

Title of Policy: Intellectual Freedom
Policy Type: Means
Policy No.: M-01

Effective Date: November 23, 2017

Review Date: November 2021

PURPOSE :

Intellectual freedom is guaranteed as a basic democratic right by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and is defined as a universal right by the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. London Public Library (LPL) believes that all people have the right to access expressions of knowledge, creative thought and intellectual activity. LPL supports, defends and promotes intellectual freedom and actively advocates in defense of the rights of library users to read, seek information, and express their views.

The purpose of this policy is to provide broad direction on the access to intellectual content through services, collections and programs offered by London Public Library.

SCOPE:

LPL will support the *Canadian Copyright Act* and other laws governing intellectual property and the *Criminal Code of Canada* and other legislation governing access to and communication of information, knowledge, opinion, creative thought and intellectual activity.

LPL also recognizes the right to privacy of the individual user. This is defined in the Library's *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Policy*.

DEFINITIONS:

LPL uses the definition of intellectual freedom stated in the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights*:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of London Public Library that:

- Intellectual freedom is a core value of London Public Library;
- LPL endorses the *Ontario Library Association Statement on Intellectual Rights* and the *Canadian Federation of Library Association/Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries (2015)* and the

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International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom;

- LPL will offer a range of choice for library users in the provision of collections and Internet services;
- LPL will make its services, collections and resources equally accessible to all users and will not discriminate due to race, creed, gender, age or for any other reason;
- The Library is committed to achieving a balance between intellectual freedom and supporting parents and guardians in their responsibility to monitor children's use of and access to materials and the Internet; and
- The Library will act in accordance with the laws of Canada, the laws of the Province of Ontario and the City of London municipal by-laws in the provision of access to intellectual content and expressions of creativity.

Canadian Federation of Library Association/Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques *Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries (2015)*

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations recognizes and values the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as the guarantor of the fundamental freedoms in Canada of conscience and religion; of thought, belief, opinion, and expression; of peaceful assembly; and of association.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations supports and promotes the universal principles of intellectual freedom as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which include the interlocking freedoms to hold opinions and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

In accordance with these principles, the Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms that all persons in Canada have a fundamental right, subject only to the Constitution and the law, to have access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, and to express their thoughts publicly. Only the courts may abridge free expression rights in Canada.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms further that libraries have a core responsibility to support, defend and promote the universal principles of intellectual freedom and privacy.

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The Canadian Federation of Library Associations holds that libraries are a key institution in Canada for rendering expressive content accessible and affordable to all. Libraries are essential gateways for all persons living in Canada to advance themselves through literacy, lifelong learning, social engagement, and cultural enrichment.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some individuals and groups consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, in accordance with their mandates and professional values and standards, libraries provide, defend and promote equitable access to the widest possible variety of expressive content and resist calls for censorship and the adoption of systems that deny or restrict access to resources.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and foster free expression and the right to safe and welcoming places and conditions. To this end, libraries make available their public spaces and services to individuals and groups without discrimination.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and defend privacy in the individual's pursuit of expressive content. To this end, libraries protect the identities and activities of library users except when required by the courts to cede them.

Furthermore, in accordance with established library policies, procedures and due process, libraries resist efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Library employees, volunteers and employers as well as library governing entities have a core responsibility to uphold the principles of intellectual freedom in the performance of their respective library roles.

INQUIRIES

Board Chair
CEO & Chief Librarian

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Canadian Human Rights Act

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Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Public Libraries Act of Ontario, R.S.O. 1990
United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
Canadian Federation of Library Association/Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries (2015)
American Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom
IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom
Ontario Library Association Statement on Intellectual Rights

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