



## Written Policy Process & Review Schedule

Policy Number: G19-17

Approval Date: March 11, 2019

Review Date: March 2023

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### Values and Principles

Policy is an important governance tool used by the Huntsville Public Library Board to engage in the roles of:

1. Defining the Library's purpose and direction
2. Delegating authority to the staff to operate the Library and deliver services
3. Advocating for Library service.

Policies are the framework that assists the Huntsville Public Library Board in conducting its business and the Library staff in making daily decisions. They grow out of and give definition to the Library's mission in the community, and provide for the establishment of consistent operational procedures. The Huntsville Public Library Board uses policy to set out what needs to be done, determines who will do it, and how it is to be done.

Policy arises out of the collective values and beliefs of the Board, staff and community about Library service. Policy provides a structure, circumscribing the range of the Library's activities that will accomplish the Library's priorities and how the Board itself functions.

Characteristics of good policy include:

1. Integration with library mission and strategic plans
2. Statement of beliefs on an issue
3. Clear basis for action
4. Allowance for interpretation and adjustment to change
5. Initial basis for evaluation.

Policy is the 'what' of Library operations: Boards make policy and Library staff establishes procedures to implement these policies.

Policy development is the responsibility of the Library Board. This work is accomplished by the Board creating an annual work plan that sets out the schedule of policies that will be reviewed. Since the Board represents the community, the Board defines the values and beliefs that underlie the policy. The Board as a whole is the only body authorized to approve policies on behalf of the Library. In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*,

R.S.O. 1990, c. P 44, s. 3(3), the Huntsville Public Library is under the management and control of the Board. The Board's role in the operational (financial, personnel and programming) matters of the library lies in developing policies to ensure that all activities conform to the mission of the Library and are in accordance with the requirements of the Public Libraries Act. Policy must be written in order to be an effective tool.

Huntsville Public Library received the honour of accreditation in December 2014 and adheres to the criteria set by the Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council.

## Section 1: Types of Policies

The Board develops and maintains policies in four areas:

1. *Foundation* policies articulate the library's purpose and the Board's decisions on vision, mission and values.
2. *Board Bylaws* establish the organizational structure, the rules and regulations of the Board and how it does business. Almost all bylaws have their basis in the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44.
3. *Governance* policies regulate the business of the Board and defines its roles and responsibilities.
4. *Operational* policies outline the means to achieve the Board's missions and goals and regulate the actions and service of the CEO and library staff.

## Section 2: Responsibilities

The Board will:

1. Approve initial versions and drafts of policies (most likely initiated by the CEO with input from staff).
2. Ensure that policies comply with the *Public Libraries Act*, any applicable municipal bylaws, provincial and federal legislation.
3. Establish a schedule to review existing policies and will integrate this schedule in the Board agendas.

## Section 3: Policy Approval and Review

When the Board reviews policy, they should be determining whether or not the policy has been useful for the purpose it was intended to serve. Review should be regular and planned.

The Board will:

1. Receive all policy changes, in draft, four days prior to the next scheduled Board meeting.
2. Introduce a new policy or policy change through a motion at a duly constituted Board meeting.
3. Approve all policies at a duly constituted Board meeting.

4. Review all policies as needed or every four (4) years.

## Section 4: Policy Distribution

All policies will be documented in a standard format, numbered according to policy type and include the date of approval and the date of the next review.

The Board will:

1. Store accepted policies in a designated policy binder/manual, which should also contain: the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P 44, s. 3(3), municipal or county by-laws affecting the Library, including the by-law which established Library service and the Strategic Plan. This facilitates regular review and revision of policies.
2. Post policies on the Library's website.

## Section 5: Considerations

The development of a new policy or the revision of an existing policy can come from several sources: CEO, member of the Board, the Council, provincial government, or member of the public.

## Section 6: Formatting

All policies will use the black & white policy template compliant with A.O.D.A.

Motions will now include one of these letters to denote policy type:

- F – Foundation
- B – Bylaw
- G – Governance
- O – Operational

## Related Documents

Community Information Policy

Intellectual Freedom Policy

Library Board Bylaws

*Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44

## Policy History

Revised and Adopted by the Library Board March 11, 2019 | Motion: G19-17.

April 10, 2017 (Motion: 17-00).

May 12, 2014 (Motion: 14-3)