



Woodstock Public Library Policy

Policy Name: **Programming**

Category: **Library Services**

Version: **May 27, 2022**

POLICY STATEMENT AND RATIONALE

The purpose of this policy is to provide Library staff with the necessary guidelines for the development and delivery of programs, and to inform the community about the principles and criteria by which programs are offered by the Library.

Library programming is a vital part of public library service. Programs compliment physical and online collections by presenting an alternative way to access and experience information.

Woodstock Public Library (WPL) provides public programming to fulfill its mission and vision statement. The Library endeavors to meet the changing needs and interests of residents by presenting programs that provide access to a broad range of knowledge, experience, information and ideas.

All programs are designed to be inclusive and safe spaces, providing activities that are innovative and community driven. Programming will seek to promote literacy, life-long learning, and participation in civic life, as well as addressing the cultural and leisure interests of the community.

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all programs including those facilitated by Library staff, co-sponsored events, and partnership activities offered to the public.

This policy does not apply to programs that are developed and presented for purposes of fundraising, volunteer, sponsor and benefactor recognition or community festivals. Nor does it apply to programs or events offered by external organizations or individuals on Library premises where space is rented.

DEFINITIONS

In reading and interpreting this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

“CEO” means the Chief Executive Officer of the Woodstock Public Library.

“Co-sponsored Program” means an arrangement that involves program delivery by an external organization or individual.

“Library” means the Woodstock Public Library.

“Library Board” means the Woodstock Public Library Board.

“Library Staff” means all staff employed by the Woodstock Public Library.

“Program” means an activity, presentation, or event offered to the public coordinated, planned, presented, or supported by the Library. It may be a single event or series of events, be scheduled or a pop-up event, take place inside the Library or outside, or take place online.

POLICY, PROCEDURE AND IMPLEMENTATION

1.0 Responsibility

- 1.1 The Library CEO has overall responsibility for Library programming in accordance with this policy.
- 1.2 Under the authority of the CEO, responsibility for the creation, planning and implementation of programming rests with the Manager of Public Services. This responsibility also includes staff training, evaluation and statistical reporting related to programming.

2.0 Guiding Principles

- 2.1 Library programs are intended to:
 - a) Stimulate an interest in and use of Library services and collections.
 - b) Develop a love of reading and provide life-long learning opportunities for patrons.
 - c) Promote and support 21st Century literacies, including but not limited to: reading and writing literacy, digital literacy, financial literacy, environmental literacy, as well as science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM) literacy.
 - d) Teach research and information skills and help develop critical thinking.
 - e) Stimulate imagination and creativity.
 - f) Promote an awareness of contemporary issues and information required to engage in society.
 - g) Provide access to entertainment, recreational and cultural experiences.
 - h) Reduce social isolation and promote social inclusion by bringing members of the community together.

- i) Support and strengthen community partnerships.
- j) Encourage participation by non-users to grow library membership and library use.

3.0 Intellectual Freedom

- 3.1 Woodstock Public Library upholds the principle of intellectual freedom embodied in the Canadian Federation of Library Associations *Statement of Intellectual Freedom and Libraries*. The Library supports the rights of individuals to read, speak, view and exchange differing points of view on any subject.
- 3.2 The Library's philosophy of open and equitable access to information and ideas extends to programming. In order to do this, the Library maintains impartiality. Hosting a program does not constitute an endorsement of the program topic or the views expressed by speakers or participants. Speakers and resources will not be excluded from programs because of possible controversy.
- 3.3 Library programs may present controversial issues in order to ensure public access and discourse. When opposing points of view are expressed, programming participants are responsible to engage in dialogue with dignity and respect.

4.0 Program Delivery

- 4.1 In general, the Library will not charge fees for programs or events. However, the Library reserves the option to charge a fee to recover the Library's cost for presenting a program.
- 4.2 Programs will be developed with consideration for the principles of accessibility. Programs will be offered in an open and equitable manner to all members of the community. From time to time, this may mean placing limits on individual access to some programs in order to ensure fair access to all.
- 4.3 All programs will adhere to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA)*. The Library will waive program fees for a support person accompanying a person with a disability.
- 4.4 The Library may set age limits or guidelines for program participation when a program is best suited to a particular age group or audience.
- 4.5 At the discretion of the Library, a parent/caregiver may be required to attend a program with their child. Children's access to programming is the responsibility of parents and guardians. For programs where the parent/caregiver is not required to attend, the Library may require the parent/caregiver to remain on the premises.
- 4.6 Registration may be required for planning purposes or due to space limitations.
- 4.7 If registration is required for a program and a waitlist is created, Library staff have the right to allow waitlist registrants into a program if registered patrons are a no-

show. It is the responsibility of program participants to show up on time. Latecomers may not be admitted.

