use of member library records. Approved research using member records must be governed by this policy. Personal information will be destroyed before publication.

Personal information, including borrowing and transaction history, shall not be disclosed to another person unless to a parent or legal guardian, who is listed as the guardian responsible, for a person who is less than 16 years of age, or where a written signed consent form is provided.

The Library must honour court orders issued by a judge that require the release of personal information. Any disclosure of personal information to law enforcement officials must be approved by the CEO. Exceptions can be made in compassionate circumstances where the manager with the Senior Leadership Team Member approval may disclose information in the case of a missing person where time is of essence. **Retention:** Personal information shall be retained only for the period of time

required to fulfill the purposes for which it was collected. The [Records Management Policy](#) defines the library record retention.

**Accuracy:** Personal information shall be as accurate, complete and up-to-date as is necessary to fulfill the purpose for which it is collected.

The library will ensure that the collection, storage and disposal of information are carried out in a manner that conforms to legislation. The [Borrowing Policy](#) defines card renewal frequency to update personal information.

Members are responsible for identifying changes in personal information such as name, address or contact information to maintain the accuracy of their information.

Members may challenge the accuracy of personal information collected and may request staff to correct it, however, some information may require supporting evidence.

**Safeguards:** Personal information shall be protected from unauthorized access by safeguards that are appropriate for the sensitivity of the information collected.

Members should report immediately any lost or stolen library cards to reduce the potential of unauthorized access to their records and protect their information.

**Openness:** This policy is publicly accessible on the library's website. Questions about specific practices will be answered in compliance with this policy.

**Individual Access:** The library shall allow members to see personal information about themselves. Parents or legal guardians, who are listed as the responsible person for the child, may obtain information about their child's account until they turn 16 years.

**Challenging Compliance:** Any library member may challenge privacy practices through the Chief Librarian and appeal to the Library Board if unsatisfied.

**Electronic Communication:** The library will ensure that all electronic messages clearly identify the subject of communication, the Hamilton Public Library is identified as the sender, and that the library's mail address and contact information is available.

The library may, at times, use electronic means to promote services, share information, or announce special events. The library will seek the individual's consent before sending promotional electronic messages. The library will provide options to individuals to easily unsubscribe from the services or change their preferences at any time.

## Contact Information

For questions or concerns about this policy, contact:

Chief Librarian

Hamilton Public Library

P.O. Box 2700, Hamilton, ON L8N 4E4

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Records Management Policy;](#)

[Borrowing Policy](#)

[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O 1990, Chapter M.56 \(MFIPPA\)](#)

[Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation \(CASL\)](#)

## APPROVAL HISTORY

January 1997; November 2001; December 2004; December 2018; April 202, . May 2025 (anticipated)

## Working With Us: Partnerships, Programs and Space Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Chief Librarian/CEO  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: October 2024 (Anticipated)

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## 1. POLICY PURPOSE

To provide Staff, community members and partners guidance on the appropriate use of library spaces and to articulate the HPL decision-making processes that govern the implementation of the policy. The policy also provides an overall framework for the Hamilton Public Library to manage:

- Learning and social inclusion program development
- Existing and new partnerships
- Room rentals

The goal is to ensure HPL uses its spaces to maximize impact and grow strong community partnerships that are focused on advancing Library, City and community priorities. This policy **combines and supersedes** the following policies: **Rules and Conditions Regarding Booking, Meeting Room, Partnership and Program Development policies**. The Hamilton Public Library will ensure our policies and procedures are consistent with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*<sup>1</sup> (*Charter*) and with other applicable legislation, including the *Ontario Human Rights Code*<sup>2</sup> (*Code*).

### 1.1 DEFINITIONS

- **Co-Planned Programs** are activities that take place in HPL spaces that are offered by Library partners. Generally, HPL provides its space for free and the partner offers a learning activity for free. The partner can brand the program, but they work with HPL to co-promote the program and include relevant library resources, when appropriate.
- **Learning Program** is defined as a coordinated activity or event with a specific purpose, such as developing reading skills, learning to utilize technology skills, understand something or gain a skill, or sharing knowledge and expertise.
- **Library Managed** – An event or program that is offered by HPL Staff.
- **Library Partner** – A community group or organization whose mission aligns with the Library may become an active partner. Generally, HPL partners with not-for-profit organizations, educational institutions and governmental entities. HPL also partners with for-profit organizations in special circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code>

- **Managers** – Each branch or department has a Manager who oversees their location within their approved mandate. Library Management and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are listed on the Library website<sup>3</sup>.
- **Meeting Space** – A part of a library building that can be used to hold special events. (i.e. Central Living Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Zones). Also referenced in the document as Library rooms.
- **Partnership** is defined as a mutually beneficial collaboration between the Library and an external organization(s). Partner contributions provide support for and/or promote activities, services, events and programs to the public in ways that are mutually beneficial. (See Section 9-Partnership Levels)
- **Program Room** – A room at the Library that is mainly used for programs and meetings.
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** – Comprised of the Chief Librarian/CEO and Library Directors.

## 2. ABOUT HPL LEARNING AND SOCIAL INCLUSION PROGRAMS

HPL programs advance learning, literacy, the love of reading and create opportunities to reduce social isolation and promote mutual understanding. Here are some key things to understand how we develop our programs:

1. **Preference for Co-Planned Programs:** HPL seeks aligned organizations serving Hamilton to provide more free learning opportunities in our spaces. We are seeking to work with organizations to create mutual benefits and share a reciprocal approach and commitment.
2. **Challenging Thinking:** Sometimes advancing our understanding can be uncomfortable. The Library may present programs that some individuals find controversial. Holding a program does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Hamilton Public Library, but rather is an affirmation of the principle of intellectual freedom as embodied in the Canadian Federation of Library Associations Statement on Intellectual Freedom.
3. **Covering Gaps in Community Needs:** Our programming looks to fill in gaps that exist in our community. When those gaps are addressed elsewhere, we focus on new needs. To assess if a program is filling a need, HPL looks to multiple points of information to evaluate alignment with our mission. These include evidence of attendance and participation in existing programs, when reliable research or information indicates a gap in general public knowledge or awareness of an issue that impacts our health, mutual understanding, security or prosperity. We also consider recommendations from residents and other

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hpl.ca/articles/management>

organizations.

#### 4. **Programs of Focus:**

- Supporting literacy for all, promoting early literacy and school readiness, and the love of reading. Helping families grow the next generation of readers.
- Supporting people in their life-long learning journeys and enhancing academic success.
- Supporting digital inclusion; knowledge and access to technology skills needed to successfully participate in work and online forums in responsible ways that protect personal privacy and reduce personal risk.
- Supporting work force development, including locating, applying and successfully interviewing for jobs. Helping entrepreneurs find paths to success.
- Strengthening community cohesion by increasing understanding of our diverse histories, heritages, culture and experiences in ways that bring us together.
- Provide information and skills that empower people to improve their own health, wellness, financial security, sense of self and social belonging.
- Enhance access to arts, music & culture. Support people to find and improve artistic forms of expression.
- Support civic engagement and participation.
- Provide information about education, health, cultural, recreational and social services opportunities that address the people's needs.
- Supporting seniors aging successfully. We are inspired by creative aging<sup>4</sup>.

5. **Target Age Groups:** HPL programs serve Hamiltonians of all ages and backgrounds. The Library works to fulfill the City of Hamilton's mandate: to be the best place to raise a child, be a child, and age successfully. We focus on developing early literacy skills, supporting school readiness, children, teens, families, adults of all ages and we have an increasing focus on seniors' programs. HPL strives to create spaces and programs that are family friendly and create **inter-generational experiences**. In some cases, the Library may set age or other guidelines for participation in a program, such as a children's program, when the program is designed and best suited for specific audience(s).

6. **Liability Insurance** is required for all programs taking place in Library premises and is purchased by the Library prior to the date of the activity/event. Certain activities require

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<sup>4</sup> <http://creativeage.ca/>

additional insurance. If that is required, we will discuss and normally require the organizers to provide that insurance and proof in advance (HPL and City of Hamilton must be named on the certificate).

7. **Pre-registration:** Where possible we offer programs that do not require pre-registration; this is generally our preference since it can create a barrier to participation and creates administrative overhead. We recognize in some circumstances pre-registration is required. HPL's event management system has a registration function which should be used. If partners prefer to handle registration themselves this should be pre-negotiated.

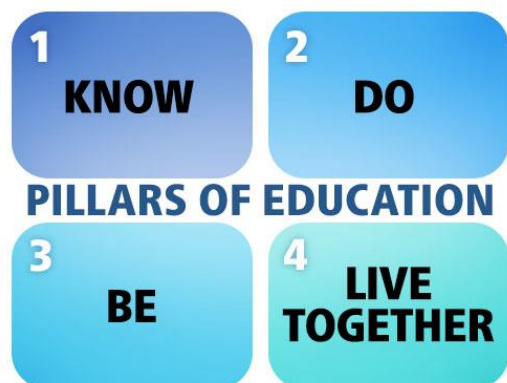
### 3. OUR APPROACH TO CREATING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

We understand that the human experience creates many different understandings and perspectives. As a public library our programming is aimed at creating constructive dialogue and learning that advances people and brings them together. We strive to create an environment where we learn from each other. HPL's Strategic Plan, our Diversity and Inclusion Policy and our Intellectual Freedom Policy provide guidance regarding the services and activities that happen in our spaces.

HPL's Mission is **Freedom to Belong and Discover**. The public library approach to learning is based on helping people learn things that ignite this imagination and inspire them. Put another way: "5"

Three (3) key frameworks shape the development of our learning program:

1. Our **life-long learning model** is informed by UNESCO's Four Pillars of Education:



- Learning **to Know**
- Learning **to Do**
- Learning **to Be** and
- Learning **to Live Together**<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/william\\_butler\\_yeats\\_101244](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/william_butler_yeats_101244)

<sup>6</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000227208>

2. We strive to work with partners that share our broad goals, focusing on working together to have positive impacts that are meaningful and sustainable. We are committed to **Collective Impact**<sup>7</sup> and working with others that are likewise committed.
3. We believe in the need for **ongoing evaluation and improvement**. We strive to be as effective as we can, ensuring we have meaningful impacts on people's lives.

#### 4. REASONS FOR ENGAGING IN PARTNERSHIP

The Hamilton Public Library is committed to working with aligned individuals and organizations to create a better future by working together. There are three (3) core reasons we engage in partnerships:



#### 5. PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES THAT SHAPE OUR APPROACH TO SPACE USE

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/collectiveimpact>

The Library's public **space is for the use and enjoyment of all members of the public**. Public space is provided for individuals and small groups to read, study, use library collections, access technology and Wifi consistent with our **Member Service Commitment**<sup>8</sup>.

- 1 **Spaces are Community Assets**: The Library's spaces are community assets that are utilized to advance individuals and the communities we serve in ways consistent with HPL's mission, values and strategic priorities.
- 2 **Manager Authorization for Other Uses**: Use of the facilities for other purposes such as book clubs, games, crafts or larger group activities needs to be authorized by the Manager and needs to be done in ways that do not impede others using the space.
- 3 **Approvals are Not Open Ended**: Library operational needs and strategic priorities change over time. Past approval for something should not be assumed to be an ongoing commitment from HPL.
  - Library staff are required to regularly review priorities. Commitments are reviewed annually.
  - Priority of space is given to groups that work in collaboration and are in line with our policies.
  - When arrangements are required to change, the Library is committed to giving advance notice.
- 4 **Resolving Challenges**: Our goal is to resolve challenges in a collaborative way, however, individuals and groups that do not work cooperatively with Staff and the local Manager will lose privileges. If a challenge arises that cannot be resolved locally, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will arbitrate and decide on the course of action. SLT will base decisions on:
  - The perspectives from both parties and relevant written documentation, including email.
  - Has the party met past commitments?
  - Has the party worked within agreed to parameters?
  - Has the party adhered to this policy and used appropriate channels for communication?
  - What are the impacts on operations and other uses?
  - Has enough notice been given for the change?

In special circumstances the appeal may be referred to the Hamilton Public Library Board. The Library Board would assess whether the Chief Librarian/CEO and SLT followed policy in making their determination. If they determine that Staff did follow the policy, then the Board would confirm the decision. They may also opt for the policy to be reviewed and updated.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.hpl.ca/articles/member-service-commitment>

- 5 **Transparency:** The Library will publish the name of the organization or group offering an authorized program or room booking in our spaces.
- 6 **Non-endorsement by HPL:** The use of library space by a group or organization does not constitute the Library Board's endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs, any particular program, position or purpose of any person or organization.
- Co-Planned programs will be promoted by HPL recognizing the hosting partner.
  - Where an outside group is using library space, promotional and other materials should not imply HPL sponsorship of the event unless it is agreed in advance.

## 6. PRIORITY ORDER OF USE FOR LIBRARY SPACES AND ROOMS

The following is the **order of priority** for use of the program rooms and meeting spaces.



- 1 At some locations the community demand outstrips operational capacity and alternate space suggestions may be suggested in the community by Library staff.
- 2 HPL's priority for space use is library managed or co-planned activities. Then we look for opportunities for aligned partners to provide free learning opportunities in our spaces. Our third and fourth priorities are providing the space for free to eligible groups and then paid room and space rental respectively.
- 3 **Free Allocations\*:** Local partners are eligible for a limited number of free bookings each year. City of Hamilton Councillors are eligible for up to two (2) free bookings per month for public meetings or groups in which the Councillor is a member and a regular attendee. All room bookings are subject to availability of space and associated resources.
- **Restore Room** - Groups are expected to restore rooms and spaces to the original set-up and leave them clean and in good order. Special set-up is normally restricted to paid rentals and must be agreed to in advance subject to the Library's ability to accommodate the request. Failure to comply will result in losing room booking privileges.
  - **Follow the Proper Channels** – HPL has processes to manage programs and room bookings. Staff can assist with the process if necessary.

## 7. PREFERENCE FOR CO-PLANNED PROGRAMS

HPL encourages partners and potential partners to work with us on co-planned programs. For those who want to work with us, we offer:

- Access to attractive, vibrant spaces with a broad, active membership base
- A strong network of promotion including online and print
- A robust Information Technology infrastructure
- A wide range of Staff expertise and knowledge
- Access to library materials including research materials, (in print and digital formats)
- Where appropriate, HPL Staff can provide programs for partner organizations in their spaces

In return for HPL-provided access to spaces and promotion, we are looking for partners to co-develop programs that include:

- 1 **Advanced planning** that enables both organizations to efficiently use their resources to organize and promote activities.
- 2 **Shared program planning** consistent with the agreed mandate, including promoting awareness of relevant free resources available at HPL or through other community agencies.
- 3 **Shared evaluation** plan that ensures both organizations can effectively track agreed to measures and assessing impact where practical.

## 8. CRITERIA FOR ENGAGING IN PARTNERSHIPS

The following criteria govern how HPL approaches partnerships and related activities. Not all criteria will apply in every case, however, they will be used to inform decision making. Priority will be given to organizations and initiatives that meet multiple criteria from the following list:

1. **Aligns with HPL core organizational values** (Intellectual Freedom, Inclusion, Innovation, Respect and Accountability) and/or shares **common goals** or objectives.
2. Is committed to looking for **mutual benefit** and a **reciprocal approach to levels of commitment**.
3. Demonstrated commitment to **collaboration** and **shared planning**

4. Demonstrated commitment to **ongoing evaluation** and **continuous improvement**
5. Demonstrated commitment to **collective impact** and **long-term strategies**
6. In some cases, we are looking for partners to provide an **activity/service** at **multiple locations**

## 9. PARTNERSHIP LEVELS

Our partnership goals have a few objectives that we are striving to reconcile in our approach:

1. HPL has multiple locations and we **empower Library Staff to work with local groups** to enhance community collaboration between HPL and others with the goal of creating a better future for all members of their communities.
2. As a publicly funded organization we need to ensure we are **accountable to our funders** to **ensure we are using our resources effectively** to have the most positive impact on the individuals and communities we serve.
3. To address this, we are **implementing processes and systems** to **support broad collaboration** with the community while also **aligning our resource commitments to those partnering with us** to ensure we are working toward shared goals.

| PARTNERSHIP LEVEL                | DEFINITION                                                        | APPROVAL LEVEL AND COMMITMENTS                |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b><br><b>Local</b>         | Groups and Organizations broadly aligned with HPL goals           | Manager<br>Limited access to free booking     |
| <b>2</b><br><b>Collaborative</b> | Groups and Organizations working with HPL                         | HPL SLT<br>Negotiated mutual commitments      |
| <b>3</b><br><b>Strategic</b>     | Groups and Organizations sharing long-term planning and alignment | Library Board<br>Long-term mutual commitments |

## 10. PRIORITY FOR FREE ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL CASES

**Most programs** offered by the Library or in partnership with others **are free to attend**. This rule also applies to space rentals. We have this approach because **charging for events creates a participation barrier** that excludes some community members. We also need to be mindful of the administrative costs associated with collecting a registration or entry fee. Our focus is using our spaces to be informative learning opportunities and social inclusion opportunities, not to be used as a vehicle for commercial ventures.

The Library does consider special circumstances where we may allow something that we do not generally do. In these cases, **advanced written authorization** from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is required for the event, program or rental to proceed.

1. **Charging Entry Fees in our Spaces:** In some circumstances HPL allows for events to charge an entry fee. When this is approved, we try to reduce obstacles created by charging a fee. SLT considers the following when approving charging for events:
  - The partner has already offered free co-planned programs with HPL in our spaces.
  - The price is reasonable and less than what might be charged at other venues.  
Focuses on covering costs, not making a large profit.
  - Makes available a limited number of free tickets for free distribution through a lottery.The same criteria may be applied when selling and fundraising is considered.
2. **Closed Meetings:** If a group wants to restrict access to a meeting, whether a free learning program, group meeting or space rental we require an explanation that is reasonable and does not violate HPL policies or any applicable laws. HPL will not allow events or meetings where attendance is limited on *Code*-protected grounds, except where the prospective group satisfies HPL that such limitations are consistent with the ameliorative provisions of the *Code* and/or *Charter*. We reserve the right to have HPL Staff observe any closed meeting to ensure it is consistent with its intended purpose and does not violate our policies or applicable laws.
3. **Political Gatherings:** These are governed by our ***Advocacy and Political Participation Policy***<sup>9</sup>
4. **Art Exhibits:** if they are not co-managed by HPL see our ***Displays and Exhibits Policy***<sup>10</sup>
5. **Alcohol Consumption** at programs/events is considered on an individual basis. An appropriate permit along with Smart Serve servers is required. A copy of the permit/license must be provided in advance of the event. Game Day insurance of \$5 million in coverage is required.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.hpl.ca/articles/advocacy-and-political-participation-policy>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.hpl.ca/articles/displays-and-exhibits-policy>

6. **Last Minute Booking:** We normally plan uses of our spaces in advance to use our promotion channels to advance public awareness of activities. To also be responsive to current needs and to remain effective and accountable to our funding partners we strive to work one (1) quarter in advance.

| SPECIAL CASES<br>SLT APPROVAL REQUIRED |                        |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Outside Normal Hours                   | Press Conferences      |
| Charging Entry Fee                     | Outside Art Exhibits   |
| Serving Alcohol                        | Selling or Fundraising |

## 11. WHAT IS NOT ALLOWED IN LIBRARY SPACES

The following restrictions exist on the use of Library spaces:

1. **Illegal Activity:** HPL will not knowingly permit any individual or group to use its facilities in contravention of Canadian or Ontario laws, including local Bylaws.
2. **Discrimination:** HPL will not allow events or meetings where attendance is limited on *Code*-protected grounds, except where the prospective group satisfies HPL that such limitations are consistent with the ameliorative provisions of the *Code* and/or *Charter*. We will not approve of events that are intended to advocate actions that contravene Canadian or Ontario laws.
3. **Sales Promotion:** Events promoting the purchase of specific brands/products/services are not allowed. General consumer education from knowledgeable professionals is not included in this category. See *Section Special Cases SLT Approval Required for Selling or Fundraising*.
4. **Also prohibited:** private social gatherings, religious-based activities, partisan politics, and gambling.



