
Policies and bylaws

A guide for public library boards in Alberta



Policies and Bylaws: A Guide for Public Library Boards in Alberta | Municipal Affairs

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Introduction

The library board is a corporation responsible for the comprehensive and efficient delivery of library service to the community. One way the board does this is by establishing policies and bylaws that outline best practices for the day-to-day operations of the board and its service point(s), such as public libraries or bookmobiles. To ensure changing community needs are met, the board should regularly review and update its policies and bylaws. Policies and bylaws must also comply with all applicable legislation including the [Libraries Act](#) and [Libraries Regulation](#).

This document provides guidance for the creation of library policies required under the Libraries Regulation and safety and use bylaws allowed under the *Libraries Act*. It aims to provide general information and a process for creating these required policies and allowed bylaws, as well as specific information including templates and discussion points, for municipal and intermunicipal boards who are writing or updating these policies and bylaws.

Library boards may opt to have additional policies that cover material beyond those required by library legislation. Library boards are also required to have certain policies by other legislation, such as the records retention policy required by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. Boards should seek out the government bodies responsible for administering other legislation for advice on how to draft policies required by that legislation.

Further information regarding best practices for personnel, collection development, resource sharing, provision of library service to persons unable to use conventional print and hours of service can be found in Public Library Services Branch (PLSB)'s [Best Practices for Public Libraries in Alberta](#). Some material in this guide has been adapted from that document.

Responsibilities in the Sample Library Manager Job Description were adapted from the Ontario Library Service (OLS) [Competencies for Ontario Public Library Staff](#).

How To Use This Guide

- Read section 1 first, for information on what policies are, why they are important, and how your board can create and manage them.
- Go to the specific policies listed in section 2 for policy considerations for library boards and others drafting policies, procedure considerations for library managers and other staff implementing policies, and sample policies and forms.
- Go to section 3 for information about safety and use bylaws.

Section 1: Policies and Policy Creation

Policies are one of the key governing documents that library boards create to set the direction of library service and guide the implementation of that service by library staff. The board is the legal entity responsible for creation of all policies. The library board communicates the library's operational best practices through the creation of policy. Effective policy benefits the library in several ways.

Good policy is proactive. It allows the board to set rules for the library based on principles, and demonstrates to the community that the board is actively managing risk. Because policies are based on the goals, objectives, and values of the board and library, the board reviews its plan of service and other planning documents before writing or revising its policies.

Good policy ensures consistency in the way the library delivers services and treats employees and library users, and can help prevent legal problems. If a board has more than one library service point, most policies apply at all service points. Some facility-related policies may only apply to specific branches.

Good policy provides direction to employees as they manage the day-to-day operations of the library. Policy tells the library manager and staff when to make a decision themselves and when to go to the board for further direction. For example, a policy that states that the library manager must go to the board for approval of purchases over a certain amount provides direction as the manager spends within the limits of the budget. Policy gives staff security knowing that their actions reflect the will of the board.

Policies are “living documents” which need to change over time. It is best practice for the board to regularly review and update policies so they continue to meet the needs of the community and reflect the goals of the board. The *Libraries Act* does not state how often to revise policies but it is good practice to review them every 2-3 years. If the board revises one of the ten policies required by the Libraries Regulation, please send revisions to PLSB at libpolicies@gov.ab.ca.

Creating and Updating Policies

Creating and reviewing library board policies is a substantial job, but it is one of the board's key responsibilities. The steps below outline a suggested process for boards to use when creating and revising board policies.

The drafting and revision of policies may involve not only the board, but also library staff. The work of creating draft policies may be completed by the library manager, another library staff person, a board member, a committee of the board, or the board as a whole. This section uses the term “policy drafter(s)” to refer to the person or people responsible for the creation of draft policies or draft updates of existing policies. No matter who is responsible for creating them, draft policies and policy updates must be reviewed and approved by the board as a whole

before they are implemented. This is because no matter who drafts, the policies are still the board's policies – the board is the legal entity with ownership of the policies. It is ideal that policy drafter(s) consult with the library manager or other relevant library staff when creating draft policies or policy updates, since they will be most familiar with the day-to-day operations of the library.

