

Board Motion Number:	2024-09	Date of Review:	2025
Date Approved:	February 20, 2024	Chairperson's signature:	Laura Langford, Vice Chair

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

BACKGROUND

Oxford County Library values diversity and social inclusion in a respectful and welcoming environment for all staff, volunteers and customers.

The Library aims to provide services and spaces that are respectful, inclusive and accessible; and is committed to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the promotion of cultural humility, and the promotion of universal access to information and ideas.

With this in mind, Oxford County Library understands that an acceptance of differences can sometimes place individual and collective values in conflict. Oxford County Library is committed to tolerance and understanding; and will act to ensure that people can enjoy services free from any attempts by others to impose values, customs or beliefs.

The Oxford County Library Board endorses the Canadian Federation of Library Association's *Position Statement of Diversity of Inclusion* (2008) as well as the *Communiqué on Anti-Black Racism* published on June 9, 2020.

PURPOSE

This policy outlines how the library will work to become a diverse and inclusive environment for library staff, volunteers and customers.

PROCEDURES

Definitions

Cultural Humility is the practice of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust.

Diversity is 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, income and political beliefs.

Equity is the delivery of services in a manner that is just and fair, recognizing that services that are delivered equally do not ensure equity. This delivery must consider the unique needs and histories of those served.

Inclusion is the act of creating environments or 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.

Collections

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Oxford County Library recognizes its responsibility to provide access to material created by diverse authors and creators. With an aim to creating diverse and inclusive collections the Library will:

- a. Seek content created by, and representative of, underrepresented and systemically oppressed groups and those protected by *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982).
- b. Apply an inclusive approach on how materials and resources are catalogued, labeled, displayed, promoted, and withdrawn.
- c. Advocate for inclusive and anti-oppressive cataloguing standards and strive to eliminate systems oppression found in library classification.

Services

The Library aims to provide services, materials, information, and programs that reflect diverse views and experiences. The Library encourages feedback from its members to suggest programs and services of interest to the community including those that reflect diversity and support social inclusion.

Spaces

OCL aims to provide welcoming and safe spaces that embrace a diversity of abilities, perspectives, and interests in accordance with the Library's Service Delivery Model. The Library will continue to work with our County and Area Municipal partners to address accessibility concerns.

Technology

The Library reviews practices and works to minimize barriers to access for users. Focus will be placed on equitable access to technology to bridge the digital divide and advance the goal of digital inclusion. The Library will explore options for assistive technology and translation services for all ages and abilities. The library website will meet AODA and WCAG 2.0 accessibility standards and be mobile friendly.

Programs

The Library reaches out to underserved and/or vulnerable communities and individuals across the County through library branches, outreach services, and collaborative efforts with community partner groups. Library staff consider cultural perspectives when offering programs within any format or platform, looking at ways to offer learning and awareness of diverse groups and individuals. Library programs aim to be inclusive and ensure equitable access.

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Staff

The Library's values shape the culture, decision-making and accountability of the Oxford County Library staff team. To further those values, the Library will provide ongoing training and support for staff. The Library will make diversity and inclusion a priority in planning and decision making for staffing.

Library administration will work with the staff Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee and the County Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer to review policies and procedures.

Library administration will work with the County Human Resources department to develop recruitment and hiring practices that attracts talented workforce that is broadly reflective of the community.

Commitment

The Library reviews its inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, and anti-racism practices regularly to consider the addition of other library activities, programs, services, collections, and spaces as well as to remove any barriers to access that may exist. The Library offers staff training opportunities when available to help strengthen understanding and build support for equitable and inclusive services.

References and Related Documents:

Oxford County Library Policies

Oxford County Library. (2023, May). *Library Code of Conduct*.

<https://www.ocl.net/en/library/resources/Your-OCL/Policies/Code-of-Conduct---2023-Update-Final.pdf>

Oxford County Library. (2024, XXX). *Strategic Plan (2024-2028)*.

Link to Follow.

Oxford County Library. (2022, June). *Collection Development Policy*.

https://www.ocl.net/en/library/resources/Your-OCL/Policies/Collection-Development-Policy_2022.pdf

Oxford County Library. (2022, September). *Information and Readers' Advisory Services Policy*. <https://www.ocl.net/en/library/resources/Your-OCL/Policies/Information-and-Readers'-Advisory-Policy-2022.pdf>

Oxford County Library. (2022, October). *Programming and Outreach Policy*.

<https://www.ocl.net/en/library/resources/Your-OCL/Policies/Programming-and-Outreach-Policy-2022.pdf>

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Oxford County Library. (2023, October). *Service Delivery Model*.

Legislation

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Part 1 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982, being Schedule B to the *Canada Act 1982* (UK), 1982, c.11, s. 2(b) and s. 7.

Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19.

Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 44.

Position Statements

Canadian Federation of Library Associations. (2008). *Position Statement on Diversity and Inclusion*. <http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/guidelines-and-position-papers/position-statement-on-diversity-and-inclusion/>

Canadian Federation of Library Associations. (2020, June). *Communiqué on Anti-Black Racism*. <http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/uncategorized/communique-on-anti-black-racism/>