- 4.8 Attendance at programs requires compliance with the Library's *Patron Code of Conduct*. Staff have the responsibility to ask disruptive and disrespectful participants to change their behavior or leave a program.
- 4.9 The Library may allow presenters to display products or books for purchase at programs or events.
- 4.10 The Library reserves the right to cancel or reschedule programs at its sole discretion, at any time, and will make every effort to notify participants and the community in advance.
- 4.11 Liability insurance is required for all programs on Library property. Events that are associated with the Library and are run by Library staff are covered by the Library's insurance. Performers contracted by the Library must provide proof of insurance of \$2,000,000 in advance of the event with Woodstock Public Library and the City of Woodstock named on the certificate.

5.0 Co-sponsored Programs

- 5.1 Co-sponsored programs with community organizations or agencies operate with the support of the Library. They must align with the Library's mission and goals, be of sufficiently high quality, and be relevant to the community. A co-sponsored program can be a one-off program or one-time series as well as an ongoing program or series.
- 5.2 The external programmer has primary responsibility for organizing and conducting the program. The organization or individual is not paid for this work.
- 5.3 The room rental fee will be waived for co-sponsored events. The Library reserves the right to maintain a presence during the program. Training is required to use the Library's audio visual/IT equipment, and arrangements must be made in advance.
- 5.4 Co-sponsored programs must be open to the public and free of charge to participants. If a fee must be charged to attendees, it must be a nominal, cost recovery fee only, and be agreed to by the Library in advance.
- 5.5 The Library may refuse a co-sponsored program opportunity due to space or resource limitations, or if the event is deemed inappropriate or incompatible with the Library's mission or goals. The Library will not partner with an organization that violates the *Ontario Human Rights Code* or the Library's *Patron Code of Conduct*.
- 5.6 In the event that a partner is using Library space without a staff member present during a co-sponsored event, the Library's insurance policy does not apply. It is the responsibility of the external partner to secure insurance coverage prior to the

event. The Library reserves the right to cancel a co-sponsored program if the insurance coverage provided is deemed inadequate by the Library.

6.0 Program Evaluation

- 6.1 The Library values feedback from patrons concerning programming. Programs are designed with measurable outcomes and evaluated as needed. Evaluation forms may be distributed at programs to gather feedback. Other comments can be addressed to Library staff at the event or to the Manager of Public Services. Information gathered will inform future programming events.

7.0 Request of Reconsideration

- 7.1 The Library believes that a healthy society must encourage the active and open exchange of ideas and opinions. The content or manner of expressing ideas through programs and events may, on occasion, be considered offensive by some members of the community. The Library recognizes the right of individuals or groups to object to programs and events based on personal beliefs. However, such offence does not provide any individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to participate in library programming. The Library will resist every effort to limit freedom of expression for all community members.
- 7.2 In the event of a complaint by a library patron or community group to any library programming, a request for reconsideration may be made as follows:
- a) The patron or community group is provided with a copy of the Program Policy and are asked to complete a written *Request for Program Reconsideration* form.
 - b) The completed *Request for Program Reconsideration* form is then to be forwarded to the Manager of Public Services. The Manager and the professional librarian responsible for the program, will read, review and discuss the complaint. When the review is completed, a written recommendation will be made to the CEO. The CEO will then provide the patron with a written decision and explanation. The decision will be rendered within four weeks of the date of receipt of the form and will reflect the principles outlined in the Library's Programming Policy.
 - c) If the patron wishes to pursue the matter further, the CEO will bring the matter forward to the next meeting of the Library Board. The complainant may also make a delegation to the Board at a Board Meeting. The Board will rule on the complaint and report the decision, in writing, to the patron and all concerned parties within 30 days of the Board Meeting.

8.0 Appendices

Appendix A – Request for Program Reconsideration

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES

Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) – Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries

Woodstock Public Library – Accessibility Policy

Woodstock Public Library – Inclusion and Diversity

Woodstock Public Library – Public Use of Library Facilities Policy

Woodstock Public Library – Patron Code of Conduct

Woodstock Public Library – Safety and Conduct of Children in the Library

Woodstock Public Library – Guideline Criteria for Health and Wellbeing Speakers

Woodstock Public Library – Guidelines for Event Organizers, Participants and Protestors

DOCUMENT REVISION RECORD

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**Woodstock Public Library
Request for Program Reconsideration**

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City / Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

1. Do you represent an organization or group? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please identify:

2. The library program / event and date held on which you are commenting:

3. Did you attend the program/event? Yes ☐ No ☐

4. To what do you object?

5. What alternative programming would you like to see?

6. What steps would you like the Library to take?

Please complete and return to staff.

Information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Public Libraries Act 1990* and is used for the purposes of library services and planning.