Before creating a new policy or reviewing an existing policy, the policy drafter(s) should consider the existing legislative, governance, and management context. They can do this by reviewing the policies that are required under the Libraries Regulation, as well as other relevant provincial and federal legislation.

The next step in the creation of policy or review process is to review the board's other governance documents. The plan of service helps the policy drafter(s) consider how the service responses, goals and objectives can influence policy development. For example, if the library wants to be a welcoming place for families with small children, it may wish to avoid policies that are restrictive to those families, such as strict policies against noise. If there are financial implications to the new policy, the policy drafter(s) may wish to include a separate plan for the reallocation of funds in the library budget.

All board policies both affect and are affected by the other policies of the board. By reviewing the board's existing policies, procedures, bylaws, or other documents, the policy drafter(s) can place the new policy in context with existing policies. In addition to the policy and procedure manuals, board meeting minutes may also contain temporary procedures or board directions for consideration. Unwritten procedures and informal documents such as pamphlets, posters and bookmarks may also provide important context.

There are several questions that the policy drafter(s) can consider when writing or revising library policy:

- Is the policy consistent with the vision, mission, values, goals and objectives of the board?
- Does the policy comply with the *Libraries Act*, Libraries Regulation and other provincial and federal legislation?
- Is the policy consistent with current service practices at the library? Does it describe rules or procedures that are no longer followed at the library? Are there any rules or procedures that need to be added or changed?
- How does the proposed policy interact with the board's other policies? Does the policy conflict with or undermine any other policies or procedures that are currently in place? Are there any other policies or procedures that should be reviewed or changed to be consistent with this policy?

When writing policy, the policy drafter(s) should use straightforward, clear language. It is best to avoid jargon and “library-speak” unless it is necessary and clearly understood by everyone in the intended audience. If the policy requires the use of library terminology, make sure terms are defined as needed. Use abbreviations only after the first reference has been written out in full with its abbreviation in brackets. For example, when referencing the term “interlibrary loan”, write the full phrase followed by the abbreviation in brackets (ILL).

Ensure that policy language is neutral and encourages fair, consistent treatment. Most library policies address all users of the library, though some may only be directed at specific segments. Although a policy on service to library users unable to use conventional print is required by the Libraries Regulation, it is important that policy drafter(s) also consider how they can best provide service to diverse populations, including Indigenous communities and other traditionally underserved groups.

Consider how the policy can be applied in practice. It is a good idea to consider a few “what if” scenarios and see if the policy still accomplishes the goals of the board. Keep in mind that policies usually cover most circumstances, but not every circumstance.

In most cases, it is best that there only be one possible meaning to the standard or rule set by policy. Check for ambiguities or unclear meanings in policy language. However, in some cases the board may wish to consider if exceptions to the rule are allowed, or if employee discretion can be permitted in implementing policy. For these more flexible policies, use terms like “generally”, “usually”, and “typically” and avoid terms like “always” and “never.”

Reviewing and Approving Policies

Each proposed policy should be reviewed and discussed at a board meeting. The policy drafter or a representative from the policy committee can explain the policy to the whole board. The board can then discuss the following points:

- How does the proposed policy fit with the board’s vision, mission, values, and plan of service?
- What are the strengths or weaknesses of the proposed policy?
- How does the proposed policy fit in the framework of the board’s other policies?
- What procedures or other operational changes would be needed to implement the policy, if any?

The board should decide if it wants to adopt the policy, adopt a revised version of the policy, send the policy back to the policy drafter(s) for further revision, or reject the policy. It is best that these decisions be made by board motion and recorded in the meeting minutes.

If the policy is adopted, plans need to be made to implement the policy. Consult with the library manager to ensure the manager has enough time to implement any needed operational changes before the policy comes into effect. If the policy is required under the Libraries Regulation, a copy must also be sent to PLSB.

