

Policy Title:	CFLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom
Policy Type:	Administration
Policy #:	ADM 03
Policy Authority:	Board
Effective Date:	June 2023
Review Date:	December 2025

Purpose

The Clarington Public Library Board endorses the “Statement on Intellectual Freedom” from the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA).

Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries

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

The CFLA 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.

Policy Resolution

Any questions, concerns, or requests for clarification regarding the interpretation or application of this policy can be directed to the CEO at ceo@cplma.ca

If the matter remains unresolved or the party is not satisfied with the CEO's determination, the issue may then be formally escalated to the Library Bard for review at chair@cplma.ca

The decision of the Library Board shall constitute the final authority on all matters related to the interpretation and application of this policy.

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