## 12. RULES AND CONDITIONS REGARDING BOOKINGS

The following are the basic rules and expectations about space usage and bookings:

1. **Respect the Space, People and Rules:** HPL wants to work with others to bring positive experiences to people. Allowing other groups to use our space creates demands on our resources. To manage this, we need to ensure that we agree in advance on what is expected, commitments are honoured, people work within our planning cycles and are respectful to Staff and the public.
  - **Attendance** must not exceed the posted room capacities allowed.
2. **Restore Room/Space Condition:** Program rooms and meeting spaces have standard set-ups that are posted in the rooms/space. Groups are expected to restore rooms and spaces to the standard set-up and leave them clean and in good order. Special set-up is normally restricted to paid rentals and must be agreed to in advance subject to the Library's ability to accommodate the request.
3. **Equipment:** Availability of equipment is specific to the room or space and on a case-by-case basis. Arrangements for equipment need to be made in advance.
4. **Observation:** To ensure meetings do not violate Library policies, HPL reserves the right to observe in person any meeting or event held in its facilities.
5. **Public Performance Rights:** Viewing of films must have appropriate Public Performance Rights in place. Films may be shown if a license has been purchased by the organizer from a rights holder such as Audio Cine Film or Criterion Pictures. Proof of the purchased film licence must be provided in advance of the booking.
6. **Charges and Cancellations:** Payment is due at the time of booking confirmation. Two (2) weeks' (10 business days) written notice is required to cancel a room booking. A full refund will be provided if appropriate notice is given. Charges may include fees for room restoration and cleaning.

7. **Declining Room Bookings:** The Library reserves the right to decline bookings that could negatively impact library operations or stress library resources. The Library reserves the right to cancel bookings when this policy is violated or in special circumstances. If HPL cancels an event that involves a room rental, a full refund will be issued by HPL.
8. **Violations of Policy:** Violation of this policy could lead to cancellation of events and a future prohibition on room or space bookings. Groups will be held financially responsible for any damage.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

[The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)

[The Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Member and Service Commitment](#)

[Advocacy and Political Participation Policy](#)

[Displays and Exhibits Policy](#)

[Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

[Intellectual Freedom Policy](#)

[HPL Fees and Rates Procedure](#)

## APPROVAL HISTORY

Approved May 2021 (replacing previous Partnerships, Programs and Room Booking Policies);  
April 2023, October 2024

## Service Fees Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Service Excellence and Communications  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: October 2024

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### POLICY PURPOSE

Hamilton Public Library (HPL) charges fees in accordance with the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.44. In doing so, HPL strives to balance its priority for equitable access with financial accountability. The purpose of this policy is to ensure Library Staff and the public are aware of the types of fees charged, how they are calculated, the approval process and where they can be accessed.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The Chief Librarian/CEO has the authority to approve revisions to all fees for reasons such as the addition of new services, changes in costs incurred by HPL to provide paid services or for any other reason that is deemed necessary. All fees are charged in compliance with the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.44.
- Fees are posted on the website and include the date of the last revision.
- Fees are reviewed on a yearly basis as part of the budget process and are submitted to the Library Board for approval during that process.
- Fees are levied on a cost recovery basis and include the following main categories:
  - o Non-resident fees.
  - o Damaged or lost materials and equipment including for reasons such as abuse of service.
  - o Fees related to Interlibrary Loan service, including pre-established shipping costs, overdue costs and replacement costs of lost material.
  - o Printing, photocopying and Makerspace fees.
  - o Local History and Archives image reproduction fees.
  - o Program room and space rental fees including additional fees related to those services.
  - o Fee-based ticketed events.

- Borrowing privileges for physical materials are suspended once a designated number of overdue materials have not been returned to the library. Please see the [Borrowing Policy](#).
- Service fees can be accessed at (insert web address here and anywhere else we post them).

## DEFINITIONS

**Commercial Use** applies to images that are intended for resale or reproduction in advertising, items for resale or other revenue generating enterprises. Examples include, but are not limited to: merchandise, books for sale (including textbooks and academic publications), periodicals and journals with paid subscriptions, commercial websites, etc. Purchase of images for commercial use provides non-exclusive, one-time use **for one year**. Hamilton Public Library and its designates retain the right to solely determine if the intended use is non-commercial or commercial.

**Digital Equipment** refers to technology devices and accessories available for loan or use at a Makerspace, Library collections or at any Library location.

**Fees** are charges related to service fees, room rentals, or recovery costs for damaged or lost materials and equipment.

**Library Materials** are items that can be borrowed from the Library, such as books, DVDs, magazines or video games. Library Materials can also include non-traditional Items (i.e. kits, passes, devices, etc.) or items acquired through the Interlibrary Loan service.

**Services** are resources or programs that the Library offers, such as printing and Local History and Archives image reproduction.

**Makerspace** refers to a range of digital creative services such as 3D printing, and digitization including sound and photo studios that are available at many Library locations.

**Non-Commercial Use** applies to images intended for artistic, educational, and/or personal projects that will not be marketed or sold for monetary compensation. Examples include, but are not limited to: presentations, personal research, websites/blogs (personal, civic and/or non-profit), remix projects, academic research papers (theses/dissertations), newscasts, newsletters, brochures, etc. Hamilton Public Library and its designates retain the right to solely determine if the intended use is non-commercial or commercial.

## POLICY DETAILS

### Types of fees charged:

Hamilton Public Library charges fees in accordance with the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.44. Fees are levied on a cost recovery basis and are regularly updated to reflect changes in costs and types of services offered.

Fees are charged for the following main categories:

- o Non-resident fees.

- o Damaged or lost materials and equipment including for reasons such as abuse of service.
- o Fees related to Interlibrary Loan service, including pre-established shipping costs, overdue costs and replacement costs of lost material.
- o Printing, photocopying and Makerspace fees.
- o Local History and Archives image reproduction fees.
- o Program room and space rental fees including additional fees related to those services.
- o Fee-based ticketed events with community partners: Occasionally HPL hosts fee-based ticketed events with partners. Ticket prices are determined based on affordability and accessibility, in agreement with the programming partner.

### **Authority to change fees:**

The Chief Librarian/CEO has the authority to approve revisions to all fees for reasons such as the addition of new services, changes in costs incurred by HPL to provide paid services or for any other reason that is deemed necessary.

Fees are reviewed on a yearly basis as part of the budget process and are submitted to the Library Board for approval during that process.

### **Posting of fees:**

Fees are posted on the website at [Service Fees | HPL](#)

### **How to pay fees:**

Members can pay fees online or at a service desk at any location.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

[Borrowing Policy](#)

[Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44](#)

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

June 2021 1<sup>st</sup> Review, previously Fines and Fees Policy approved March 2019; December 2019; December 2020; February 2023, October 2024

## Collections Policy

|                |                                              |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board                                |
| Author:        | Director Collections and Program Development |
| Review Period: | 4 years                                      |
| Approval Date: | September 2024                               |

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## POLICY PURPOSE

- To provide a statement of philosophy and identify key objectives that reflect the [Mission Statement](#) and [Strategic Priorities](#) of the Hamilton Public Library with regard to the collection management, and access to collections.
- To define the delegation of collections responsibilities.
- To establish procedures to address suggestions for purchase, gifts, donations and objections lodged against items in our collection by community residents or organizations.

## KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The library's collections policy outlines the philosophy and key objectives of the library's collections development.
- The ultimate accountability for the management of Library collections lies with the Chief Librarian but in practice is delegated to the Director of Collections and Program Development.
- The collections policy outlines the key criteria for the selection and deselection of materials.
- The collections policy addresses suggestions for purchase, gifts, donations and objections lodged against items in our collection by community residents or organizations.

## DEFINITIONS

**Format** is the physical form of material and applies to all literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works; sound recordings; and recorded performances. Formats include: print, audiovisual, digital and multimedia made available to the community for lending through the integrated library system, third-party platforms or in-house use.

**Non-traditional Formats** refer to items in our collections that do not fit the above definition, yet still circulate as part of our collection. Non-traditional formats include, but are not limited to Radon Kits, CO2 Kits, and experience-based passes.

**Interlibrary loans** are transactions in which library materials are made available by one library to another; they include the provision of copies and microforms as substitutes for loans of the original materials.

## POLICY DETAILS

Strong library collections are fundamental to public library service. The Hamilton Public Library (HPL) is committed to developing and maintaining diverse, relevant and responsive collections that meet and anticipate the changing needs of our members.

The ultimate responsibility for the library's collections lies with the Chief Librarian acting in accordance with the general policies established by the Library Board. In practice, this authority is delegated to the Director of Collections and Program Development.

The Library Board, in establishing a Collections Policy, was cognizant of the [Constitution Act, 1982, Part 1, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#), Section 2b, which guarantees everyone the following fundamental freedoms, freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication. The Hamilton Public Library endorses the [Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](#) adopted by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations in 2016 and the [Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual adopted](#) by the Ontario Library Association in 1998. Hamilton Public Library's [Intellectual Freedom Policy](#) asserts and supports this position, and clarifies the procedures aligned with requests for reconsideration of our services.

The presence of materials in the Library collections does not constitute an endorsement of their content or viewpoints by the Library Board. The Board recognizes that this policy is carried out in compliance and with due regard for all applicable legislation.

Where appropriate, HPL participates in resource sharing initiatives and consortium purchasing to provide the greatest access to library materials.

### Selection

Items, including non-traditional formats are selected:

- To meet the recreational needs and interests of the community.

- To enrich human understanding by celebrating the diversity of our community through inclusion of various cultural, ethnic, religious and philosophical backgrounds.
- To educate and support lifelong learning.
- To recognize and accommodate a range of education levels and abilities.
- To inspire a love of reading, learning and creativity.
- To collect and preserve materials which illustrate the growth and development of the City of Hamilton, that celebrate its history and heritage or that pertain in whole or in part to activities within the geographic boundaries of the City of Hamilton.

### **Criteria for Selection of Materials**

- Suitability of physical and/or digital form for library use, including maintenance/replacement cost of material, format or non-traditional format material.
- Relation to existing collections and other materials on a subject.
- Accessibility of materials in other libraries, for free via the internet, or from other easily and freely accessible resources.
- Interests and composition of the community.
- Popular and/or anticipated demand and current trends.
- Attention of critics, reviewers, and the public.
- Quality, clarity, comprehensiveness and accuracy of the work.
- Canadian content.
- Local content of a significant nature.
- Reputation, skill, competence and purpose of the originator of the work.
- Special value as a contribution to social questions and problems of continuing or topical interest.
- Timeliness or permanence of the work.
- Availability of funds and space.
- Balance of viewpoints in the collection including those considered extreme or minority.

An item need not meet each of the above criteria in order to be acceptable for inclusion in the collection. Items that do not meet these criteria may be purchased to meet demonstrated significant demand from the community. The [Local History and Archives](#) department will only accept material on a permanent basis, except when borrowing material for short-term loans to reproduce or to include in displays or exhibits.

## Local Authors

Special interest will be made to add works by local authors/artists to the collection. Works will be accepted if they are in a suitable format, fit the selection criteria and meet the eligibility requirements of Hamilton Public Library. All other authors will fall under the regular selection process. All submitted works will be treated as donations.

## Request for Removal of Items

The Hamilton Public Library recognizes the right of individuals to express opposition to author or artists' ideas or to their creative expression in items selected for the library. While people have the right to reject for themselves items of which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom of others. The Hamilton Public Library is a resource where many points of view and modes of expression can be examined without hindrance. No ideas or opinions have universal acceptance and the use of language or visual depiction, either descriptive or expressive, can itself stimulate controversy.

The presence of an item in the collection does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Hamilton Public Library, but rather is an affirmation of the principle of intellectual freedom as embodied in the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries.

The Hamilton Public Library complies with any law enacted at the federal, provincial or municipal level, and therefore does not collect or maintain items which have been judged obscene or pornographic, or have been banned by the courts. The relevant sections of the [Criminal Code of Canada](#) are: sedition, hate propaganda and obscenity.

The following will not cause an item to be automatically included or excluded from the collection:

- Race, religion, nationality or political views of an author.
- Frankness or coarseness of language.
- Controversial content.
- Endorsement or disapproval of an individual or group.
- Language in which the work is written or spoken.

If a resident of Hamilton feels that an item in our collection falls outside the criteria outlined in this policy, they are invited to complete a [Resident Request for Reconsideration Form](#). This form is open to those who live, work, attends school or owns property in Hamilton.

## **EResources and Content Hosted by Library Vendors**

The Library subscribes to a variety of third-party vendors that provide content for users of the Hamilton Public Library. The materials that are made available by these platforms is determined by the vendor, and not the library itself. In these circumstances, the library may be unable to assess the items for continued inclusion using our Request for Reconsideration guidelines.

## **Deselection and Collection Maintenance**

The library strives to maintain strong physical collections while growing or providing access to content that reflects the increasing demand for information, books, music and videos in digital formats.

The Library continually identifies items from its collections for discard based upon the following criteria:

- Item's subject is outdated.
- Item is no longer of interest or in demand.
- Overabundance of an item or subject due to waning interest.
- Worn or damaged copies.

Once an item has been identified for possible deselection based on the criteria above, the process of determining if an item still deserves a place in the library's collection begins. Retention is based on the following criteria:

- Is it of local, regional, or national significance, including works of local or Canadian authors, artists, recording artists or film makers and works pertaining to local history?
- Is it a work by a famous author, artist, recording artist, film maker or universally accepted as a classic work?
- Is it unique to the collection in that there is little or no information available on that topic elsewhere and is the information still relevant and useful?
- Can the damaged item be easily replaced? Is the item out of print?

Items withdrawn from the collection may be redirected back to the community through Community Collections in congress with HPL's Working with Us policy.

## Local History & Archives Collection

Material added to the Local History & Archives collection shall be held until such time as it is deemed no longer relevant and is de-accessioned. All information pertaining to the deaccessioning and disposition of material will be retained in the Archives' records.

## Access to Collections

Physical access to items will not be restricted except for the express purpose of protecting an item from damage or theft. Library members of all ages shall have open access to all the Library's collections with the following exceptions:

- Films rated "R" or "18A" by the Ontario Film Review Board until 2019 and then by Consumer Protection BC and Games rated "M" by the Entertainment Software Rating Board are limited to members 18 years of age or older. If a rating is not available for an item, yet fulfils the Library's Collections Selection Criteria, the item will be included in the collection without a rating.
- In keeping with the Library's [The Rights of Children and Youth in the Public Library Statement](#), there is no restriction on the material that may be borrowed by children. Parents and/or those responsible for the child are responsible for the selection, usage and safe return of materials borrowed by their children.

## Interlibrary Loan

The Hamilton Public Library Board recognizes the important value of the [interlibrary loan service](#) to complement HPL's collections. HPL actively participates in resource sharing for the benefit of library members across Ontario and Canada and to provide Hamilton Public Library members with efficient access to information and materials not held in the HPL. Interlibrary loans are limited to those items that the library might not be expected to own. HPL does not depend upon another library to supply the normal needs of our members. Members have the option of requesting a "No Charge loan." However, when the lending institution has charges to apply, members must agree to pay up to \$25 in charges when they place the request. If the charge will exceed \$25 the member will be contacted. If an HPL member loses an item borrowed from another library on their behalf they are responsible for all replacement charges from the lending institution.

## Suggestion For Purchase, Donations or Gifts

- **Suggestions:** We encourage member participation in the shaping of our collections. Suggestions are referred and considered according to the Library's selection criteria.
- **Material Donations:** Defined as items purchased commercially that are no longer needed by members and organizations. Offers to donate items to the Hamilton Public Library are appreciated. However, we do not accept them, because they place a financial toll on the system that supersedes any monetary gain from sale or enhancement to our collection.
- **Monetary Donations:** Defined as a donation of funds intended to be spent on materials for circulation. The library cannot accept imposed conditions relating to any monetary donation for the collection (specific titles, specific collection, how purchasing is carried out, etc.). The allocation of these funds will be at the discretion of the library.
- **Gift Copies from Local Authors:** In an effort to support local authors, recording artists and film makers, we accept gift copies of their work as long as they are submitted in a format we currently support. The library cannot accept imposed conditions relating to any item after its acceptance (e.g. consignment, return). Items that are not added to the collection are not returned, but rather discarded or sold. Items are considered for inclusion according to the Library's selection criteria. We encourage authors to ensure that their materials are commercially available, as this is the preferred method to acquire materials for circulation, and to ensure that the author/artist is adequately compensated for their work.
- **Gifts to Local History & Archives:** Gifts in this case are defined as original works or works of significant historical value being offered to the Library at no charge. We have a mandate to collect and preserve valuable items that pertain to Hamilton's past and its culture. The Archives will accept historical material of any medium, including: textual records; photographs and other visual records; maps, plans and architectural records; and sound recordings and oral history recordings. Valuable items on Hamilton's past are evaluated by staff in our Local History & Archives Department before being accepted.

## APPROVAL HISTORY

March 2014; November 2019, May 2023, September 2024

## Local History and Archives Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director, Collections and Program Development  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: June 2025

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the mandate, scope and objectives of the Hamilton Public Library's Local History and Archives collections and archival activities and the authority under which the department operates.