The library manager determines how to communicate any policy changes to staff, volunteers, and the public. Whenever possible, make staff and volunteers aware of policy changes before the public. Options for communication to the public include signs, promotional items (e.g. bookmarks), newspaper ads, or posting on the library website or social media.

Policies vs. Procedures

Procedures are specific instructions that provide detail to the board's policies. They describe how to implement policy, often in a step-by-step process.

For example, a vacation policy might say how much vacation employees are allowed, and a related procedure would tell employees how to schedule their vacation time and get approval. A discrimination policy would communicate the organization's stance on discrimination, and a related procedure would tell an employee how they can raise a complaint and how it will be managed.

Unlike policies, most procedures can be developed by the library manager. Library boards in municipalities that are members of a library system must follow any library system procedures that apply to their library as per the system agreement.

When drafting procedures, provide clear, step by step instructions that specify the actions required.

Formatting and Organizing Policies

It is best practice that library board policies be formatted in a consistent way. These policies are likely stored as electronic documents, but may also be kept in print form as a manual for easy reference in the library.

If the board is approving several policies at once or making major revisions to the policy manual, establish a consistent format for policies and organize them for easy use by board members, library manager and staff.

Here are some formatting tips:

- Identify the policy categories. Some examples: Governance, Administrative, Human Resources, Financial Management, Property and Facilities. Note that specific categories may not become apparent until after all individual policies are approved.
- Include a table of contents to help find information.

- Consider how to categorize the information. Each policy should have a unique identifier and be assigned a category.

Create a standard template for policies. Suggested elements include

- section title, consistent with the table of contents
- an introduction to the policy;
- the policy statement itself;
- procedures related to the policy;
- references to other policies and procedures;
- page number including the total pages in section;
- dates, including both the date approved by the library board and the date when the policy is scheduled to be reviewed; and
- footer at the bottom of each page, a line that denotes what the document is and the name of the library board.

If referencing legislation in policy, avoid citing specific sections. Only reference the legislation as a whole.

Section 2: Legally Required Policies

This section includes additional information about the policies required under Section 7 of the Libraries Regulation. It includes the relevant section from the Libraries Regulation, policy considerations for boards and procedure considerations for library managers. It also includes sample policies and forms that you can use as a starting point when writing your board's policies.

The first three policies in this section (confidentiality of user records, orientation and continuing education of board and staff members, finance) are required of all library boards. The remaining seven policies (personnel, collection development, resource sharing, provision of resources for those unable to use conventional print, conditions under which library resources will be loaned, hours of service, areas of the building not normally used for library purposes) are required only for those boards that operate a service point (e.g. a public library or bookmobile).

These sample policies are based on existing policies received at Public Library Services Branch. While these policies are suitable for use at most public libraries in Alberta and are compliant with the Libraries Regulation, please adjust the specifics of these policies to suit local needs.

Confidentiality of User Records

Description from Libraries Regulation

“Confidentiality of user records, except where disclosure is required by law” (Libraries Regulation 7(1)(a))

Policy Considerations

This required policy defines how information about library users is kept confidential, or released if legally necessary.

Canadians have a right to privacy. Privacy is often defined as “the right to be left alone”. It is important to keep records of library users’ personal information (address, telephone number, email, etc.) private. Records of library users’ reading history, attendance at programs, and even presence in the library are also private.

Library boards should also consider the privacy rights of children and young adults when making policy. The board should consider whether it wishes to allow older children to control if and how other people may access their library records.

Privacy also helps protect the intellectual freedom of library users, which includes the right of library users to read or view what they want without judgment or coercion. All Canadians are guaranteed the rights of thought, belief, opinion, and expression under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

The [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy \(FOIP\) Act](#) also requires library boards to keep their library users’ recorded personal information confidential, and only release it under specific circumstances. Library policy must be consistent with this legislation.

Library system members may also have the records of inactive patrons purged on a regular basis based on library card usage criteria. Check with your local system for more information about such policies.

Procedure Considerations

When collecting library user information for a registration form, collect only those pieces of information that are required to fulfill the tasks for which the form has been created. For example, library user names, home addresses, phone numbers, and email address are probably required for a general library registration form. Information such as social insurance numbers or driver’s licence numbers probably are not.

