



Policy Type: **Operational**

Policy Number: **OP - 21**

Policy Title: **Programming Policy**

Policy Approval Date: **January 2021**

Policy Review Date:

PURPOSE

Milton Public Library provides an array of programs, covering the widest range of topics. All programs are designed to be inclusive, providing activities that are innovative, community driven, and which seek to promote literacy and lifelong learning. MPL's programs provide safe and equitable spaces, in which MPL's presence as a community hub is evident, and to which all members of the community are encouraged to attend. In doing so, Milton Public Library celebrates and upholds the universal principle of Intellectual Freedom within a democratic society.

The purpose of this policy is twofold, namely to provide direction to the staff creating programs that reflect Milton Public Library's Mission Statement and the needs of the local community, and to inform the public of the criteria informing programming decisions.

SCOPE

Milton Public Library's programs uphold MPL's mission to empower the community to read, learn, create, and connect. This policy applies to all programs including those facilitated by MPL staff, co-sponsored events, and partnership activities offered to the public. This policy does not apply to programs offered by external organizations as outlined in Milton Public Library's Room Use Policy.

Intellectual Freedom

Intellectual Freedom is a core pillar of public library service provision, whereby all community members:

“...have access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, and to express their thoughts publicly.”

Milton Public Library upholds, promotes, and advocates for the principles of Intellectual Freedom as a basic tenet of the programs on offer. As such, all of MPL's services, including programming, adhere to the Canadian Federation of Library Association's *Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries* and the Ontario Library Association's statement on the *Intellectual Rights of the Individual*.

(Appendix A) and Milton Public Library is strongly committed to upholding and defending the diversity of beliefs and interests espoused by all community members.

Criteria for Programs at MPL

MPL adheres to a community-led programming approach, in which the library collaborates directly with community members from a variety of backgrounds to inform the direction of responsive programs. All programs offered by Milton Public Library provide an opportunity for public discussion, edification, recreation, and access to information regardless of religion, family status, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic class.

As such, MPL's criteria for programs include, but is not limited to, topics that:

- Support the freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression of all community members
- Enhance literacy, lifelong learning, cultural awareness, and community engagement
- Encourage thoughtful debate and discussion on a variety of topics in a safe public space
- Promote, support, and adhere to illuminating equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Represent viewpoints and opinions from all sides of controversial issues, including unpopular and non-mainstream beliefs
- Meet public demand as determined by timely patron and community feedback
- Provide public access to authors of significance, or individuals and organizations providing subject authority
- Relate the importance of subject matter to community needs and current events
- Celebrate trends and current events occurring locally and globally
- Encourage and provide support to vulnerable members of the Milton community
- Reflect a relationship to existing collections in the library
- Meet budgetary considerations, such as cost of speaker and program materials

Responsibility for Program at MPL

The responsibility for programming at MPL falls under the Manager, Public Service and is at the discretion of the Chief Librarian. All staff at MPL are provided with ongoing training to ensure they effectively support MPL's patrons with responsive programming initiatives, by developing their understanding of the needs of the communities served.

Request for Reconsideration

Milton Public Library believes that a vital society encourages members of the community to actively participate in an open exchange of ideas and opinions in a safe public space. The content or manner of expressing these ideas through programs and events may, on occasion, be considered offensive by other library users. Milton Public Library recognises the right of an individual or group to object to a program or event at MPL based on personal beliefs. However, such offence does not provide any individual or group with the right to restrict the freedom of

others to participate in library programming and MPL will resist every effort to limit the freedom of expression guaranteed to all community members.

Library users who object to programs offered by Milton Public Library are asked to complete a written "Request for Program Reconsideration" form.

Program Cancellation

Milton Public Library reserves the right to cancel programs at its sole discretion, at any time, making every effort to notify registered attendants and the public in a timely manner

Related Documents:

Milton Public Library: [Programming Request for Reconsideration form](#)

Milton Public Library: FN-04: **Intellectual Freedom Policy**