This policy articulates the key objectives with respect to the acquisition, preservation and access to materials in the Local History and Archives collections which will reflect the Mission Statement and Strategic Priorities of the Hamilton Public Library. The policy outlines process and expectation to assure transparency, accountability and preservation of trust.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The library's Local History and Archives Policy outlines the key principles and key objectives of the library's archival collection development and access.
- A central role of Local History and Archives is to collect, preserve and make accessible materials which illustrate the history of the Hamilton area and its peoples.
- The Local History and Archives Policy outlines the key criteria for the acquisition, access and reappraisal of archival materials.

### DEFINITIONS

**Accession** is the formal acceptance into custody and recording of an acquisition.

**Acquisition** is an addition to the holdings of a repository.

**Archival Processing** is the physical and intellectual control work done by archives employees to fully prepare archival materials for use, access and long-term preservation.

**Deaccession** is the removal of material from the holdings of a repository.

**Digital Preservation** is the management and protection of digital information to ensure authenticity, integrity, reliability, and long-term accessibility of digitized and born-digital information.

**Digitization** is the process of transforming analog information into digital form.

**Preservation** encompasses actions taken to extend the useable life of material and records by minimizing physical and chemical deterioration, preventing loss of information and ensuring continual access and use over time.

**Reappraisal** is the process of identifying material that no longer merits inclusion in a repository.

## POLICY DETAILS

### Mandate

The Local History and Archives collections exists to:

- Acquire, preserve and make accessible materials which illustrate the history of the Hamilton area and its peoples. The Archives collect and provides access to cultural heritage that makes a significant contribution to an understanding of the development of the City, its natural and built environments, its cultures and the people who lived, worked, and had an impact upon the Hamilton area.
- Acquire and preserve archival materials created by the Hamilton Public Library which illustrate the growth and development of the Library, including archival material identified through the corporate Records Management program.
- Manage and preserve defined Special Collections representing past collecting priorities of the Library including art, local government documents, Canadian history and rare books.
- Arrange and describe these materials according to archival principles and best practices to make them accessible to the public, unless access is restricted by legal requirements, Library Board policy or written agreement with the donor.
- Provide adequate and appropriate conditions for the storage, protection and preservation of analog and digital archival material.
- Provide reference and access services to individuals, organizations, or other groups interested in the holdings of Local History and Archives.
- Facilitate digitization projects, exhibition, outreach and programming to increase public awareness of the Hamilton area and its peoples, history and development.

The ultimate responsibility for the management of Local History and Archives is with the Chief Librarian acting in accordance with the general policies established by the Library Board. In practice, this authority is delegated to the Director, Collections and Program Development and the Manager, Local History and Archives.

The presence of materials in the Local History and Archives collection does not constitute an endorsement of their content or viewpoints by the Library Board. The Board recognizes that this policy is carried out in compliance and with due regard for all applicable legislation.

## **Scope of Acquisition**

The archives will acquire material of cultural heritage value by donation, bequest, purchase, or transfer, regardless of medium, including but not limited to: textual records; photographs and other visual and artistic works; cartographic, technical and architectural records; audio and visual recordings as per the mandate. Material may be analog or digital in nature.

The Local History and Archives department will only accept material on a permanent basis, except when borrowing material for short-term loans for reproduction, research or exhibition.

## **Limitations of Scope**

Notwithstanding intrinsic, informational or historical value of records, Local History and Archives will acquire records, taking into consideration the following:

- The resources required to make the material available for research purposes in a practical period of time.
- The extent and terms of any restrictions, the legal rights and/or requests of the donor to place the records in the Archives.
- The records' relationship to the strengths and weaknesses in the existing holdings.
- The availability of appropriate storage facilities and the physical condition of the records in relation to the probability of being able to conserve them in a reasonable period of time.
- The acquisition mandates of other institutions.
- The Archives retains the right to reproduce materials by mechanical, electronic, or photographic means for security, research, access, conservation and long-term preservation purposes in accordance with applicable Canadian law.

## **Methods of Acquisition**

- Archival materials are generally acquired by donation and not by purchase. The Archives may determine to acquire material by purchase if it fulfils a critical gap within the collection with the approval of the Chief Librarian.
- Archival materials of private donors are accepted by gift, bequest, or transfer from another archival institution. A signed Deed of Gift is completed to transfer ownership and negotiated rights such as copyright of the records from the donor to the Hamilton Public Library.
- The Hamilton Public Library's institutional archival records are retained primarily according to approved records retention policy. The Archives does not function as a repository for financial records or human resources records.
- The Archives does not generally accept fonds that have been willfully partitioned by a donor.

- In special circumstances, and in line with the Library's [Working With Us Policy](#), Local History and Archives may work in or develop partnerships with local organizations to improve community access to materials. In the case of each partnership, a letter of agreement or memorandum of understanding is signed defining the scope of the project and the rights and responsibilities of all parties.
- At the discretion of the Archives, tax receipts may be issued based on Canada Revenue Agency rules subject to external appraisal by individual(s) qualified in appraising the material in question.

## Access to Collections

Due to the rare and fragile nature of the Local History and Archives collections, access to collections housed in Local History and Archives is limited to persons consulting archival material and carrying out their research in the Local History and Archives Reading Room or other Library approved designated space. Within the Reading Room, library employees are on hand to provide assistance and proper supervision to ensure the safe care and handling of materials. Consistent with the Library's [Member and Service Commitment](#), [Rules of Use](#) outline researchers' responsibilities in working with library employees to preserve the collection and are amended from time to time.

In line with the Library's [Borrowing Policy](#), researchers consulting material in person will be required to show identification verifying their name and address prior to viewing items from the collections. This information, along with phone number or email address, will be recorded and retained for statistical and control purposes before being anonymized and destroyed after a set period consistent with Ontario's Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Local History and Archives balances a range of collections management, preservation and access priorities. Library employees do not provide research services, but can offer some direction and resources to researchers. This support may be limited in scope and duration and reassessed from time to time. Researchers are active participants in their work, including requesting specific material and interpreting their own findings.

Local History and Archives utilizes archival, digital preservation, digitization and metadata standards to support analog and digital access to Local History and Archives collections. The Library supports the principle of open access with regard to digitization initiatives while upholding the terms of existing donor agreements, copyright and applicable law and legislation.

Digitization of collections will be prioritized based on alignment with the Local History and Archives' mandate, conservation issues, processing status and complexity, copyright, local relevance, public demand, digital preservation feasibility and access within existing resources.

Barring the extent and terms of any restrictions, the legal rights and/or requests of the donor to place the records in the Archives, no person shall be prevented from using archival materials unless it is determined that the materials are unprocessed and present a conservation risk, will be physically abused or used in a libelous or illegal manner. Due to a range of media carriers, digital formats and technological obsolescence, Local History and Archives may not be able to provide a means to access the information contained in collection material.

The Library retains the right to charge for any reproduction or other research service as per the Library Board's [Service Fees Policy](#).

## **Loans**

Materials from the Local History and Archives collection may be loaned to other institutions or organizations only under the following circumstances:

- Authorization is obtained from the Manager, Local History and Archives (or designate).
- Documentation is provided for the loan.
- The borrower ensures adequate insurance, display, care and handling of the material on loan. If at any time Local History and Archives determines that the material on loan is not being cared for adequately, the Manager, Local History and Archives (or designate) may cancel the loan and request the immediate return of the material.

## **Digital Preservation**

A responsive and relevant archive requires ongoing adaptation to technological change to ensure present-day records are safe and accessible for the people of Hamilton in the future. Digital information is important to our collective culture, knowledge base and history. Recognizing that analog and digital media both have different long-term preservation needs, Local History and Archives supports the active digital preservation systems and practices required to ensure a duty of care is extended to born digital and digitized material.

## **Collections Representation**

Hamilton Public Library's Local History and Archives collections do not yet fully represent the many people and voices that make up Hamilton. The Archives is committed to a concerted effort to recognize, reflect, and amplify diverse voices and perspectives.

Records and descriptions of material held by Local History and Archives contain language or depictions of people which includes problematic wording, cultural references and stereotypes that are

no longer used or appropriate today. The presence of materials in the Local History and Archives collection does not constitute an endorsement of their content or viewpoints.

Local History and Archives will actively update archival descriptions, contextualize records and develop a collection that illustrates the history of all Hamilton's peoples.

## **Reappraisal and Deaccession**

Material added to the Local History and Archives collection shall be held until such time as it is deemed to no longer fit the approved acquisitions policy and is deaccessioned. All information pertaining to the deaccessioning and disposition of material will be retained in the Archives' records.

### **Guiding Principles for Reappraisal and Deaccession**

- Archivists must use professional judgment when reappraising collections. Exceptions are handled on a case-by-case basis.
- Although it is an important collection management tool, reappraisal does not always lead to deaccessioning.
- To ensure consistency, the process should be systematic and both procedure and outcomes thoroughly documented.
- Reappraisal and deaccession is a responsible archival practice for better management of collections.

### **Considerations for Reappraisal and Deaccession**

- Legal issues of ownership of collections.
- Ethical issues regarding the disposition of collections in a transparent manner.
- Donor relations.
- Resource allocation.

### **Conflict of Interest**

As per the Library Board's [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#), Local History and Archives library employees will not formally, through trade or purchase for their own personal use, enjoyment, or profit, collect for their personal benefit archival materials which fall within the broad acquisition mandate of Local History and Archives.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

[Borrowing Policy](#)

[Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Copyright and Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Donation, Sponsorship and Fundraising Policy](#)

[Intellectual Freedom Policy](#)

[Member and Service Commitment Policy](#)

[Service Fees Policy](#)

[Working With Us Policy](#)

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

October 2017, June 2021, June 2025

## Copyright and Intellectual Property Policy

|                |                                              |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board                                |
| Author:        | Director Collections and Program Development |
| Review Period: | 4 years                                      |
| Approval Date: | December 2024                                |

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To outline the Hamilton Public Library's role and position related to applicable Copyright and Intellectual Property legislation.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The Hamilton Public Library (HPL) is not responsible for infringing copies made by users of the Hamilton Public Library's copying equipment and Makerspaces. It's the user's obligation and responsibility to determine and satisfy copyright or other use restrictions.
- HPL respects the copyright and moral rights of authors and copyright holders and seeks to educate users about these rights with regard to the Library's physical and digital collections.
- HPL staff and users may make copies for specific purposes under the fair dealing provision of the Copyright Act.

### DEFINITIONS

- **Copyright** is a legal means of protecting an author/creator's work.
- **Intellectual Property** refers to the ownership of intangible and non-physical goods.
- **Fair Dealing** is a user's right in copyright law permitting use of a copyright protected work without permission or payment of copyright royalties for the purpose of research, private study, education, satire, parody, criticism, review or news reporting, provided that what you do with the work is within the permitted uses as outlined in the Copyright Act Section 29.
- **Access Copyright** is a Canadian non-profit organization that represents writers, visual artists, and publishers. It licenses the copying of creative works to educational institutions and businesses, redistributing proceeds to copyright holders to support the ongoing creation of new content.
- **Creative Commons** is a licensing framework that allows creators to share their works freely while retaining certain rights. It offers a variety of licenses that enable others to use, remix, and distribute the works under specified conditions, such as attribution, non-commercial use, or share-alike requirements.

## POLICY DETAILS

HPL seeks to advocate for, inform and support the intellectual property rights of the creator as outlined within Canadian legislation while balancing the social benefit and educational value of exceptions to legislation as outlined in section 29 of the Copyright Act outlining “fair dealing.”

The majority of the material in the Library’s collections is subject to copyright. It is not the role of Library staff to interpret the Copyright Act for users. Responsibility regarding copyright arising from the use and/or copying is the responsibility of the user making the copy, whether they use their own or Library equipment.

The intellectual property laws of Canada govern the making of reproductions and/or use of some materials. Certain copying may be an infringement of copyright law. The Hamilton Public Library is not responsible for infringing copies made by users of the Hamilton Public Library’s copying equipment and Makerspaces. It’s the user’s obligation and responsibility to determine and satisfy copyright or other use restrictions (such as privacy rights, CSA standards, technical protection measures, licensing and trademark, etc.) when using HPL’s collections, equipment and software.

Fair dealing is a long-standing feature of Canadian copyright law that permits certain uses of copyright material in ways that do not unduly harm the interests of copyright owners, but which could have significant social benefits. In Canada, fair dealing does not infringe copyright and is limited to the purpose of research, private study, education, satire, parody, criticism, review or news reporting:

- HPL staff and users may make copies for specific purposes under the fair dealing provision of the Copyright Act including Controlled Digital Lending. Any concerns of the legitimacy of staff copying for these purposes will be referred to the Library’s Chief Librarian or delegate.
- HPL’s copying services, whether the copy is made by Library staff or user, are provided without a motive of financial gain. The fee charged is intended to cover a portion of the Library’s costs accumulated while providing this service.

HPL will make copies of the Copyright Act and Access Copyright available and post signage to make users aware of the Copyright Act.

Hamilton Public Library retains copyright for content created by the Hamilton Public Library including the digitization of Local History and Archives collections. When content is created by the Hamilton Public Library (and HPL is the copyright holder), it is covered under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial 4.0 International licence.

A credit line, “Courtesy of Local History and Archives, Hamilton Public Library” should be provided in all cases. Commercial use is prohibited without prior written permission from the Hamilton Public Library. Commercial use includes but is not limited to reproductions, redistribution, publication, or transmission, whether by electronic means or otherwise.

Local History and Archives contributes to online platforms which aggregate material held in cultural heritage institutions. All images from Local History and Archives featured on such platforms are in the public domain or the copyright is owned by the Hamilton Public Library.

For more information, please visit the Canadian Intellectual Property Office's website:  
<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/home>

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Copyright Act](#)
- [Local History and Archives Policy](#)

## APPROVAL HISTORY

April 2001; April 2010; October 2017; September 2021; December 2024

## Naming Opportunities Policy

|                |                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board                   |
| Author:        | Director Finance and Facilities |
| Review Period: | 4 years                         |
| Approval Date: | May 2022                        |

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To provide the opportunity for public recognition of individuals or organizations that have made a lasting contribution to the development of library services in the City of Hamilton or to recognize significant financial donors.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The Library Board may initiate a request for naming of a room or facility in recognition of individuals or organizations.
- Outside requests for naming a room or facility after an individual or organization may also be made to the Hamilton Public Library Board in writing for formal consideration.
- The naming of a room or facility after an individual may be considered for reasons including the individual's contribution to the Hamilton Public Library (HPL) or in recognition of a significant financial donation to the HPL.

### POLICY DETAILS

The naming of a room or facility in recognition of individuals or organizations is a decision that requires special consideration by the Library Board of the value and benefits of such recognition and the suitability of the room or facility for such recognition purposes.

Recommendations for the naming of a room or facility after an individual may be considered to honour the individual's contribution to the Hamilton Public Library (HPL). The naming of a room or facility may also be considered in recognition of a significant financial donation to the Hamilton Public Library.

Unless specified in a separate agreement, rooms or facilities named under this policy shall be reviewed by the Hamilton Public Library Board every five (5) years, or earlier at the request of the Board, at which time Board approval will be required to renew the named room/facility.

### **Board-initiated recognition**

The Library Board may initiate a request for naming of a room or facility. The Director of Finance & Facilities would prepare an evaluation of the naming opportunity. Naming a room or facility after an individual or organization would then be evaluated and presented to the Library Board based on the following criteria:

- The name should be appropriate for a public library.
- In the case of an individual, agreement to the naming proposal must be confirmed with the individual to be named, and if deceased, by the immediate family.
- The physical condition of the room or facility must be assessed to ensure that it projects a positive image of the donor.

If a donation is involved, the proposed naming opportunity should complement the purpose of the donation. When a naming opportunity is to be established as part of a capital campaign, the monetary value of the donation must be considered in relationship to the entire building/renovation cost and not just the portion that is raised by a fundraising campaign.

To proceed with the naming opportunity, the Director of Finance and Facilities will be authorized to initiate the following actions:

- Determine specific placement of appropriate signage for the designated room or facility.
- Prepare draft wording and a cost estimate to produce the signage.
- When final copy and design is approved by the individual or organization, produce and install the signage.
- Determine what type of ceremony/reception, if any, is to accompany installation of signage and/or opening/renaming ceremonies of the room/facility.

### **Requests to the Board for the naming of a room or facility after an individual or organization**

Requests for naming a room after an individual must be directed to the Hamilton Public Library Board in writing.

The letter of request shall include a short biography of the honouree, lasting contributions to the Hamilton Public Library, community involvement, and a description of exceptional achievements as appropriate (e.g. philanthropy, leadership, professional excellence, distinguishing honours).

The letter will be reviewed by the Library Board, and, if required, an assessment of the request will be prepared by the Director of Finance & Facilities, in consultation with HPL's Senior Leadership Team. Included in the assessment will be a report on the physical condition of the room or facility to ensure that it will project a positive image of the individual or organization.

If approved, the Library Board will make a recommendation for acceptance of the request and respond to the nominator in writing. To proceed with the naming opportunity, the Director of Finance & Facilities will be authorized to initiate the following actions:

- Determine specific placement of a plaque/signage for the designated room/facility.
- Prepare draft wording and a cost estimate to produce a plaque/signage.
- When final copy and design is approved by the nominator, produce and install the plaque/signage.
- Determine what type of ceremony/reception, if any, is to accompany installation of the signage/plaque in recognition of the naming (or, in some cases, re-naming).

## APPROVAL HISTORY

January 2002; July 2010; March 2018

## Donations, Sponsorship and Fundraising Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director of Finance  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: May 2025

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The Hamilton Public Library (HPL) welcomes and encourages donations, gifts and sponsorship from individuals, groups, foundations and corporations to enhance library system services. The Library provides services to the community in accordance with the Library's mission, values and strategic goals. The Hamilton Public Library gratefully accepts donations, sponsorship and fundraising opportunities based on this Policy.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The Library gratefully accepts donations and welcomes sponsorships and fundraising opportunities with appropriate third parties to advance its mission, adhere to its values and meet its strategic goals.
- Undesignated cash donations are set aside in a Donations Reserve. Use of funds from the Donations Reserve shall be approved by the Library Board. Designated donations that are specified are directed to the appropriate department.
- The Library has a long-standing partnership with the Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) in managing its endowment funds. Endowment funds are gratefully accepted and directed to HCF on behalf of the Library.
- The Hamilton Public Library will ensure appropriate donor recognition in support of this policy. The purpose of the donor recognition program is to publicly thank donors who wish to be acknowledged.
- Charitable receipts are issued for cash donations, appraised donations of art, significant documents and media, as well as in-kind donations. Charitable receipts cannot be issued for more than the fair market value as determined by an independent appraiser.

### DEFINITIONS

**HPL Financial Services Office** - This office is responsible for the Library's financial services and facilitates tax receipts and donations. Activities of this office are overseen by the Director of Finance.

