
St. Marys Public Library



Policy Type: **Operational Policy**

Policy Number: **OP-11**

Policy Title: **Community Information**

Policy Approval Date: January 2020

Policy Review Date: March 2023

1. Objective

- 1.1 In accordance with the Library's Mission and vision statements, displays and distribution of materials connects local residents to local services and resources, providing opportunities for involvement and information dissemination to the community;
- 1.2 The Library provides access to information regarding the community, community activities, agencies, organizations, institutions and resources or services provided by community groups. These information resources have a designated spot within the Library; and
- 1.3 While the public information board is hosted and monitored by library staff, this policy, and the information presented on the information board, conforms to the Canadian Library Associations' Statement of Intellectual Freedom, and furthermore the Library, its staff or the Board does not imply the approval or endorsement of any materials posted on the community board.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 This policy sets the parameters for inclusion and display of community information at the St. Marys Public Library.

3. Community Information—Collection and Access

- 3.1 The library will collect and keep current information on the services of the community, its agencies and organizations, including but not limited to:
 - a. Municipal services or events;
 - b. Community groups;
 - c. Health and social services agencies;
 - d. Recreational and cultural institutions;
 - e. The Adult Learning and Partners in Employment resources, courses or activities; and
 - f. Materials related to the Perth County Information Network.
- 3.2 The library will ensure easy, convenient and confidential access to information on agencies and/or organizations. Access may be through print media or electronic resources;
- 3.3 The Library staff will be knowledgeable about community agencies and organizations and capable of referring people appropriately and in a sensitive manner; and
- 3.4 Patron confidentiality will be respected at all times, in accordance with the St. Marys Public Library's *Privacy and Access to Information Policy*.

4. Displays

- 4.1 The Library may elect to provide a public display board for information about events that serve the needs of the local community, or fit within the parameters outlined in section 3.1 of this policy;
- 4.2 All materials submitted, used or placed on display become the property of the St. Marys Public Library;
- 4.3 Library staff shall place, post and remove all materials on the bulletin board and in the brochure racks;
- 4.4 The Library, and its staff, reserve the right to dispose of materials deemed as inappropriate. The CEO will be made aware of materials that are deemed inappropriate and will make the final decision;
- 4.5 The Library does not return unsolicited materials or notify individuals or groups if their materials are not acceptable for any reasons;
- 4.6 Materials are made available in response to the diverse informational, recreational, cultural and educational needs of the community. These materials may represent varying points of view. They will reflect current conditions, trends, and controversies so that members of the community may inform themselves and make individual judgments;
- 4.7 In providing these materials, it is accepted that while people have the right to reject for themselves material of which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom of others; and
- 4.8 The Library does not participate in partisan politics nor take an advocacy role on issues outside the library world, and will comply with the *Library and Political Elections Policy*.

5. Acceptable Materials

- 5.1 Materials will be accepted as display space is available;
- 5.2 Preference will be given to materials of the following types and in this order of priority:
 - a. Notices of library programs, events, activities, and services;
 - b. Notices of community interest from local municipalities, departments, and local non-profit agencies; and
 - c. Notices of cultural, educational, and recreational events.
- 5.3 Materials that are not acceptable for display or distribution at the St. Marys Public Library include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Materials that contravene the Ontario Human Rights Code, federal or provincial laws and regulations.
 - b. Materials that contravene St. Marys Public Library policies, procedures, regulations, or Rules of Conduct.
 - c. Materials whose primary focus is partisan or political in nature; however, political materials may be eligible when announcing meetings and forums for discussion of community issues, following rules from the *Library and Elections Policy*;
 - d. Faith-based materials whose primary purpose and/or editorial policy is the promotion of faith;
 - e. Materials advertising and promoting commercial products or services;
 - f. Personal ads and notices, including items for sale or rent, pledge forms; and
 - g. Multiple copies of the same posting in Library display areas (exception: library postings and signage).

6. Requests for Information Displays

- 6.1 Written requests for display space should be directed to the CEO/Chief Librarian. The CEO/Chief Librarian must approve the request and in some cases may determine that the display needs to be staffed by the requesting organization;
- 6.2 Displays will be booked on a first come first served basis;
- 6.3 Displays will be booked for a maximum of seven (7) days unless otherwise approved by the chief librarian;

- 6.4 The Library will provide the group with a designated space, table and chairs;
- 6.5 Groups will not be permitted to sell items or solicit donations from Library users and staff with the exception of Remembrance Day Poppies and Canadian Cancer Society Daffodils;
- 6.6 Any damage caused to the display space or tables of the Library during the display time will be the responsibility of the group or organization using the space;
- 6.7 The Library does not accept responsibility for the safe return of materials;
- 6.8 The Library reserves the right to refuse a request for an information display.

7. Electronic and Online Displays

- 7.1 The Library may choose to display community information electronically on monitors and other display devices within or outside the library. This may replace print notices;
- 7.2 Guidelines regarding acceptable electronic materials will be consistent with those for print; and
- 7.3 Decisions regarding online promotions are entirely at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer or designate.

8. Social Media

- 8.1 The St. Marys Public Library website and social media accounts are designated to strictly promote Library programs, services and information, and will include the Adult Learning Programs of Perth, as well as critical information revolving around the Perth County Information Network (PCIN); and
- 8.2 St. Marys Public Library may use the social media outlets to selectively communicate, share or promote information from or regarding other organizations, groups or individuals if it has benefits to the Library, its community, or its users.

9. Related Documents

Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H. 19
CLA's Statement on Intellectual Freedom, Canadian Library Association 2015
Code of Conduct Policy, St. Marys Public Library Policy
Library and Political Elections Policy, St. Marys Public Library
Privacy and Access to Information Policy, St. Marys Public Library Policy

10. History

Date of Latest Board Approval: January 2020
Date(s) of Revision(s): March 2005, December 2012, April 2015, January 2020
Date of next scheduled review: March 2023

Appendix A

The Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries

The Canadian Library Association recognizes and values the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html> 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 Library Association supports and promotes the universal principles of intellectual freedom as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>, 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 Library Association 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 Library Association affirms further that libraries have a core responsibility to support, defend and promote the universal principles of intellectual freedom and privacy.

The Canadian Library Association 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.

*Approved by Executive Council ~ June 27, 1974
Amended November 17, 1983; November 18, 1985; and September 27, 2015*