

COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

Statement from the Clarington Public Library, Museums, and Archives on commitment to inclusion:

Staff at the Clarington Public Library have recently found swastika graffiti in the children's section of the Courtice Library Branch on multiple occasions. Each time the symbols have been successfully removed. However, library staff and members of the Board are concerned by the trend.

"I am deeply dismayed that recently symbols of hate have been found at a branch of the Clarington Public Library. Libraries are for everyone. There is no place for hate here," said Steven Cooke, Board Chair of the Clarington Public Library, Museums, and Archives.

While there is no threat to public safety, the Clarington Public Library takes these incidents exceptionally seriously. Video from the library's security cameras has been reviewed, and a meeting was held with experts from Durham Regional Police Services to discuss ways to discourage future displays of intolerance in the library.

"Libraries support inclusive access for all. This is a space where all cultures and beliefs are celebrated," said Monika Machacek, CEO of the Clarington Public Library, Museums, and Archives. "Everyone of all backgrounds and beliefs should feel safe and welcomed."

Moving forward, we continue to encourage library users to inform staff if they experience any issues so that immediate action may be taken.

Background

- In 2018, Clarington's Diversity Advisory Committee was created to promote a "welcoming and inclusive Clarington, where differences are celebrated, and the voices of all peoples are heard."
- In 2022, Clarington developed the Inclusive Spaces Policy in partnership with its Diversity Advisory Committee to create an open environment where everyone is welcome to freely enjoy municipal facilities and spaces without fear of harassment, racism, and discrimination.
- The swastika is a symbol of Nazism associated with racial hatred after the Second World War. It should be noted that the equal-armed hooked cross is also an ancient holy symbol in Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism



Steven Cooke
Chair

Clarington Public Library Board



Monika Machacek
Chief Executive Officer

Clarington Public Library, Museums & Archives