**Cash** - Cash includes cheques, money orders, bank drafts, and money (bills and coins). Donations made by debit and credit cards are also considered cash gifts.

**Donation** - A donation is a gift, contribution of cash, or goods given voluntarily to the Library as a philanthropic act without expectation or requirement of reciprocal benefit. A designated donation is

one that is to be used for a specific purpose. An undesignated donation has no stipulations on use.

**Gifts-In-Kind** - Gifts-in-kind, also known as non-cash gifts, are gifts of property. They cover items such as artwork, equipment, securities, and cultural and ecological property. A contribution of service, that is, of time, skills or effort, is not property and, therefore, does not qualify as a gift or gift in-kind for purposes of issuing official donation receipts. More information: [CRA charities and giving glossary](#).

**Sponsorship** - A sponsorship is a mutually beneficial exchange between the Library and an outside organization, in which an external party contributes cash or in-kind goods or services to the Library in return for recognition, acknowledgements or other considerations. Sponsors receive a benefit of reciprocal value in return for their support and contribution.

## POLICY DETAILS

The Hamilton Public Library is a registered charity and follows all relevant rules and regulations of the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

All donations constitute a complete transfer of ownership from the previous owner to the Library.

The Hamilton Public Library will honour donor agreements. For unsolicited gifts of private collections, HPL has no obligation to inform the donor of the disposition of the donated materials, to retain intact, or to reserve special library shelving. Donations will be accepted on the understanding that they will be used in accordance with the criteria established in this Policy.

### Types of Gifts

HPL welcomes and accepts several types of gifts as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency. Where applicable, the Library may require the donor to have their property appraised by a certified appraiser at a shared expense with the Library before deciding whether a donation will be accepted.

## DONATIONS

### Cash Donations

Gifts of cash are accepted and used to enhance the Library's services.

The Library reserves the right to use undesignated donations in the best interest of the Library, and shall make decisions regarding the investment, disposition and/or eventual disposal of all donations.

Both designated and undesignated donations are welcome. For designated donations, the Library will direct the donation to a specific purpose as outlined by the donor.

Unless otherwise specified by the donor, cash donations received during the year are to be transferred to a Donations Reserve. Use of funds in the Reserve requires Board approval before being spent.

The Board will be informed of individual cash donations of \$25,000 or more. Employees will advise the Board of such donations and bring forward a recommendation for use of the funds, such as transfer to the Donations Reserve or use for a specific purpose.

Acceptance and handling of cash donations shall adhere to the Library's Cash Handling Policy.

## Endowment Funds

The Library has a long-standing partnership with the Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) in managing its endowment funds. Endowments are gratefully accepted and directed by the Library to the HCF ([hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca](http://hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca)).

Endowment funds are administered and managed by the HCF on behalf of the Library. The principal is used to generate income, which is available for Library use. The Library Board approves the expenditures consistent with the specifications of the funds.

Donors of \$25,000 or more may name a fund and choose to direct the donation to a specific field of interest in consultation with the Library Board.

Those interested in making an endowment contribution are encouraged to contact the Library. Library employees will work together with the donor or the donor's authorized representative to establish which type of donation best meets the donor's goals.

Both the Library and the HCF recognize all donations to endowment funds. Donors of named funds are recognized in the Hamilton Community Foundation's Annual Report each year. The wishes of any donors wanting to remain anonymous will be respected.

## Gifts-In-Kind

Gifts-in-kind, also known as non-cash gifts, are gifts of property. They cover items such as artwork, equipment, securities, and cultural and ecological property.

A contribution of service, that is, of time, skills or efforts, is not property and, therefore, does not qualify as a gift or gift in-kind for purposes of issuing official donation receipts. [CRA charities giving and glossary](#).

## Art

The Library accepts artwork of historic/documentary value related to the history of the City of Hamilton as appropriate and as described in its [Collections Policy](#).

- The Library does not act as a repository of the works of local artists or of portraits of local persons.
- The Library does not actively collect, seek or accept unsolicited donations or purchase art for decorative, artistic or commemorative purposes. The Library may commission art for a new or

existing building.

- The Library Board reserves the right to refuse to accept any artwork considered by it to be inappropriate and/or unsuitable for a library environment.

### **Valuable Papers/Collections**

The Library accepts gifts of papers/collections of historic/documentary value related to the history of the City of Hamilton as determined by its [Local History and Archives Policy](#).

### **Non-cash Gifts**

Gifts of securities are welcome and directed to the Library's trust funds managed by the Hamilton Community Foundation.

### **Property**

Gifts of property, real estate and tangible property are administered through the Library's Financial Services Office.

### **Deferred Gifts including Bequests/Life Insurance**

A deferred gift is arranged now but is not available for use by the Library until some future time, usually after the death of the donor. With a deferred gift, a portion or all of a donor's assets may be designated by bequest to benefit the Library. Such gifts may be made by Will or beneficiary designation. Persons interested in making deferred gifts are encouraged to contact the Library's Financial Services Office.

## **SPONSORSHIPS**

A sponsorship is a mutually beneficial exchange between the Hamilton Public Library and an outside organization, in which an external party contributes cash or in-kind goods or services to the Library in return for recognition, acknowledgements or other considerations. Sponsors receive a benefit of reciprocal value in return for their support and contribution.

Sponsors are required to have sponsorship agreements and need to align with our policies and practices and do not imply endorsement of products by the Library.

The Library reserves the right to immediately terminate an existing sponsorship if the sponsor uses Hamilton Public Library's name outside the parameters of the agreement without prior consent or if the sponsor develops a public image inappropriate to the Library's service and philosophy. In case of a change in ownership or name or both of a sponsor during the term of the agreement, Hamilton Public Library reserves the right to immediately cancel the agreement if the new organization fails to meet any of the principles or conditions outlined in this policy or in the contractual agreement.

Any naming opportunity included in a Sponsorship Agreement will conform to the [Naming Opportunities Policy](#) and will be assessed in accordance with that policy. Sponsors' corporate names and/or logos may not have prominence over the Hamilton Public Library name and/or logo. The Library reserves the right to determine the placement of such names and logos.

The Hamilton Public Library Board endorses the Canadian Library Association's Position Statement on [Corporate Sponsorship Agreements in Libraries](#). All donations, gifts, sponsorship and fundraising programs will be consistent with the Hamilton Public Library's mission statement. The Library reserves the right to decline any donation, gift or sponsorship opportunity that is deemed to be inappropriate or unsuitable for the advancement of the mission, values, and strategic objectives of the Library.

Sponsorship agreements valued at \$25,000 or more shall be presented to the Library Board for approval. Sponsorship agreements valued at less than \$25,000 may be approved by the Chief Librarian and will be reported to the Board.

## FUNDRAISING

Employees will develop and implement appropriate fundraising strategies to achieve fundraising targets while maintaining awareness and respect for fundraising activities undertaken by others within the City of Hamilton.

The Library may approve special fundraising ventures that it deems suitable in fulfilling its mission, values, goals and objectives, and which will not compromise the Library's public image. All funds raised will be used for the stated purposes and established priorities of the fundraising program as determined by the Library in the fundraising strategy.

### Library Support Groups

Library Support Groups (such as the former Friends of the Library) wishing to financially support and/or advocate on behalf of the Hamilton Public Library will have their terms of reference and governance by-laws approved by the Hamilton Public Library Board. The group will submit annual reports summarizing its activities to the Library Board.

## RECOGNITION

The Hamilton Public Library Board will maintain a donor recognition program in support of this policy. The purpose of the donor recognition program is to thank donors, encourage others to give, and steward healthy, long-term relationships between the Library and its donors. Every effort is made to ensure that recognition is timely, meaningful to the donor, appropriate and equitable. Recognition of donors will conform to established guidelines.

Those who consent, HPL will publicly honour individuals, corporations, service clubs, community organizations and philanthropic foundations that make monetary and/or gifts-in-kind donations, as well as government agencies that provide direct cash grants to the Hamilton Public Library to enhance library services.

Donor recognition programs for special fundraising initiatives, such as capital campaigns, will be developed as a part of the campaigns.

All records pertaining to established and potential donors will be held confidential and in accordance with relevant legislation and Library policies.

The Library will also respect the wishes of any donors wishing to remain anonymous.

### **Charitable Receipts**

Charitable receipts are issued for cash donations, appraised donations of art and valuable papers, and in-kind donations. Charitable receipts cannot be issued for more than the fair market value as determined by an independent appraiser.

Deadlines may be applied to ensure that donations are received in time to be receipted in the current tax year. Receipts cannot be backdated.

### **Support Your Library Webpage**

The Library website will provide information about how to [Support HPL](#).

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

June 1993; April 2001; July 2010; December 2016, November 2021, May 2025

## Procurement Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Finance and Facilities  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: June 2021

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### POLICY PURPOSE

Hamilton Public Library is committed to acquire goods and services through a competitive process that results in the most effective net cost, appropriate quality and from a responsible source in a manner which abides by the [City of Hamilton's Procurement Policy By-Law 20-205](#) (By-law). Unless an exemption is created by the Library Board, staff will follow the By-Law. This policy will highlight sections of the By-Law which apply to the Library and the Library Board.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- Procure the necessary quality and quantity of Goods and/or Services in an efficient, timely and cost-effective manner, while maintaining the controls necessary for a public agency, in accordance with the Procurement Policy By-Law No. 20-205 as approved by Council.
- Encourage an open and competitive bidding process for the acquisition and disposal of Goods and/or Services, and the objective and equitable treatment of all vendors.
- Ensure the best value of an acquisition is obtained. This may include, but not be limited to, the determination of the total cost of performing the intended function over the lifetime of the task, acquisition cost, installation, disposal value, disposal cost, training cost, maintenance cost, quality of performance and environmental impact.
- Procure Goods and/or Services with due regard to the preservation of the natural environment and to encourage the use of “environmentally friendly” products and services, as supported by the Library’s strategic plan.
  - o The Library has adopted a modified process outlined in the Library’s Disposal of Surplus Goods Policy. This modifies Policy #16 in the By-Law.
  - o The Library has adopted a Conflicts of Interest Policy to complement Policy # 17 in the By-Law.
  - o The Library Board may name a Vendor of Record for specific purchase types for standardization of the Library’s business.

## DEFINITIONS

This is a selection of definitions. For a complete list please see Section 3 of By-law No.20-205.

### **Cooperative Procurement**

The coordination of purchases with purchases of other government bodies, public authorities, conservation authorities, municipalities, academia, schools and hospitals (MASH) sector and not-for-profit organizations.

### **Disposal of Surplus Goods**

Goods that are no longer needed in one Hamilton Public Library location will be distributed to other library locations, if appropriate, prior to being declared surplus. Disposal methods are outlined in the Disposal of Surplus Goods Policy.

### **Low Dollar Value Procurements**

The process of procuring goods and/or services with an estimated annual procurement cost of up to but not including \$10,000.

### **Request for Information (RFI)**

A process where information is requested from vendors regarding their interest in, or the feasibility and availability of, specific goods and/or services in the marketplace and to determine if there are enough vendors to justify a Request for Proposals or a Request for Tenders. An RFI may also gather information on potential suppliers and assist with understanding of the marketplace and potential solutions. An Expression of Interest or "EOI" shall be considered an RFI.

### **Request for Proposal (RFP)**

A formal request for prices and details on Goods and/or Services from vendors, where the Goods and/or Services may not be able to be fully defined or specified or when alternate methods are being sought to perform a certain function or service, at the time of the request. See Also: By-Law Policy #5.4 – Request for Proposals (\$10,000 and greater).

### **Request for Quotation (RFQ)**

An informal request for prices on Goods and/or Services with an estimated procurement cost between \$10,000 and up to but not including \$100,000, and where comprehensive Technical Specifications can be developed. Request for Quotations may be processed by the Client Department. See Also: By-law Policy #5.2 - Request for Quotations.

### **Request for Tender (RFT)**

A formal request for prices on Goods and/or Services from vendors, where the Goods and/or Services are able to be fully defined or specified at the time of the request. See Also: By-Law Policy #5.3 – Request for Tenders (\$10,000 and greater).

### **Standardization**

A management decision-making process that examines a specific common need or requirement and then selects a Good and/or Service that best fills that need to become the standard.

### **Vendor of Record**

Vendor of Record relationships are created by the Library Board to allow the Library exemptions from the By-Law with a specific business case laid out in a board motion.

## POLICY DETAILS

### Purchasing Principles

The purchasing policy and the Library Board are guided by the following purchasing principles in addition to the By-Law.

1. Ensure the acquisition of goods and services meet the requirements of applicable legislation, including City of Hamilton Policies and by-laws, any specific provisions of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and all other relevant Federal and Provincial legislation.
2. Procure goods and services in an efficient, timely and cost-effective manner while maintaining the necessary controls.
3. Ensure maximum value is obtained during the acquisition of goods and services including, where appropriate, the total cost of the product or service purchased. Total costs may include but not be limited to acquisition, disposal, training, maintenance costs, residual value, performance and the environmental impact.
4. Procure goods and services considering, wherever practical, the commitment to the environment and energy savings.
5. Where standardization is advantageous to the Library's business, the reasons for standardization will be documented.
6. The Library will participate in cooperative purchasing partnerships wherever quantifiable benefits exists.
7. Any information supplied to the Library by a vendor will be subject to the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act.

### Procurement Process Overview

The By-Law outlines and creates a robust infrastructure at the City of Hamilton for the Library to leverage. The Library creates requests and submits them to the City to process, eliminating the need for a separate procurement department at the Library while keeping us in alignment with the City of Hamilton's procurement office.

### Approval Authority

Below is a simplified table modified to reflect Library structure, as represented in the By-Law Policy #2 - Section 4.2. In this By-Law, Chief Librarian/CEO is equivalent to City Manager. The By-Law is the definitive authority.

| Competitive Process | Amount of Purchase     | Approval Authority            |
|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| RFT & RFP           | \$250,000 or greater   | Hamilton Public Library Board |
| RFT & RFP           | \$100,000 to \$249,999 | Chief Librarian/CEO           |

|                                           |                                  |                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RFQ & RFP                                 | \$10,000 to \$99,999             | Directors specifically delegated with Purchase Authority                         |
| Policy #5.1 Low Dollar Value Procurements | Up to but not including \$10,000 | Managers and other staff members specifically delegated with Purchase Authority. |

## Standardization

The Library leverages standardization for goods and services so that equipment can be interchangeable between branches to reduce costs and administration. Specific cases of standardization lead to specific Vendors of Record and are submitted to the Board.

Standardization is determined through:

- Common usage.
- Ease of distribution.
- Reduce maintenance and service costs.
- Reduced need for training.
- Economies of scale.
- Standardization includes but is not limited to information technology, software, furniture and furnishing, telecommunications equipment and other items designated specifically as a standard item.

## Disposal of Assets

As outlined in the Library's Disposal of Surplus Goods Policy, the Chief Librarian or designate is authorized to declare a good as surplus. When a good is declared surplus the following are authorized disposal methods:

- Offered to HPL branches for use.
- Offered to the City of Hamilton for use.
- Donated to a non-profit agency or charity.
- Library specific goods (i.e. Library shelving) may be donated to other libraries or a similar entity such as a school.
- By recycling.
- By taking to a municipal landfill or destroying if recycling is unavailable.
- By sale to public or private sector entities; by external advertisement, formal request, auction or public sale (where it is deemed appropriate, a reserve price may be established).

Generally, disposing of goods by sale will only be undertaken when the estimated value of the items exceeds the total cost of selling the items (including costs of staff time).

When donating items to external agencies, the receiving agencies will generally be responsible for the costs of pick-up.

The disposal of surplus goods will be consistent with the Library's Conflict of Interest Policy.

### **Cooperative Purchasing**

The Library staff may participate with other governments, agencies or public authorities in cooperative venture or contracts where the best interest of the library would be served. The library shall ensure that the practices of such groups are consistent with the principles in the By-Law and other relevant legislation. See By-Law Policy #12 – Cooperative Procurements.

### **Sustainable Purchasing**

The By-Law states in Section 1 (4) that one of the objectives of the policy is to:

“Procure Goods and/or Services with due regard to the preservation of the natural environment and to encourage the use of “environmentally friendly” products and services, as supported by the City's Strategic Plan”.

The Library believes in the use of environmentally sustainable products and practices. The Library will consider best value (quality, price, service and innovation), in addition to the social and ethical impacts of the products.

Total costs of goods may reflect environmental and ethical impacts of products as specified in procurement documents.

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

December 2004; June 2006; July 2010; September 2018, June 2021

## Disposal of Surplus Goods Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Finance and Facilities  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: June 2021

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline rules for the appropriate disposal of surplus goods. The goal of the policy is to ensure surplus items are disposed of in an ethical manner, cost effectively, and in the best interests of the Hamilton Public Library and the City of Hamilton.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- Goods that are no longer needed at one branch will be distributed to other library locations, if appropriate, prior to being declared surplus.
- The Chief Librarian or designate is authorized to declare a good as surplus.
- If a good is declared surplus, there are various disposal methods that are authorized.
- When disposing of goods, staff are to complete the Policy 16 Form and file with the Financial Services Office.

### DEFINITIONS

n/a

### POLICY DETAILS

#### Process and Authorized Disposal Methods

Goods that are no longer needed in one Hamilton Public Library location will be distributed to other library locations, if appropriate, prior to being declared surplus. The Chief Librarian or designate is authorized to declare a good as surplus. When a good is declared surplus the following are authorized disposal methods:

- Offered to the City of Hamilton for use.
- Donated to a non-profit agency or charity.
- Library specific goods (i.e. Library shelving) may be donated to other libraries or a similar entity, such as a school.
- By recycling.
- By taking to a municipal landfill or destroying if recycling is unavailable.

- By sale to public or private sector entities; by external advertisement, formal request, auction or public sale (where it is deemed appropriate, a reserve price may be established).

Generally, disposing of goods by sale will only be undertaken when the estimated value of the items exceeds the total cost of selling the items (including costs of staff time). When donating items to external agencies, the receiving agencies will generally be responsible for the costs of pick-up.

When disposing of goods, staff will complete the Hamilton Public Library Policy 16 Form and file with the Financial Services Office who will then file with the City Procurement Department. Policy 16 forms are not required for: library collections, Local History and Archive items, obsolete supplies or severely damaged items. Criteria for the deselection of library materials and Local History and Archive items are covered by the Library's Collections Policy.

The value of any declared surplus good cannot be used to offset the value of procurement when determining the procurement process to follow.

