



## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Board motion number:

Date of next review: June 2027

Date Approved: June 28, 2023

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Policy type: Foundational

Board Chair's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Purpose:

The Orangeville Public Library Board understands the need to recognize and embrace the diversity of our community and strives to be a truly inclusive place within the community.

### Policy:

As part of the strategic plan and commitment to the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, this policy provides definitions, a declaration, and some general guidelines/considerations to be implemented immediately.

This policy also guides considerations in the development of any new policy and the review of existing policies (as scheduled for according to the Policy Review Plan).

### Section 1: Definitions

1. **Equity** - Definitions of equity vary but all focus on the ideals of justice and fairness. Whereas equality means providing everyone with the same number of resources regardless of whether everyone needs them, equity is when resources are shared based on what each person needs to adequately level the playing field.
2. **Diversity** - the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ancestry, place of origin, citizenship, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, mental ability, education and political beliefs, many of which are listed within the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, chapter H.19 s. 5 (1).
3. **Inclusion** - is the act of creating environments and spaces in which any individual or group feels 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.

## Section 2: Declaration

The Library is committed to fostering an environment which makes equity, diversity, and inclusion a priority in planning and decision making for staffing, collections, services, and spaces.

Our first of five values is Inclusivity: we support and protect accessible, equitable services that respect the needs and individual experiences of all – Everyone is welcome.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) standards mandate how organizations must make themselves accessible to people with disabilities. The Orangeville Public Library is committed to accessibility and continuous improvement of its services and website to comply, and where possible exceed AODA standards.

Orangeville Public Library strives to provide services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, and we are committed to giving persons with disabilities the same opportunity to access goods and services.

Our staff training includes accessibility, anti-racism, and cultural awareness training.

The Orangeville Public Library Board endorses the CFLA Position Statement of Diversity and Inclusion prepared by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations which reads:

“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.”

### Section 3: Collections (Collections Policy)

The Orangeville Public Library will provide diverse collections relating to cultures, languages, religious traditions, and peoples, in all our formats from books to audio and video materials. A broad range of authors, content creators and experiences will be included and highlighted in our collection. Our bibliographic database will use subject headings and descriptors which are more inclusive, including the use of Indigenous Subject Headings as they become available.

### Section 4: Services and Programming (Program Policy and Framework)

As we develop and deliver services and programs, we work with our many communities to develop inclusive consultation and engagement processes and to develop services in appropriate ways. We will seek to understand how diverse community groups define and describe themselves and we will listen to and learn from communities rather than relying on indirect sources.

In the spirit of equity, diversity and inclusion for all members, the library welcomes the exhibition of displays and provision of programs and services that reflect and fit within the location's communities (e.g., displays during various religious holidays, culturally significant dates, etc.)

### Section 5: Spaces (Operational Policies including but not limited to Room Rental policy)

The Orangeville Public Library will provide welcoming spaces for all. Our spaces will be inclusive with areas free of bias (e.g., gender neutral, universal washroom facilities, collection arrangement, etc.)