### **Restrictions**

Disposal of surplus goods will be done consistent with the Hamilton Public Library's Conflict of Interest Policy. There will be no disposition of goods to employees of the Hamilton Public Library or the City of Hamilton, members of the Library Board or Council, or their family members unless such good(s) are sold through external advertisement, formal request, auction or public sale and no conflict of interest exists.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

May 2014; September 2018, June 2021

## Records Management Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Digital Technology and Creation  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: March 2022 , September 2025

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To ensure that physical and electronic records created or received by Hamilton Public Library (HPL), in the course of carrying out library business, are managed appropriately throughout the records' life cycle to facilitate the accessibility, accuracy and security of information to meet operational and legislative requirements.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- This policy applies to physical and electronic records that are created or received by the Library Board, employees or volunteers of HPL, including records received from external sources, in the course of carrying out library business.
- This policy does not apply to the digital or physical materials acquired for public collections, or to historical and archival items acquired for the Local History and Archives collections.
- Records will be managed to ensure they are available, accessible, and maintained to support operations, and to meet legislative requirements.
- Records (permanent, archival, official, and transitory) will be retained, preserved, protected, secured and disposed of appropriately.
- The CEO/ Chief Librarian and the Directors are accountable and responsible for the administration of, and compliance with, the Records Management Program.

### DEFINITIONS

**Archival Record:** Records determined to have historical and cultural value to the library to warrant continuous preservation. These records are transferred to Local History and Archives at the end of their retention periods. **Disposition:** The final action carried out on a record after its retention period has ended. This may include retaining, archiving, or destroying the record.

**Life Cycle:** The entire lifespan of a record, including its creation or receipt, use, maintenance, retention, and disposition.

**Permanent Record:** Records determined to have historical, administrative, legal, or other value to the library to warrant continuous preservation.

**Record:** Information in any format or medium, created, received, and maintained as evidence in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. This may include paper and electronic records, minutes, correspondence, financial statements, maps, drawings, photographs, etc.

**Records Management:** The practice of managing records in an efficient and systematic manner throughout its life cycle.

**Record Series:** A group of identical or related records that are normally used and filed as a unit and that permit evaluation as a unit for retention scheduling purposes.

**Retention Period:** The period of time during which records must be kept before disposition. The retention period is often broken into active and inactive stages, and is determined by legislative, regulatory, and operational requirements.

**Retention Schedule:** A timetable that identifies record series and the length of time they must be retained and their final disposition.

### **Transitory Records:**

Records are kept or referenced for a short duration of time and are not required to meet legislative obligations or to sustain administrative or operational functions.

## **POLICY DETAILS**

All records created by Hamilton Public Library or in the organization's custody are the property of the library and are managed as a corporate resource, regardless of medium or format.

**Limited collection:** Where there is no legislative requirement to retain records or there is no compelling business reason to do so, HPL will limit its collection of information and what is contained in records.

Hamilton Public Library will ensure that all records created by the library or in its custody are:

- Available, accessible and maintained to support management and strategic decision-making and to meet operational and legislative requirements;
- Secured and properly protected against damage or unauthorized access;
- Retained and not destroyed before the defined retention periods;
- Disposed of in accordance with established retention schedules; and destroyed in a secure manner that considers confidentiality requirements.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to the life cycle of all records in all formats, digital or physical, and will be applied consistently across all media.

This policy applies to all records that are created and/or used by the Board, employees of the Library and volunteers. It also applies to records from external sources such as other governmental bodies, businesses and the public when such records are maintained by the Library as a part of its administrative and operational functions.

This policy does not apply to items in the Library's digital or physical materials collections acquired solely for use by the public.

This policy does not apply to historical and archival materials or items acquired by the Library as part of its Local History and Archives collections.

### **Accountability – Roles and Responsibilities**

The CEO/Chief Librarian is responsible for ensuring that records management requirements are met and that they reflect the library's policies and priorities

The Director, Digital Technology and Creation oversees the general administration of the digital record management, including implementing systems that ensure the security, accuracy, and integrity of records.

Directors and Managers ensure compliance and administration of their respective records series as defined in the retention schedule.

Employees, including volunteers, shall create and manage records in accordance with this Policy, the retention schedule, and any applicable policies, procedures, or standards.

### **Protection of Records:**

Records that are private, confidential, privileged, or essential to business continuity and disaster recovery will be identified and protected with appropriate security measures. All electronic records are stored securely on servers managed under HPL's infrastructure.

### **Retention and Disposition of Records**

The Hamilton Public Library identifies and maintains records according to legal, regulatory, contractual, fiscal, historical, and business requirements in its retention schedule.

Records that have reached the end of their retention period and are no longer needed for another valid reason will not be retained and will be destroyed in a secure and confidential manner in accordance with established procedures.

Transitory records, unless they have become necessary for legal or administrative purposes, will not be retained and will be destroyed.

Records that are classified as permanent or archival records have long-term value to the library, as such, they will be preserved and protected to ensure their safety, availability, and recovery in accordance with their disposition in the retention schedule.

Records will not be retained beyond their retention period without a valid reason unless authorized by the Chief Librarian/CEO or designate.

### **Official Records**

Only one official record, either physical or digital, will be maintained to meet retention requirements.

- If an original physical record is not legally required or classified as permanent, the digital copy becomes the official record. The physical version is then transitory and must be securely disposed of.
- Exceptions: Duplicate records listed in the retention schedule (e.g., supporting documents or records submitted to external entities like the City of Hamilton) are not transitory and must be retained per the schedule.

### **Legislation**

This policy, procedures and retention schedule will comply with legislated requirements and professional standards, including, but not limited to:

- [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Ontario Municipal Act](#)
- [Public Libraries Act](#)
- [Employment Standards Act](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)
- [Income Tax Act](#)

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

[Privacy Policy for Library Members](#)  
[Records Retention Schedule](#)

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

April 2010; January 2018; March 2022, September 2025

## Security Camera Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Finance and Facilities  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: November 2022

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The Hamilton Public Library Board strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for members and staff while protecting individual rights to privacy. The Library recognizes the use of security cameras at Library facilities as part of the Library's overall strategy to ensure the safety of persons and property. This policy will adhere to privacy requirements set out in the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#). In addition, this policy has been developed to follow the guidelines set out by the Information and Privacy Commission of Ontario.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- This Policy applies to all types of camera surveillance systems, surveillance monitors and camera recording devices that are used for security purposes at Library managed facilities. This policy does not address instances where library staff record a specific event (such as a program, or presentation).
- Security camera systems are a resource used by the Hamilton Public Library Board within the Board's jurisdiction to promote the safety of visitors, staff and community members. Where deployed for that purpose, these systems also help to protect library property against theft or vandalism and can assist in the identification of intruders and of persons breaking the law.
- In the event of a reported or observed incident, the review of recorded information may be used to assist in the investigation of the incident. The Library will maintain control of and responsibility for the security camera system at all times.
- Employees and service providers are expected to review and comply with this Policy, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), and other relevant statutes in performing any duties and functions that are related to the operation of the security camera program.
- The Chief Librarian will issue administrative procedures in support of this policy.

### DEFINITIONS

**Personal Information** (taken from MFIPPA)- Recorded information about an identifiable individual, including,

(a) information relating to the race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or marital or family status of the individual,

- (b) information relating to the education or the medical, psychiatric, psychological, criminal or employment history of the individual or information relating to financial transactions in which the individual has been involved,
- (c) any identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual,
- (d) the address, telephone number, fingerprints or blood type of the individual,
- (e) the personal opinions or views of the individual except if they relate to another individual,
- (f) correspondence sent to an institution by the individual that is implicitly or explicitly of a private or confidential nature, and replies to that correspondence that would reveal the contents of the original correspondence,
- (g) the views or opinions of another individual about the individual, and
- (h) the individual's name if it appears with other personal information relating to the individual or where the disclosure of the name would reveal other personal information about the individual.

**IPC** – Information and Privacy Commission of Ontario. IPC oversees compliance with the privacy protection provisions of MFIPPA and conducts investigations into privacy complaints. IPC also provides guidance regarding Ontario's access and privacy legislation.

**MFIPPA** – Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The purpose of the Act is to provide a right of access to information under the control of institutions and to protect the privacy of individuals with respect to personal information about themselves held by institutions.

## POLICY DETAILS

### **Collection of Personal Information Using a Security camera coverage System.**

Any recorded data of an identifiable individual qualifies as "personal information" under MFIPPA. Security cameras can be used to collect personal information about identifiable individuals. The Library has determined that it has the authority to collect this personal information in accordance with the MFIPPA. Pursuant to section 28(2) of the Ontario MFIPPA, no person shall collect personal information on behalf of the Library unless the collection is expressly authorized, used for the purposes of law enforcement or necessary to the proper administration of a lawfully authorized activity.

### **Planning Considerations for Security Cameras**

Before deciding if a facility warrants security cameras, the Library will:

1. Conduct consultations with relevant stakeholders as to the necessity of the proposed security camera program at the facility.
2. Endeavour to ensure that the proposed design and operation of the video security surveillance system reasonably minimizes privacy intrusion.

### **Design, Installation and Operation of Security Cameras**

When designing a security camera system and installing equipment, the following must be considered:

1. Given the open and public nature of the Library's facilities and the need to provide for the safety and security of employees and visitors who may be present at all hours of the day, the Library's security camera coverage systems may operate at any time in a 24-hour period.
2. The ability of authorized personnel to adjust cameras shall be restricted so that authorized personnel cannot adjust or manipulate cameras to overlook spaces that are not intended to be covered by the security camera coverage program.
3. Equipment shall never monitor the inside of areas where the public and employees have a higher expectation of privacy (e.g. change rooms and washrooms).
4. Reception/recording equipment must be located in a strictly controlled access area. Only authorized personnel shall have access to the controlled access area and the reception/recording equipment.
5. The annual maintenance program for reception and recording equipment will ensure that the equipment is operating properly. Library staff will endeavour to promptly follow-up issues or concerns regarding the performance of equipment.

### **Notice of Use of Video Systems**

In order to provide notice to individuals that video is in use:

1. The Library shall post signs, visible to members of the public, at all entrances and/or prominently displayed on the perimeter of the grounds under security camera coverage. On at least one sign at each location with security camera coverage the following information will include:
  - The legal authority for the collection of personal information.
  - The principle purpose(s) for which the personal information is intended to be used.
  - The title, business address, and telephone number of someone who can answer questions about the collection.
2. Additional signs will be used to support awareness of the security camera program.
3. The Security Camera Policy will be posted on the Library's website.

### **Security Camera Monitors and Records**

1. Staff at each location may be authorized to monitor real-time camera feeds as is reasonably necessary to implement this Policy. Every reasonable attempt will be made to ensure security camera monitors are not in a position that enables the public and/or unauthorized staff to view them.
2. Only the Chief Librarian, Director of Finance & Facilities or other authorized delegates may review recorded information from the system.
3. Security camera footage is not actively used to monitor members' use of Library spaces or employee performance. Circumstances which warrant review will be limited to security incidents that have been reported, or in the investigation of a potential crime, or identifying individuals associated or potentially involved with a crime. Footage may also be used to assist in identifying or resolving property-related matters. Access will be limited to cases where review of camera footage may help to identify the cause of/or help resolve a problem.

4. While security camera footage is not used to actively monitor employee performance, where warranted, camera footage may be reviewed and/or monitored for workplace investigation purposes such as policy violations, health and safety concerns, crime, and/or theft. The aforementioned works in conjunction with the HPL's Privacy Policy and Staff and Technology Use Policy which should be consulted together with the contents of this section.
5. All storage devices will be located in a controlled-access area. Access to the storage devices will be limited to authorized personnel. Logs will be kept of all instances of access to, and use of, recorded material to enable a proper audit trail.
6. The Library will take all reasonable efforts to ensure the security of records in its control/custody and ensure their safe and secure disposal.
7. Security camera systems will be set-up to ensure regular recordings are cleared or overwritten on a regular basis. Normally, systems will be set-up to maintain records for up to 30 days. In some cases system capacity may limit the time records are maintained. In the event that authorized staff need to remove information from the system (still images, video footage) for authorized reasons, the resulting record(s) will be maintained for at least one (1) year.
8. When records are released to law enforcement officials, where possible, authorized staff will limit the release of information about individuals deemed not to be involved in the investigation. This includes, but is not limited to, zooming images in on suspects in question, obscuring identifiable features of other individuals and limiting the time frame of video coverage provided.

## Logs

Each location must maintain a log on the Library's Intranet that records all activities related to security cameras and records. Activities include all information regarding the use, maintenance, and storage of records and all instances of access to, and use of, recorded material, including the name of the person accessing the system. All logbook entries will detail staff name, date, time and activity.

## Access Requests Process

All requests to view security camera coverage will be recorded in the Log and will be directed to the Chief Librarian or designate. Requests will be reviewed based on Library policy and relevant legislation including MFIPPA.

## Law Enforcement Access Request

If access to a security camera coverage record is required for the purpose of a law enforcement investigation, the requesting Officer must complete the *Disclosure of Personal Information Form* and forward it to the Chief Librarian or designate. The Chief Librarian or designate will provide the recording for the specified date and time of the incident requested by the Law Enforcement Officer, subject to MFIPPA exemptions.

The Chief Librarian, or designate, will record the following information in the facility's log:

1. The name of the Officer and badge number.
2. Investigation number and reason for the request.

3. The date and time of the original, recorded incident including the designated name/number of the applicable camera and DVR.
4. The name of the authorized personnel at the time of the incident.
5. The time and date the copy of the original record was sealed.
6. The time and date the sealed record was provided to the requesting Officer.
7. Whether the record will be returned or destroyed after use by the Law Enforcement Agency.

### **Viewing Images**

When recorded images from the cameras must be viewed for law enforcement for investigative reasons, this must only be undertaken by authorized personnel, in a private, controlled area that is not accessible to other staff and/or visitors.

### **Inquiries from the Public Related to the Security Camera Policy**

A staff member receiving an inquiry from the public regarding the Security Camera Policy shall direct the inquiry to the Chief Librarian's Office.

### **People Counter Systems**

The Library uses a People Counter System to track the number of visits to our spaces. This equipment functions separately from our Security Cameras and do not record video footage or collect any personal information as defined by MFIPPA. The counter system anonymously senses and counts when a person crosses an invisible threshold. This allows us to quantify the number of visitors we receive in a given time period. Since the information collected by this People Counter System does not contain personal information it is outside the scope of this Policy.

### **Accountability - Roles & Responsibilities**

**Chief Librarian** - The Chief Librarian is responsible for the overall Library video security surveillance program and is responsible for the Library's privacy obligations under the Ontario Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Policy. Upon request, a report on the security camera program will be provided to the Board. Only the Chief Librarian and specifically designated staff will have the authority to review recorded camera coverage and authorize the release of images from the system for investigations or other purposes.

**Director of Finance & Facilities** - The Director of Finance & Facilities or designate is responsible for coordinating security threat assessments and advising on installations. The Director of Finance & Facilities is also responsible for ensuring installations and operations are done in accordance with this Policy. The Director of Finance & Facilities works with the Director of Digital Technology to ensure camera systems have appropriate security measures in place and the technical aspects of the system are periodically audited. The Director of Finance & Facilities ensures that authorized Facilities and Security staff are familiar with this Policy and that training is provided to all authorized personnel. The Director of Finance & Facilities oversees the day-to-day operations of security camera systems at the Central Library.

**Branch Manager** - The Branch Manager of a facility having security cameras is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the system in accordance with the Policy. The Branch Manager's responsibilities include ensuring proper signage is in place, monitors are only positioned in appropriate locations, and that only authorized staff have access to the system. The Branch Manager ensures that authorized staff are familiar with this Policy and have adequate training. The Branch Manager ensures problems with the system or policy violations are promptly reported. The Branch Manager refers all requests to view recorded camera coverage to the Chief Librarian or designate.

### **Personnel Authorized to Operate Video Equipment**

Only authorized personnel shall be permitted to operate security camera coverage systems.

### **Unauthorized Access and/or Disclosure (Privacy Breach)**

Any Library employee who becomes aware of an unauthorized disclosure of a video record in contravention of this Policy, and/or a potential privacy breach has a responsibility to ensure that the Chief Librarian is immediately informed of the breach.

The following actions will be taken immediately in accordance with HPL's procedures for managing a privacy breach:

- Upon confirmation of the existence of a privacy breach, the Chief Librarian or designate will notify the Information and Privacy Commission of Ontario (IPC).
- HPL staff shall work constructively with the IPC staff to mitigate the extent of the privacy breach, and to review the adequacy of privacy protection with the existing Policy.
- The Chief Librarian or designate in consultation with the Director of the department in which the breach of Policy occurred, shall investigate the cause of the disclosure with the goal of eliminating potential future occurrences.
- The departmental Director shall inform the Chief Librarian, or designate, of events that have led up to the privacy breach.
- The staff member shall work with the departmental Director and the Chief Librarian or designate to take all reasonable actions to recover the record and limit the record's disclosure.
- The Chief Librarian, where required, shall notify affected parties whose personal information was inappropriately disclosed.
- A breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. A breach of this Policy by service providers (contractors) to the Library, may result in termination of their contract.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

[Privacy Policy for Library Members](#)

[Technology Use Policy for Staff / Users](#)

[Technology Use Policy for Library Members](#)

[Employment Standards Act, Section XI.1 Written Policy on Electronic Monitoring](#)

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

April 2010; March 2013; October 2017; November 2021

## Cash Handling Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Finance and Facilities  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: June 2021

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To define the acceptable levels on control for Cash Handling operations for all Library locations to ensure clear and consistent practices within the Library for the handling of cash. This policy is designed to avoid mishandling or fraudulent activity in the handling of cash and to prevent and minimize the risk to employees when handling cash.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- Promote proper and consistent cash handling practices across the Library.
- Establish a system of internal controls for cash handling to prevent mishandling of such funds.
- Assist in strengthening the security over cash receipts.
- Ensure an appropriate segregation of duties exists.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding of cash.

### DEFINITIONS

**Bank Deposits** consist of coin, currency, cheques, and money orders.

**Cash** consists of coin, currency, cheques, money orders and credit/debit card transactions.

**Cash Custodian** – is an employee who performs the function of reconciling and preparing Library cash deposits for management review.

**Cash Float** are funds used to make change for a cash transaction.

**Cashier** is any employee who performs the function of receiving, transmitting, safeguarding and/or depositing Library cash.

**Point of Sale System** is a computer used in place of a cash register to record transactions, handle credit and/or debit payments and print receipts and reports.

**PeopleSoft Financial System** is the accounting software utilized by the Library to record financial transactions.

**Refund** is the exchange of monetary funds, debit transactions, credit card transactions or payment by cheque by the member to the Library for goods or services that, after processing and settlement, has been mutually agreed to by the member and Library that the repayment of a sum of money is required.

**Segregation of Duties** is an internal control concept in which the same employee does not have responsibility for incompatible activities such as handling cash and recording and reconciling transactions.

**Transaction Log** is a manual record used to record transactions.

**Void** is when no exchange of monetary funds, debit transactions, credit card transactions or cheque payment by the member to the Library for goods or services that, after it has been authorized but before it has been settled, has been mutually agreed to by the member and Library that said transaction should not be processed.

## POLICY DETAILS

This policy applies to all Library staff, volunteers, students, and business partners who accept cash funds on behalf of the Library and whose financial transactions are captured within the Library's financial systems.

This policy does not include controls pertaining to the use of petty cash funds. Failure of staff to comply with this Cash Handling Policy could result in disciplinary action.

### Segregation of Duties

No single person shall handle a transaction from beginning to end. No single person should have responsibility for both collecting cash and:

- Opening the mail.
- Depositing cash receipts.
- Recording or approving journal entries within the PeopleSoft Financial System.
- Performing bank reconciliations.
- Issuing invoices or posting payments within the PeopleSoft accounts receivable module.
- Initiating, approving or recording accounts receivable write-offs or other adjustments.
- Reconciling the numerical continuity of manual member receipts, where applicable.
- Using discretion as to whether a related charge will be levied and / or the amount of the charge.

Where segregation of duties is not practical, additional compensating controls and mitigation practices such as managerial oversight are required to reduce the risk of loss.

## **Receiving and Recording Cash Payments**

An incomplete record of cash transactions and adjustments provides an opportunity to misappropriate cash and omit the shortage from the accounting records.

Counterfeit and mutilated currency is not legal tender and should not be accepted. Cashiers should be adequately trained in using common security features to identify counterfeit money.

All cash payments should be entered into the cash register or point of sale system immediately upon receipt from the member. Where it is not practical to use a cash register or point of sale system, the cash payment should be recorded using pen in a transaction log which documents at a minimum the date, amount, type and purpose of the payment received.

A receipt should be printed from the cash register or point of sale system and provided to the member for all payments received. A manual receipt should be prepared where it is not practical to use a cash register or point of sale system. The cash register, point of sale system, or manual receipt should indicate, at a minimum, the transaction date, sequential transaction or receipt number, purpose of the payment, amount received, taxes, and type of payment.

All cash payments should be collected by the cashier at a central location (ie. service desks).

## **Refunds and Voided Transactions**

Lack of documentation and management oversight provides an opportunity to process an unfounded refund or void transaction for cash and misappropriate the funds. All refunds and voided transactions should have the following supporting documentation:

- Transaction date.
- Member name, address, phone number and signature.
- Original member receipt (where available).
- Reason for the refund or voided transaction.
- Amount and form of payment.
- Signature of the cashier issuing the refund or void.
- Signature of the supervisor approving the transaction.

Total refunds and voided transactions appearing on the cash register summary tape, point of sale system report or manual transaction log at the end of the cashier's shift should be reconciled to the supporting documentation outlined above.

Management should investigate refunds and voided transactions for which no supporting documentation exists. Refunds should be returned using the same payment method as the original

payment. For example, if the original payment was made using a VISA credit card, the refund must be returned to the same VISA credit card.

## **Receipts Reconciliation**

Lack of management oversight and a proper receipts reconciliation process creates an opportunity to misappropriate cash and conceal the shortage. Cash, cheque, debit and credit card receipts on hand should be counted and reconciled to amounts recorded in the cash register, point of sale system or transaction log.

Cash appearing on the cash register summary tape, point of sale system report or manual transaction log covering the shift period should be compared to the actual amount of cash on hand once the float balance is removed. Cash shortages or overages should be identified and explained. The receipts reconciliation should be documented, re-performed and reviewed by management and signed by both the cashier and management as evidence that the reconciliation is complete and accurate.

Where it is not practical for management to review the receipts reconciliation, a second employee who did not participate in the particular cash handling activities may act on management's behalf. Management should summarize cash shortages and overages by date and amount. Management should review this summary at least on a monthly basis in order to identify trends or significant cumulative discrepancies. Significant shortages and overages should be brought to management's attention, investigated, documented and resolved. At a minimum, documentation should contain a description of steps taken to investigate the shortage or overage and what action (if any) was taken by management.

The float and cash awaiting deposit should be stored in a secure location with limited access. Only the cash custodian or branch manager should have access to cash awaiting deposit.

## **Bank Deposits**

Large amounts of cash stored on-site for an extended period of time provides an opportunity to misappropriate, skim or lap funds.

All funds should be deposited intact. No cash receipts should be retained or expended to pay invoices or miscellaneous expenses, replenish petty cash or make loans or advances. Cash back for debit or credit card purchases must not be allowed. Cash awaiting deposit should be stored in a secure location with limited access.

Cash appearing on the cash register summary tape, point of sale system report or manual transaction log covering the deposit period should be compared to the actual amount of cash on hand. Differences that were not previously identified as part of the receipt reconciliation process should be brought to management's attention, investigated, documented and resolved. The deposit reconciliation should be reviewed by management and signed by both the employee and management as evidence that it is complete and accurate.

A bank deposit slip should be prepared for the actual amount of cash on hand. The deposit amount should match the amount of cash appearing on the receipt reconciliation or deposit reconciliation. The deposit should be re-counted and bank deposit slip reviewed by management or designate. The bank deposit slip should be signed by both the employee and management, or designate, as evidence that the reconciliation is complete and accurate. At a minimum, the bank deposit slip should be produced in triplicate – two copies are remitted to the bank with the deposit and one copy is retained by the department. The deposit and two copies of the bank deposit slip should be sealed in a bank deposit bag. The deposit should occur the same day on which it is prepared.

Where the Library's contracted service provider is not required, the bank deposit should be escorted to the bank by a Library employee. Bank deposits should not be sent through mail or inter-office mail.

Bank deposits picked up by the Library's contracted service provider should be recorded using a pen in a pickup log which documents, at a minimum, the date, deposit bag number, deposit amount, initials of the Library employee releasing the deposit and initials of the Library's contracted service provider driver taking custody of the funds. If in doubt, the identification of the Library's contracted service provider driver can be compared against a list of authorized personnel before releasing the deposit.

## **Bank Reconciliation**

Lack of a bank reconciliation process creates an opportunity to misappropriate cash from the bank deposit and not detect the discrepancy. Funds deposited should be recorded in the PeopleSoft Financial System and reconciled to bank statements at least on a monthly basis.

Point of sale system transactions should be automatically downloaded into the PeopleSoft Financial System. Manual journal entries are required to record cash register and transaction log activity into the PeopleSoft Financial System. Each branch should forward pertinent documentation to the Financial Services Office in order to prepare journal entries.

The Financial Services Office should perform, document, review and sign off on bank reconciliations by the end of the month following the month being reconciled. Any discrepancies between funds deposited and bank activity should be investigated and resolved with assistance from the branch.

## **Safeguarding Cash**

Inadequate physical security provides an opportunity to misappropriate cash from the float, daily cash receipts and/or bank deposit. It may be difficult to identify when and why cash shortages occur or the person responsible if access to cash is not limited.

Background checks should be performed on new cash handlers.

Cash should be kept secure at all times. This includes but is not limited to:

- Keeping all cash in a locked cash register, cash drawer or cash box.
- Locking the cash register, cash drawer or cash box when cash is left unattended.
- Affixing cash registers and boxes to a fixed surface to prevent removal.

Cash should be counted in a non-public, secure area, out of sight.

Physical access to the safe or storage areas where cash is kept should be restricted to a limited number of people. Access may be restricted by limiting those with access to keys or knowledge of the combinations. Access should be granted based on the employee's job duties.

Safe combinations should be kept in secure locations and records should be maintained listing those who have knowledge of the combinations. Safe combinations should be changed when one or more of the following parameters have been met:

- An incident at the facility has compromised and / or has the potential to compromise the security of cash
- Annually

For safes, lock boxes, filing cabinets or cash drawers with keys, all keys and copies must be kept secure and there should be a log to track the issuance of keys. When an employee leaves the employment of the Library or changes responsibilities, all keys should be turned in. Locations should have a plan in place for re-keying safes / lockboxes periodically.

## **Cash Float**

Continuous access to the cash float for an extended period of time without management oversight provides an opportunity to misappropriate, skim or lap funds. A cash float is issued for the purpose of making change for a cash transaction. Money from the float should not be retained or expended to pay invoices or miscellaneous expenses, replenish petty cash or make loans or advances.

The cash float should be stored in a secure location with limited access at all times. Access to the cash float should be limited to the cashier and their direct supervisor during a given shift. The cashier should count the cash float at the start and end of their shift. At a minimum, the float should be re-counted by management or their designate at the end of the cashier's shift as part of the receipt reconciliation process. Shortfalls in the float balance should be brought to management's attention, investigated, documented and resolved.

Management should conduct a surprise count on a periodic basis to reconcile the float balance. The count should be witnessed by another employee and the reconciliation documented and initialed by both employees. At a minimum, surprise counts should occur on a quarterly basis.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- [Refund Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- Cash Handling – Procedures for all Staff
- Cash Handling – Procedures for Cash Custodian

## APPROVAL HISTORY

July 2010; October 2017, June 2021

# Health and Safety Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director, Human Resources and Information Services  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: May 2025

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## POLICY PURPOSE

The Hamilton Public Library (HPL) will provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions for all employees in keeping with the requirements of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and other relevant legislation. To fulfill this commitment, the Library will:

1. Meet or exceed health, safety and ergonomics standards, applying the precautionary principle as needed.
2. Recognize the importance of consulting and cooperating with joint health and safety committees and representatives when developing and implementing programs and procedures.
3. Provide training and education specific to job requirements.

## KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- HPL will provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions for all employees in keeping with the requirements of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and other relevant legislation. Protecting the health and safety of all employees is a commitment of the highest priority to HPL.
- All employees have a shared responsibility for reducing workplace injuries and illnesses by ensuring that jobs are performed in a safe and healthy manner.
- Management will promote a safe and healthy work environment and inform employees of any known safety, health and ergonomic hazards that are or may be present in their work.

## DEFINITIONS

**Employee:** A worker that is employed and compensated by the Hamilton Public Library.

**Ergonomics:** the science of designing the task to fit the employee and the product to the user.

**Hazard:** any source of potential damage, harm or adverse health effects on something or someone under certain conditions at work.

**Management:** Management is defined as an employee holding a managerial role with the authority and responsibility for overseeing and directing the operations of a specific department, branch, or division. At HPL, these roles may include, but are not limited to Managers, the Senior Leadership Team, and in some cases Coordinators.

**Supervisor:** HPL adopts the definition of ‘supervisor’ as defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, which includes management.

**Worker:** HPL adopts the definition of ‘worker’ as defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, which includes employees.

## SCOPE

This Policy applies to all workers at the Hamilton Public Library, including but not limited to full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary and contract employees, consultants, contractors, volunteers, students and Library Board members.

## POLICY DETAILS

The following conditions will guide the development and implementation of all health and safety programs and procedures:

1. Protecting the health and safety of all employees is a commitment of the highest priority.
2. Management will take a leadership role in promoting a safe and healthy work environment.
3. Management, employees and the union share the responsibility for reducing occupational injuries and illness by ensuring that jobs are performed in a safe and healthy manner.
4. Management systems and practices will be developed with employee involvement and cooperation to minimize injuries and illness.
5. Focus on the prevention of occupational injuries and illnesses taking a scientific-based approach to principles and acceptable standards.
6. Information about health and safety programs will be made accessible to all employees.
7. Employees will be informed of any known safety, health and ergonomic hazards that are or may be present in their work.
8. Programs and practices will be reviewed on an as needed basis and at least annually to ensure they are in keeping with legislative and corporate standards.

## Implementation

This policy statement is intended to provide direction for the development of all health and safety programs and procedures.

Annually, the Board Chair and Chief Librarian will re-affirm their commitment to Health and Safety in the form of a Commitment Statement. This Commitment Statement is not subject to an annual Board review.

## APPROVAL HISTORY

December 1992; January 2002; March 2004; August 2010; March 2014; May 2016; April 2017; April 2019; June 2021; December 2024; May 2025

## Red Book by Hamilton Public Library Inclusion Policy and Terms of Use

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Collections and Program Development  
Review Period: 3 years  
Approval Date: May 2023

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To clearly illustrate the scope and breadth of records kept in the Red Book of Community Information (referenced as Red Book for the remainder of the policy), the intentions of this resource, and to set out terms for how this information is owned by HPL, used and shared by others.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- Red Book by HPL **provides equitable access and support for knowledge of programs, organizations and resources in the community.**
- HPL determines which records are contained in the Red Book based on our Inclusion and Exclusion criteria.
- HPL accepts no liability for accuracy of information in the Red Book and does not endorse any organization or program by its inclusion.
- HPL adheres to professional Information and Referral standards.
- HPL welcomes suggestions and feedback to [redbook@hpl.ca](mailto:redbook@hpl.ca), however we reserve the right to determine and edit records at our discretion.

### DEFINITIONS

Attribution—Provide appropriate credit to the original creator or disseminator.

I&R (Information and Referral) - the practice of providing people with information about services.

Accreditation – a third party evaluation assessed against recognized standards.

### POLICY DETAILS

Hamilton Public Library produces and manages the Red Book, an online resource database of community services. Red Book by Hamilton Public Library makes this information readily available to the community, enabling community members to make informed choices to improve their quality of life.

#### **Listing Inclusion:**

Red Book by Hamilton Public Library includes services located in the City of Hamilton or serving the people of Hamilton that are:

- non-profit, community-based services
- government services
- elected representatives (in a non-partisan manner)
- grassroots organizations

Commercial organizations are generally excluded, except in cases where:

- They provide a service not offered by the non-profit sector.
- They meet the specific needs of an underrepresented group or group that faces systemic barriers to service.

Red Book by Hamilton Public Library includes, but is not limited to, services related to:

- Aging
- Basic needs
- Cultural groups
- Education
- Employment and training
- Environment
- Faith groups and places of worship
- Health
- Legal and criminal system
- Recreation
- Settlement and integration
- Youth services

Inclusion in the Red Book is free and subject to the discretion of Hamilton Public Library.

### **Listing Exclusion:**

Red Book by Hamilton Public Library, generally, does not include records for private professionals, organizations or agencies offering services for profit.

Hamilton Public Library reserves the right to exclude from the database any organization that it has, in its own discretion, adequate reason to believe may spread hatred or have a philosophy that could be hurtful to the well-being of individuals, groups or the community.

Potential grounds for exclusion or removal from the database may include, but are not limited to, service non-delivery, fraud, misrepresentation, discrimination based on grounds named in the Ontario

Human Rights Code and/or the Canadian Charter of Human Rights, criminal activities, or operating outside licensing mandates.

**No Endorsement:**

Hamilton Public Library may exclude or remove organizations from its resource database for any reason. The presence of a record in the collection does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Hamilton Public Library, nor does a record's omission indicate disapproval.

**Responsibility and Data Limitations:**

Information provided in Red Book is not intended to provide medical, legal or professional advice and should not be relied upon in that respect.

While Hamilton Public Library makes every effort to validate information contained in the Red Book records on a timely basis, HPL does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of information contained in its resource database. Hamilton Public Library disclaims all responsibility and liability that may be asserted or claimed resulting from, or arising out of, reliance upon the information and procedures presented in the database.

Hamilton Public Library reserves the right to edit information to meet format, guideline, and space requirements. Hamilton Public Library recognizes the right of individuals to provide feedback or suggestions regarding records in the Red Book by Hamilton Public Library. We welcome suggestions for updates, additions or removals directed to [redbook@hpl.ca](mailto:redbook@hpl.ca).

**Ownership and Creative Commons Licensing:**

Hamilton Public Library collects, disseminates and maintains information in the Red Book for the purpose of making community resource information readily available to the community. The information exists for community individuals, organizations, and service providers to equitably use as a tool for accessing services and resources in the community.

All records and information in the Red Book by Hamilton Public Library is licensed under the Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license. Other uses may be permitted when explicit exceptions are agreed to by Hamilton Public Library.

**Standards and Data Sharing:**

Red Book adheres to AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems) data and taxonomy standards and maintains professional requirements necessary for accreditation. Data from Red Book is shared with Ontario 211.

**Individuals and organizations are free to:**

Share—copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format.

Adapt—remix, transform and build upon the material.

**Under the following terms:**

Attribution—Provide appropriate credit to Red Book by Hamilton Public Library, link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.

Noncommercial—The material is not used for commercial purposes.

Share Alike—If you remix, transform or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

HPL cannot revoke these freedoms as long as the license terms are followed.

**Exceptions:**

CC license terms and conditions are not triggered by uses permitted under any applicable exceptions.

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

September 2019, May 2023

## Access and Security Control Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: Director Digital Technology and Creation  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: March 2022

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To establish access and security controls that maximize access to resources by the public and staff users, in support of Hamilton Public Library core values of “intellectual freedom”; while securing the availability, integrity and confidentiality of systems, information and resources by restricting rights only to individuals or entities that have successfully completed the necessary identification, authentication and authorization procedures and by having adequate controls in place.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- HPL will provision required permissions to its users to access HPL systems and resources.
- HPL will ensure availability, integrity and confidentiality of the system and resources.
- HPL will review the access list on pre-defined durations.
- HPL will ensure network security, end point security, physical and data security and access by having necessary controls in place.
- HPL will enforce the access and security control policy to all involved parties.

### DEFINITIONS

**Access Control:** Is the process that limits and controls access to resources of a computer system.

**Library Board:** In this policy refers to the members of the Hamilton Public Library Board.

**Employees:** In this policy is referred to staff, volunteers, co-op or school internships, etc.

**End Point Security:** Is a security system managed centrally and agent installed on all end user devices to protect them like antivirus agent, antispam filter etc.

**External Organizations:** Including consultants, vendors and contractors that require access to systems or networks to complete library business or third-party agencies that may have agreements with the library to provide services and systems.

**Library Members:** Are the public/users or library patrons who have or don't have library cards.

**Users:** In this policy is defined as any user whether public, staff, volunteers, Library Board members or external organizations that uses HPL systems to access service or perform any business activity.

## POLICY DETAILS

### Library Members

Library members are provided with access privileges to library technology resources (including web, networks, applications, and devices) based on the following principles:

- **Open Access:** granting open unrestricted access to IT resources for users to consume digital services and to support intellectual freedom and discovery.
- **Secure Availability:** balancing open access with availability, and security of technology resources to ensure that digital services are protected against disruption, privacy breaches, and are accessible to all library users in a secure manner.

Library members are governed by the Technology and Internet Use Policy and Customer Code of Conduct while accessing HPL technology resources and services.

### Library Board and Employees

While carrying out library business, the Library Board, employees including volunteers, and external organizations are provided with access privileges to systems and technology (including web, networks, systems, applications and devices) based on the following principles:

- **Need to know:** They will be granted access to systems that are necessary to fulfill their library roles and responsibilities.
- **Least privilege:** They will be provided with the minimum privileges necessary to fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

### User Education and Transparency

Educating employees and library members on effective use of systems and ways to protect information and systems will be a priority.

Library members can challenge restriction to access. The process to challenge restrictions to access will be communicated on the Library website. Staff will investigate and document complaints. An annual report will be prepared updating the Library Board on access and security issues, including reports on complaints.

### Scope

This policy applies to library members, who may directly or indirectly require access to IT systems, networks, or information while using library services.

This policy applies to the Library Board, employees of the library including volunteers, and external organizations that may directly or indirectly require to gain access to library IT resources or systems.

This policy applies to all Hamilton Public Library provided or supported systems, infrastructure, data and services, unless noted otherwise, including:

- **Locations:** all HPL locations including central, branches and other mobile locations.

- **Technology:** IT systems, or applications that store, process or transmit information. All network and computer hardware, virtualized environment, storage, software and applications, staff mobile devices, and telecommunication systems.
- **Processes:** all processes that support, operations, environments and services. All automated and manual procedures for the controls.
- **Interfaces:** all interfaces within the environments and to external entities.
- **Data:** all data including transaction streams, files, data files, repositories, databases, tables, inputs and outputs used by a system.
- **Security Credentials:** all user accounts, all tokens, all security credentials including all user IDs, functional IDs, machine IDs, admin, root, and super user type accounts.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Privacy Policy for Library Members](#)

## APPROVAL HISTORY

January 2018, March 2022

## Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy

Policy Level: Library Board  
Author: CEO/Chief Librarian – Director Human Resources  
Review Period: 4 years  
Approval Date: May 2019

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### POLICY PURPOSE

Under review.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

Under review.

### DEFINITIONS

Under review.

### POLICY DETAILS

#### Scope

This Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy applies to all HPL employees, including but not limited to regular, temporary and contract employees, volunteers, students and interns (collectively referred to as “Employees”).

#### Core Principles

Core values of the Hamilton Public Library are: **Intellectual Freedom, Inclusiveness, Innovation, Respect and Accountability**. Each employee occupies a position of trust in dealing with others inside and outside the Library. Whatever the area of activity or degree of responsibility, the Library Board expects each employee to act in a manner which will enhance the Library’s reputation for ethical performance and professionalism in all its dealings.

The Hamilton Public Library is an organization funded primarily by the City of Hamilton and is charged with the management of public funds and programs, and therefore, employees must avoid not only actual conflicts of interest and breaches of trust, but also the appearance of conflicts of interest or breaches of trust.

Library employees often work in spaces where their actions are visible to members of the public. Staff need to ensure that both their actions and the appearance of their actions reflect well on the Hamilton Public Library. Focusing on meeting the needs of members, including making them feel welcome in our spaces is essential to building trust and confidence in HPL.

Employees of the Hamilton Public Library are guided by the following principles:

1. We understand that we all have a role to play in ensuring the community has confidence and trust in HPL. We will behave with high ethical and customer service standards and be accountable for our actions.
2. We will be respectful of each other and towards members of the community. We will treat all with dignity, respect and without discrimination.
3. We will adopt the perspective of advocate for our members, ensuring we understand their needs and assist them to the best of our ability. If we are in doubt that we have not given a full answer or solution we will get appropriate assistance from other staff.
4. We will promote and foster a safe, secure and healthy work environment and public space for all.
5. As public servants we will not engage in any conduct or business practice which might bring the reputation of HPL into ill-repute or damage or diminish the reputation of the Library in the eyes of members of the community.
6. We will avoid actual and potential conflicts of interest or breaches of trust. We will be proactive in disclosing actual or potential conflicts with the appropriate individuals and seek proper advice if we are unsure.
7. We will abide by the law and adhere to all Hamilton Public Library policies and procedures. In following policy and procedures we will use good judgement and consider the individual needs of members.

### **Hamilton Public Library Customer Service Commitment to our Members:**

At HPL our goal is to deliver an exceptional library experience. Library staff commit to:

- Provide professional, knowledgeable and best in class customer service.
- Be engaged with our members and our community. We welcome feedback to continually improve our service delivery.
- Strive to meet your expectations for timely delivery of materials and provision of relevant services and programs. We are life-long learners and ready to help you with questions or concerns.
- Provide welcoming and inclusive spaces and be sensitive to your individual needs. We will maintain your confidentiality and privacy.

### **Conflicts of Interest & Breaches of Trust**

Conflicts of interest and breaches of trust may take many forms. It is impossible to list them all. Remember, if you are unsure ask your manager/supervisor. In most cases, prompt and early disclosure of potential conflicts of interests will permit the problem to be resolved.

- **Definition of Family:** For the purposes of this policy family is defined as:
  - (a) spouse, including but not limited to common-law spouse and same-sex partner
  - (b) child, parent, sibling, grandchild, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece and nephew
  - (c) parent-in-law, sibling-in-law
  - (d) stepparent, step-sibling, and step-child
  - (e) child, parent in a relationship where the role of parent has been assumed.
- **Personal Benefit:** Employees shall not engage in any behaviour or conduct which may be seen to be an attempt to gain, through their positions as Library employees, or through their knowledge or contact gained as a Library employee, any personal advantage, advancement, favour, influence, benefit, discount or other interest, for themselves, their family or friends.
- **HPL's Reputation:** Employees shall not engage in any activities or business practices which might bring the reputation of the Library into ill-repute or damage or diminish the reputation of the Library in the eyes of members of the community.
- **Protecting Confidentiality:** Protecting the confidentiality of members, employees and business partners is a responsibility that all staff need to take very seriously.
  - o Employees will not access personal member information (i.e. borrowing records, computer logs...) unless it is required to conduct legitimate library related business.
  - o Employees will not disclose personal member information unless it is required to conduct legitimate library related business and/or is permitted under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
  - o Employees shall not release a member's personal record or any other "personal information" about a member without permission from the individual involved. This includes the right to privacy of a specific family member from inquiries made by other family members. Employees need to be knowledgeable of Library policies and procedures around parent's access to children's account information, picking up holds of family members and other related circulation functions that provide limited and defined exceptions where disclosure is appropriate.
  - o Library staff need to be knowledgeable of Library policies and procedures related to assisting Police in cases of emergency or a criminal investigation.
- **Waiving Fines and Fees:**
  - o The Hamilton Public is not charging for its materials as of May 2021. Only fines/fees for Interlibrary loan materials will be imposed on HPL Library members as it is set by the loaning library.

**Respecting Library Property including Library Collections:** Library collections, computers, furniture, supplies and equipment are held in trust by HPL for the purpose of fulfilling our mission to the people of Hamilton.

- o Employees will not use library supplies or equipment for personal use, except where permitted by library policy. For example, the Staff Technology Use Policy allows for limited personal use of library computers in certain circumstances.
- o Employees will access library collections for personal use by ensuring they are properly checked out on the integrated library system (ILS) using self-check-out terminals and automated returns sorters.
- o Employees will not use access to the ILS or other systems to extend loan periods, adjust hold queues or fines for themselves or other employees. This restriction does not include staff that are accessing the system for legitimate business purposes, such as, setting up a display or resolving member complaint or system problem.
- o Upon termination of employment, an employee shall promptly deliver to HPL any and all property, technology, data, manuals, notes, records, plans, or other documents, including any such documents stored on any video or software related medium, held by the employee concerning HPL's services and programs, know-how, developments, and equipment. This includes property made or prepared by the employee and relating in any way to the affairs of HPL. With permission, employees may retain samples of their work if such work is in the public domain. However, this paragraph shall not apply to any original research or to any articles or papers for which the employee is an author or co-author, for which the employee shall retain all intellectual property rights.
- **Doing Business with HPL and Contract Approval:** Employees shall not, personally or through companies in which they or their family are involved:
  - o Bid on Library contracts for the supply of goods or services
  - o Work on Library contracts, for the supply of goods or services, other than in their capacities as Library employees.
  - o Approve any contract, agreement or other document on behalf of the Library for any business in which they or their family is personally involved.
- **Hiring and Supervision of Employees:** Employees shall not be involved in any decision to hire or engage their family members for any employment with the Library whether temporary, full-time, part-time, casual or seasonal.
  - o Employees shall not influence or attempt to influence any decision relating to the hiring of family members.
  - o Employees shall not permit themselves to be placed in supervision over another Library employee who is a family member without disclosing the nature of the relationship to the appropriate supervisor.
- **Gifts and Benefits:** Employees shall not accept any gift, benefit, money, discount, favour or other assistance from any business which has a contract with the Library Board to supply goods or services, unless the gift, benefit, money, discount, favour, or assistance is one which, due to the nature of the business, is available to the general public.

- o No employees shall accept any gifts, hospitality, and invitations to special events which exceed \$100 in value.
  - o Nominal gifts or hospitality below \$25 may be accepted under appropriate conditions.
  - o Gifts or hospitality ranging from \$25 to \$100 may be accepted under appropriate conditions as long as they are documented and disclosed. Employees will disclose the receipt of such gifts to the Chief Librarian and Director of Finance and Facilities. The Chief Librarian will disclose to the Library Board Chair.
  - o Appropriate conditions for this policy is defined as: it is in the context of a business meeting or interaction, or in the context of a recognized charitable event; and it is an infrequent occurrence; and it legitimately serves a business purpose; and it is appropriate to the business responsibilities of the individual employee; and the gift or hospitality is not an attempt to seek special favours or advantages from the employee or HPL.
- **Speaking Fees and Publications:** No employee shall charge or knowingly accept a fee for taking part in a public speaking engagement such as a public radio/television broadcast, website broadcast or conference to which they were invited as a direct result of their position as an employee. No employee shall charge or knowingly accept a fee for writing or publishing articles or books in any print or online publications, if such articles or books directly relates to the employee's position at HPL or uses insider information about HPL. The same restrictions apply for the creation of audio, video and other media types. The rules specified in the Gifts and Benefits section apply to Speaking Fees and Publications, however, some additional exceptions apply:
  - o Accepting free admission from the seminar or conference organizers for the balance of the seminar or conference is not a violation of this Policy.
  - o Any fee that is received for work done during normal working hours, or at any time where the employee is representing the Library, shall be turned over to the Library, unless the value of the fee does not exceed expenses (incurred for attending the event) which are not reimbursed by the Library.
  - o Employees may charge or accept a fee for speaking engagements during time off work (e.g. vacation time) providing such employees are not representing or purporting to represent the Library.
- **Outside Employment:** Employees shall not take outside employment, including self-employment, if such employment: causes a real or apparent conflict of interest; or is performed in such a way as to appear to be an official act of or to represent HPL; or interferes with regular duties in any way, or involves the use of Library premises, resources or equipment including but not limited to Library e-mail, telephones, cell phones, or supplies.
  - o Where it appears that a conflict of interest might arise in accepting outside employment, employees must notify their supervisor in writing of the nature of such outside employment prior and receive written permission prior to the acceptance of such employment.

- **Community Board Activity:** Employees are encouraged to volunteer in the community on their personal time and this may include serving on local boards or agencies; however, no employee shall accept an appointment to the Board of a community agency or association that deals with matters related to the activities of HPL, without the written permission of the Chief Librarian or designate. Written permission of the Chief Librarian or designate is not required if the employee is appointed to the Board of the agency or association by HPL to represent HPL's interests.
  - o Any Library employee serving on a community board shall take all reasonable actions to avoid any real conflict or apparent conflict between Board activity and HPL's interests. Where a real or apparent conflict exists, the employee shall declare the conflict and shall not take part in, or be present for, any Board discussion or decision about the issue raising the conflict of interest. If the conflict of interest is significant, the employee shall resign from the board.
- **Compliance with Laws and Regulations:** Employees shall not, during the course of the conduct of their employment duties, knowingly violate, or permit the violation of, or fail to report the violation of, any federal or provincial statute or regulation. Staff will adhere to all policies of the Hamilton Public Library. Library procedures exist to provide guidance to staff in circumstances where potential crimes need to be reported to the Police.
- **Software Piracy:** HPL forbids software piracy, defined as using any unlicensed copy of a software package that has not been purchased for Library purposes. It includes taking a copy of a licensed software package for one's own use or passing a copy on to another person for their use (See the Staff Technology Use Policy.)
- **Public Duty:** Some positions in the organization are more subject than others to conflicts of interest. Managers, Directors and employees who give professional advice or assistance, or participate in enforcement and/or inspection activities, shall take every reasonable action not to place themselves in conflict of interest situations, or exhibit behaviour or commit acts which could bring disrepute to HPL or undermine HPL's reputation.
  - o Since public criticism can also undermine HPL's reputation, employees are expected to refrain from public criticism of HPL or of other Library employees through all venues including social networking. This does not remove employees' rights as citizens to comment generally on matters of public interest, but in exercising this right, Library employees must not identify themselves as such or purport to be speaking on behalf of the HPL.

## Compliance

Employees are reminded of the importance of disclosure. In most cases, prompt and early disclosure of potential conflicts of interests will permit the problem to be resolved.

By signing the Employee Code of Conduct & Conflict of Interest Policy, employees acknowledge and accept responsibility to act and behave in a manner that is consistent with the expectations prescribed in this Policy. Employees collectively benefit from an overall atmosphere of high ethical conduct that flows from this commitment. Employees who are found to be in a conflict of interest or

- Uphold and support Intellectual Freedom, Inclusiveness, Innovation, Respect and Accountability.
- Affirm that information is neutral and not affected by personal values and beliefs.
- Limit assistance to the provision of information; do not provide advice, interpretation or advocacy especially when dealing with questions which may require professional expertise such as legal and medical issues.

### **Legal, ethical and professional framework**

- [Human Rights Code](#)
- [Universal Declaration on Human Rights](#)
- [OLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual](#)
- [Access for Ontarians with Disabilities \(AODA\)](#)
- [CULC Statement on Race and Social Equity](#)
- [Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act](#)
- [American Library Association RUSA \(Reference and User Services Association\) Guidelines for Information Services Revised 2000 by the RUSA Access to Information Committee](#)

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- [Privacy Policy for Library Customers](#)
- [Accessibility for Individuals with a Disability](#)
- [Rights of Children and Teens in the Public Library](#)
- [Technology Use for Library Members](#)
- [Copyright and Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- [Member Service and Commitment](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

**Relevant Legislation:** Children's Rights in the Public Library

### **APPROVAL HISTORY**

January 1997; January 2002; October 2010; March 2019

## Hiring Policy

|                |                                                   |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board                                     |
| Author:        | Director Human Resources and Information Services |
| Review Period: | 4 years                                           |
| Approval Date: | October 2022                                      |

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## POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of the Hiring Policy is to set a consistent and equitable standard for the recruitment and selection of employees at the Hamilton Public Library (HPL). This will help to create a diverse and qualified talent pool to support the Library's current and future business needs. Effective recruitment, selection and promotion practices optimize the efficiency of human resources, and maximize the number of promotion and career development opportunities for existing employees.

## KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The Hiring Policy exists to ensure consistent and equitable processes are followed.
- This is to create a diverse and qualified talent pool.
- HPL is committed to transparent and merit-based selection.

## DEFINITIONS

### Bona Fide Termination

Occurs only when an employee fully severs their employment relationship with the library. This results in losing any accumulated service/seniority and the ending of employee benefits and being issued a Record of Employment.

### Conflict of Interest

A situation in which a member of the selection panel has a Conflict of Interest in participating in the hiring decision (e.g. they have a significant social or familial relationship with the candidate); or the internal candidate, or external candidate has a Conflict of Interest in applying for a position that may compete with the public interests of the library. Such competing interests can make it difficult to fulfill their duties impartially. Refer to the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest policy.

### Direct Reporting Relationship

Involves a reporting relationship where an individual has the authority to direct and control the activities and work assignments of another employee; review or approve performance reviews, wage

and salary adjustments; and administer disciplinary action and recommend or approve the hiring or firing of an employee.

### **Former Eligible Employees:**

Are those former employees (not retirees) whose employee record indicates satisfactory or better job performance; who voluntarily left the library or were terminated through no fault of their own and did not receive financial incentives to do so; and who meet the minimum requirements of the position.

### **External Candidates**

This includes candidates who may be contracted as consultants, employed through a special program (e.g. grant programs), co-op students/interns, summer students, placed through an external temporary employment agency, employed by City of Hamilton, Hamilton Police Services, and/or any other boards and agencies receiving funding/sponsorship from the City.

### **Internal Candidates**

Candidates who are current employees of the library.

### **Nepotism**

Favoritism granted to a family member or significant social relationship, usually in the form of hiring practices or other employment decisions without regard to or with lesser regard to the individual's merit, qualifications or performance.

### **Retiree**

An employee who is in receipt of a pension, OMERS or otherwise and is retired from the library.

### **Monetary Incentive Package**

Payments in compliance with Employment Standards Act including notice and severance payments as negotiated upon separation, other voluntary or not voluntary incentives.

## **POLICY DETAILS**

The Hamilton Public Library is committed to transparent and merit-based selection in all of its hiring decisions. All candidates are given an equal opportunity for employment in compliance with the provisions in the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act and any other applicable legislation.

The Hamilton Public Library recognizes that its effectiveness as a publicly funded organization is determined largely by the quality of its workforce. To this end, an impartial and objective recruitment and selection process best ensures the employment of the most qualified and experienced personnel available. The Hamilton Public Library Board is committed to ensuring that the best-qualified candidates are selected for positions within the Library system.

It is the policy of the Library to hire employees on the basis of merit and the following principles will govern during the selection process:

1. Merit – all selections, appointments, and promotions shall be based on considerations of merit, and ability to perform effectively in a position and fill the vacancy as soon as possible.
2. Hiring decisions will be free of nepotism. In accordance with the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). S. 24 (1) (d) of the *Code* states that the right under section 5 to equal treatment with respect to employment is not infringed where an employer grants or withholds employment or advancement in employment to a person who is the spouse, child or parent of the employer or an employee. Refer to the Employment of Relatives Policy (Anti-nepotism Policy).
3. Objectivity – selection criteria shall be developed in an objective and non-discriminatory manner and must be based on bona fide job-related requirements.
4. Consistency – selection systems and procedures will ensure that all candidates are treated in a fair and consistent manner.
5. Equal Opportunity – All recruitment practices and procedures must comply with the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. All internal candidates and external candidates receive equal treatment with respect to employment without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability and/or any other grounds as prescribed in the *Code*.
6. Accessibility -- All recruitment practices and procedures must comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements for developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards for internal candidates and external candidates who may have a disability. This includes identifying and removing any barriers that may exist for persons with disabilities to apply for positions; and if qualified, to participate in the interview process.

## Terms and Conditions

1. All internal candidates whose performance is in good standing are eligible to apply for posted positions.

2. Any Internal Candidate who has received a “written notice” about their performance in the last six (6) months prior to the posting is ineligible for consideration. Exceptions to this require the approval of the Director of Human Resources (or designate); and require a written business case provided by the employee’s immediate manager or supervisor supporting a lateral move to facilitate a better job fit.
3. Short-term positions or vacancies are covered under the Internal Job Posting Procedures.
4. Subsequent appointments based on previous competitions for the same position can be made only if it falls within 6 months of the closing date of the competition. Otherwise, the position must be re-posted.
5. Candidates must meet the position qualifications to be considered.
6. If an internal Candidate and external Candidate are both determined to equally meet all the selection criteria, preference for the selected position shall be given to the internal Candidate.
7. For retirees rehiring please refer to the Rehiring of Retirees policy.
8. Employees who have been terminated from the library, with just cause, shall not be eligible to be re-employed by the library, in any capacity, at any time after their departure.
9. Re-employment is conditional upon satisfactory performance references in previous positions. If a monetary incentive package was provided such as but not limited to severance due to performance related issue, termination, grievance settlement or other issue, the employee will be ineligible for re-employment.
10. All employees who seek re-employment following a separation of any length of time are considered external candidates. There must be a break of at least eight weeks (8) of service before they can be considered for rehiring. The appropriate recruitment and selection processes must be complied with to ensure a fair and transparent process. Re-employed former employees waive all rights accruing from prior service. The employee shall receive a new hire letter and a new hire date. Any rehired employee must complete the standard probationary period before they become a permanent employee. For the purposes of benefit plans or vacations, the date of re-employment will govern. Any exceptions must be approved by the Chief Librarian.
11. Re-employment is considered on a case by case basis giving due consideration to extenuating operational circumstances including difficulty sourcing the critical skill-set for the position.

As per our policy, all candidates will require a police check as outlined in our Criminal Records Screening Policy.

### Restrictions to hiring:

To facilitate effective recruitment and selection, all hiring will be coordinated through the Human Resources Department. The Chief Librarian is responsible for the final hiring decisions.

### Human Resources:

- Develop employment policies, procedures, guidelines and tools which promote a fair and equitable process and support the hiring manager or designate in making the best hiring decision possible.
- Ensure the principles in this Policy are abided by during the hiring process and that the hiring manager or designate is aware of and follows any associated procedures.
- Provide support to hiring manager or designate in determining workforce planning requirements and specific recruitment strategies to attract quality candidates.
- Ensure that all recruitment activities and staffing decisions comply with statutory requirements, collective agreements, and corporate policies and procedures. Participate in the recruitment process as required by the Collective Agreement, contentious or senior positions, as necessary.
- Perform candidate screening based on pre-determined objective criteria.
- Receive an up-to-date job description from the hiring manager or designate that outlines duties and requisite qualifications. Provide consultation, as required, to complete this process.
- Post the position as per the Internal Job Posting Procedure.
- Advise and support the hiring manager or designate so they are able to conduct a fair and equitable selection process, as per the principles of this policy, and in accordance with the collective agreement, policies, procedures, and legislation.
- Maintain documentation associated with all phases of selection process including collecting relevant portions from the hiring manager or designate.
- Ensure accessibility and accommodation is provided (as needed) for candidates.
- Complete the reference checking once consent is received, verify all licenses and professional designation, receive police background check.
- Assist in hiring decisions in consultation with Management. Ensure that the selected hire does not have any Conflict of Interest as per the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy and no nepotism issues (Employment of Relatives Policy).
- Extend offer of employment and seek the required approvals for any provisions outside of policy and/or collective agreements.
- Safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of candidate information.

### Manager

- Review the job description to ensure it is still accurate in terms of duties and requisite qualifications; consult Human Resources in this process.

- Review applications that meet the identified qualifications in consultation with Human Resources.
- Be aware of the employment related statutory requirements, collective agreement, and corporate policies and procedures. Ask for clarification from Human Resources, as required.
- Participate and conduct interview process with Human Resources as required.
- Complete the reference checking for positions identified (Library Pages, students, etc.) once consent is received, verify all licenses and professional designations, confirm if there is a requirement for police background check.
- Make the hiring decision in consultation with Human Resources (Library Pages, students, etc.). Ensure that the selected hire does not have any Conflict of Interest as per the Code of Conduct Policy and no nepotism issues.
- Extend offer of employment (Library Pages, students, etc.) and seek the required approvals for any provisions outside of policy and/or collective agreement.
- Safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of candidate information.

#### Candidate

- Carefully read the position's posted requirements and apply only if they have the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities and experience.
- Complete an application process to meet the posted closing date, and accurately and fully disclose all related information to allow for an objective determination of knowledge skills and experience.
- Disclose any potential Conflict of Interests at the beginning of the selection process and do not apply for roles where the supervisor or manager is a family member.
- Satisfy all employment conditions and provide proof of the qualifications identified on the posting if requested.
- Consult with Human Resources to disclose and request accommodation, as required.
- Safeguard and keep confidential any library related information disclosed during the recruitment process.

#### All Management

- Identify and remove any employment practices or selection criteria that may result in employment barriers for any individual or groups. Such barriers would include any requirement that is not a bona fide occupational requirement, a necessary requirement under the collective agreement or statutory requirement, or a necessary requirement for the effective operation of the library.

#### Compliance

- Any attempt to improperly influence a recruitment or selection decision will be reviewed by management and, if verified, result in appropriate disciplinary action.

- Failure to comply with this policy and its associated procedures may result in appropriate disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment.
- Candidates who do not comply with responsibilities listed above may be disqualified from the selection process.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#)  
[Employment of Relatives Policy \(Anti-nepotism Policy\)](#)  
[Rehiring Retirees Policy](#)  
[Criminal Record Screening Policy](#)

## APPROVAL HISTORY

August 2010; June 2013; June 2018; October 2022

## Rehiring Retirees Policy

|                |                                                   |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board                                     |
| Author:        | Director Human Resources and Information Services |
| Review Period: | 4 years                                           |
| Approval Date: | June 2018                                         |

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## POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to identify circumstances whereby a former employee who has retired from the Library can subsequently return to work for the Library. The policy is based on the need to maintain a consistent and transparent hiring process for departments to follow when contemplating resource options which include the re-hiring of retirees.

## KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- The Rehiring Retiree Policy exists to ensure consistent and equitable processes are followed.
- To ensure that it does not become a substitute for encouraging the development of well-qualified staff.
- To ensure it is time limited and for a specific set of skills required.

## DEFINITIONS

Under review.

## POLICY DETAILS

### Scope

This recruitment policy applies to all regular full-time, part-time, contract positions and Library Page (casual) staff who, following official retirement, elect to seek re-employment with the Library. Official retirement refers to the former employee advising the Library in writing that they are retiring from the organization.

### Rehiring Retirees Protocol

As an equal opportunity employer, the Library values diversity and is committed to principles found in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The Library is committed to effective succession planning and does not intend to use the Library retiree re-employment as a substitute for developing well-qualified staff. The Library will not re-hire its retirees for the sole purpose of convenience.

Re-employment must be in response to a Library need, for example: the retired employee possesses skills and institutional knowledge that the hiring department cannot otherwise readily obtain in the community; or the hiring department anticipates that the retired employee will assist their replacement in acquiring the necessary skill and knowledge through a knowledge transfer not otherwise available. Retention of the retiree must not exceed a total of six (6) months. Any period beyond six (6) months requires approval of the respective Director to a maximum of an additional six (6) months.

### **Responsibilities**

**Human Resources** – The Director of Human Resources is authorized to ensure that the information within this policy is applied and that all actions comply with the Employment Standards Act, Ontario Human Rights Code as well as any additional provincial legislation and Collective Agreements.

**Managers** – To ensure that this policy is followed when conducting any recruitment searches. Managers are required to work with Human Resources prior to any offers of employment.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Hiring Policy

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

May 2014; June 2018

## Staff Development and Training Policy

|                |                                                   |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board                                     |
| Author:        | Director Human Resources and Information Services |
| Review Period: | 4 years                                           |
| Approval Date: | December 2021                                     |

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### POLICY PURPOSE

To be successful at an individual, team or corporate level, employees need the right knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies to support Hamilton Public Library's (HPL's) Mission, Values, and Strategic priorities. This policy provides a framework for staff development and training activities. Learning, personal and career development activities, and knowledge sharing are responsibilities of all employees and have a broader focus than training alone. Training is just one component of a complete learning and development strategy. Employees' learning, personal and career development activities are tied to the Goal Setting and Performance Review process that is described in HPL's Performance Management Policy.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- Ongoing professional development is important to employee success and to support HPL's Mission, Values, and Strategic priorities
- HPL is committed to providing high quality learning opportunities for employees through the Learning Institute and via the Goal Setting and Performance Review process
- Responsibility for staff development and training is shared among employees, Senior Leadership, Management, and Human Resources

### DEFINITIONS

**Staff development** refers to the provision of resources and the scheduling of activities to advance employees' knowledge, understanding and skills through the Learning Institute at HPL and to meet succession planning needs.

**The Learning Institute at HPL** offers opportunities designed to support a comprehensive and continuous process of professional growth, including opportunities for exposure to varied ideas and diversity of experience. Learning Institute programs foster staff development through means such as onboarding, training, mentoring, coaching, and optional and required internal and external learning programs including lunch and learn sessions, conferences, workshops, coursework, leadership development programs, e-learning programs, webinars, participation on system committees and special projects, professional summits and knowledge sharing opportunities.

**Education** in this policy refers to formal education qualifications referred to in job descriptions and obtained through study at academic institutions. Educational qualifications are highlighted in HPL's Educational Qualifications Policy.

## POLICY DETAILS

The Hamilton Public Library recognizes the benefits of investing in staff development and training in order to

- Build a competent, diverse, and professional workforce.
- Increase employee engagement and job satisfaction.
- Maintain public confidence in the quality of HPL's service delivery.
- Position HPL as an attractive employer in the job market.
- Create a skilled and versatile workforce that can adapt to changing needs.
- Reduce risk and exposure to liability due to non-compliance with legislated requirements.
- Foster employee career growth, high performance, and innovation.
- Act as an important input to workforce planning including succession planning.

Employees interested in a career with the Hamilton Public Library should be prepared to develop a Learning and Development Plan for their own learning and professional development and to seek feedback about that plan from their manager or supervisor and the Human Resources Department. While it is acknowledged that not all employees may have a desire to move into a higher-level role or managerial or supervisory role, continuous learning and development is important to stay current with changing trends and technology in an employee's existing role.

Learning and Development Plans will reflect the employee's individual needs and the operational needs of the Library. Employee Learning and Development Plans will outline what competencies require improvement or further development, what actions need to be taken by the employee and the employer, and the target completion date. A Learning and Development Plan may also include what future roles the employee would like to move toward at the Library, and those career goals will guide parts of the Plan.

Learning and Development Plans are a key component of HPL's Goal Setting and Performance Review process. Goal setting and performance review meetings are held to ensure that employees understand what is expected of them and what supports are available to them. Learning and development planning is a process that involves both employee and manager input. The Library provides resources for the training and developmental support of employees.

### Statement of Principles

Hamilton Public Library is committed to:

- Fostering a learning culture where learning and development opportunities are provided to help employees develop and apply new competencies and work flexibly to meet the constant changes of day-to-day operations.
- Ensuring learning activities align with strategic priorities and current operations and projects as adult learning is most effective when learning directly relates to job responsibilities and is immediately relevant.
- Encouraging and assisting staff to develop their skills and knowledge to improve individual performance and to promote job satisfaction.
- Ensuring fair and equitable access to development opportunities for employees at all job levels and in all job functions, so that they may develop in their existing role, and/or grow into their next position.
- Ensuring that sound educational and instructional design principles are applied in all approved education and staff development programs.
- Making use of existing staff expertise where appropriate to staff development goals, and promoting knowledge sharing as common practice among employees.
- Recognizing that learning and development is a joint responsibility shared by the Library and the employee.
- Providing necessary resources including time for learning, funding, qualified leadership, physical spaces suitable for learning functions, and appropriate technology.
- Assessing training options to ensure value for money spent, negotiating with vendors to encourage learning content alignment with the Library's operational needs and goals, and evaluating transfer of training by the employee on the job.

## **Responsibility**

Responsibility for staff development and training at Hamilton Public Library is multi-layered and is shared among the following parties:

- The effectiveness of any staff development activity depends on the active and purposeful participation of the individuals involved. Employees have a clear responsibility to develop their skills to enhance performance in their current position and to be ready to assume further responsibilities.
- Senior Leadership and Management have overall responsibility for the development of Library staff.
- The Coordinator, Staff Development and Training, and the Director, Human Resources support the programs that are part of the Learning Institute at HPL and have overall

accountability for the extent, quality, effectiveness and equitable nature of staff development, for planning and overseeing the development, scheduling and funding of internal staff development and training initiatives, for review of external opportunities relevant to Hamilton Public Library goals and for assessing options and negotiating with vendors such as trainers or coaches or consultants.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Conference Attendance Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Access to Leadership Development Programs Policy
- Workshop and Seminar Attendance Policy
- Tuition Assistance Policy
- Memberships and Professional Fees Policy
- Educational Qualifications Policy

## APPROVAL HISTORY

August 2010; February 2017; December 2021

## Employee and Family Assistance Program Policy

|                |                                                   |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Policy Level:  | Library Board                                     |
| Author:        | Director Human Resources and Information Services |
| Review Period: | 4 years                                           |
| Approval Date: | November 2021                                     |

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### POLICY PURPOSE

The Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is a free, confidential service available to all permanent full-time and part-time employees and their dependents 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The EFAP provides short-term counselling along with health and wellness services for everyday life challenges and demands.

### KEY POINTS SUMMARY

- HPL recognizes that challenges, personal or work-related, can be a natural part of employees' lives.
- The EFAP program covers all permanent employees (full-time and part-time). Library Pages, students and contract employees are not covered.
- Employees' confidentiality is protected by the program.
- The policy provides a summary of the services provided.
- Accessing the program will not affect an employee's job security nor adversely affect advancement opportunities.

### DEFINITIONS

**Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)** A confidential service available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to eligible employees and/or their dependents. The EFAP provides short-term counselling regarding personal and work-related challenges including personal and/or job stress, relationship issues, balancing work and family, eldercare and childcare, separation and loss, smoking cessation, parenting issues, career counselling, and financial or legal matters along with a variety of health and wellness services such as e-learning courses, articles, health risk assessments, and more.

### POLICY DETAILS

The Hamilton Public Library recognizes that challenges, personal or work-related, can be a natural part of employees' lives and that providing employees with an opportunity to resolve challenges will result in a healthier and more positive approach to everyday living.

#### Eligibility

All permanent employees of the Hamilton Public Library and their dependents as defined by the employee's specific benefit plan are eligible. Library Pages, Students, Volunteers and Contract

employees are not eligible under the current plan. Employees who do not currently have access to the EFAP and who may require specialized assistance are asked to contact Human Resources. Access to the EFAP will be determined on a case-by-case basis

### **Pensioned employees and their spouses**

Terminated or resigned employees will have access maintained for one (1) month following date of termination or resignation and the Employee & Family Assistance Program will provide limited short-term service to the individual.

### **Scope of Program**

The core Employee & Family Assistance Program consists of:

#### **Counselling Services**

Counselling is short-term and focused on problem-solving and finding solutions that are practical and improve your physical and mental well-being. It's available face to face, over the telephone, or online. Counselling can help with any challenge such as: family or marital relationships, addictions, anxiety, depression, life transition or change, grief or bereavement, stress, and other personal issues.

#### **Plan Smart - Lifestyle and Specialty Counselling**

These work life services help you tackle small issues before they become big concerns. Each service helps you to take a proactive approach to managing everyday challenges and life transitions. With Plan Smart, you can receive information and coaching related to:

- Health - nutrition, lifestyle changes, weight management, smoking cessation, "12 weeks to wellness" programs for people with specific health and/or weight management goals.
- Life Balance - childcare and parenting, elder and family care, relationships, financial issues, legal issues.
- Career planning, workplace issues, pre-retirement, shift work.

#### **Online Resources ([homewoodhealth.ca](http://homewoodhealth.ca))**

You can access the Homewood Health website [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca) anytime for e-learning, interactive tools, health and wellness assessments, and a library of health, life balance and workplace articles.

Visit Homewood Health's website at [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca) and register for Member Services to access online services, including:

- E-Learning courses - self-directed, confidential and interactive courses on a variety of topics designed to help you take charge of your health and well-being.
- Health Risk Assessment - an online health risk assessment tool that assesses your physical and emotional health as well as your overall readiness to change.
- Busy Family - an online tool to help you find child and elder care services.

If specialized or longer-term support is required, EFAP counselors can refer to an appropriate specialist or community services. Fees for additional services outside of the EFAP that are not or may not be covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) or the employee's benefit plan are the responsibility of the employee and are not paid by the Library.

### **Accessibility**

Employees and/or their dependents may access the Employee & Family Assistance Program voluntarily. The program may be suggested by an individual's co-worker, peer, or supervisor but it is up to the employee to initiate access to the program. To access the program, please visit: [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca) or call, toll-free number 1-800-663-1142.

### **Confidentiality**

The Employee & Family Assistance Program shall respect the confidentiality of information obtained about the client and shall release the information only with the approval and consent of the client as governed by standard professional and legal guidelines. The Employer and/or anyone acting for it or on its behalf shall not request or receive any information concerning the client without the written consent of the individual.

### **Anonymity**

The Employee & Family Assistance Program service will be located in an off-site location and will provide an anonymous service. No one will know that an individual has used the service unless the individual themselves chooses to inform others about their use of the program. Employee & Family Assistance Program office procedures are designed such that anonymity is protected.

### **Coordination and Administration**

Upon request utilization reports, regularly completed by the Employee & Family Assistance provider, will be made available and discussed with representatives of Local 932 Canadian Union of Public Employees at the regularly scheduled Joint Union-Management Committee. Utilization reports provided to this Committee by the Employee & Family Assistance Program service will be of a statistical nature only. Please note that statistical information will only be released to this Committee when use of the program has resulted in reporting figures large enough to protect anonymity of individuals.

### **Advancement/Opportunity**

Use of the Employee & Family Assistance Program will not affect an employee's job security nor adversely affect advancement opportunities. Neither will use of the program affect normal disciplinary and grievance procedures.

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

August 2010; February 2017, November 2021