If the library uses government-issued identification to verify identity for a form, a section on the form can confirm that the identification has been seen without including registration numbers or other specific information.

Policy Sample: Confidentiality

Confidentiality of User Records Policy

[Name of municipality] Library Board and its staff are subject to the *Libraries Act* and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP).

1. Library board members, staff, and volunteers only collect library users' personal information when it is required for the purposes of delivering public library service.
2. No records are kept of the frequency or content of visits to the library by specific library users.
3. No records are kept of a cardholder's item checkout history, unless the cardholder has given written permission for this record to be kept. If this record is kept, it is subject to disclosure with the cardholder's other records under the conditions of this policy.
4. Library staff, board members, and volunteers do not disclose a library user's personal information to a third party without the individual's consent, except:
 - a. in partnership with other Alberta libraries and library systems for the purposes of sharing materials under conditions defined in existing resource sharing agreements and programs (e.g. interlibrary loan agreements, ME Libraries), collecting fees or fines, and retrieving borrowed materials.
 - b. for other reasons consistent with FOIP.
5. Cardholders complete a form acknowledging that their contact information will be available to other organizations for the purposes listed in point 4 above.
6. No library user information, including their presence in the library, is given over the phone.
7. Staff, volunteers and board members are to keep confidential the reading and viewing habits of individual library users.
8. Access to a user's records is limited to that user except where the user has given written permission for another person to access their records. Parents or legal guardians with custody of children under fifteen years may also access the user records of those children.
9. Upon request, a library user is given access to all information concerning their records that the library has on file.
10. The library board's physical documents are retained or destroyed according to the board's records retention policy.
11. Records of inactive library users are purged in accordance with the policies of the library system.

Orientation and Continuing Education of Board and Staff

Description from Libraries Regulation

“Orientation and continuing education of board members and staff, including expenses for attendance at library meetings, conference workshops and courses, and for memberships in library associations” (Libraries Regulation 7(1)(b))

Policy Considerations

This required policy defines how board members and staff are oriented to their roles and supported financially as they continue to educate themselves about their positions. It must include direction on reimbursement for attendance at library meetings, conferences, workshops and courses. It must also include direction on memberships in library associations.

New library board members receive orientation as soon as possible after they start their positions. It is the responsibility of the library board to ensure that its board member orientation program develops informed board members who understand their duties and responsibilities to the library board and the community. New board members are more effective when they understand the role of the board and the roles they, as members of that board, play in the functioning of the library.

Orientation is only the first step. To continue to fulfill their roles effectively as the community and library services change, board members participate in ongoing professional development to stay informed of current library and community trends.

New staff members also require orientation upon beginning their positions, including an introduction to the specific duties of their position, the operations of the library, and the structure of public library service in Alberta. Once established in the job, staff continue learning more about ongoing developments in library services through continuing professional development.

Professional development for board members and staff is often delivered through workshops, conferences, and courses. Board members and staff receive financial support from the board for their attendance at professional development, usually in the form of expense reimbursement.

Procedure Considerations

Usually, orientation for board members and staff consists of an orientation package including the library board’s plan of service, a tour of the library, and meetings with the library manager and the board chair or another member of the board.

The training needs for new board members and new library staff varies. The library manager and other staff members receive additional training about the specifics of their position. This includes training on the local library system if their municipality is a member. New board

members attend a Board Basics workshop, or other board training offered by Public Library Services Branch.

Plan for staff and board members to attend training needed to keep up with library trends and changes. If possible, the manager and at least one member of the board attend at least one professional development event per year. Rotating which member(s) of the board attend allows each member an opportunity to participate. Staff members participate in relevant workshops or professional development days (for example, offered by the library system or PLSB), and are able to take relevant coursework from post-secondary institutions including distance education courses. Encourage staff who are interested to work towards a Library Technician diploma or a Master in Library and Information Studies (MLIS) degree.

Policy Samples: Orientation and Continuing Education

Board Orientation and Continuing Education Policy

New Board Member Orientation

1. The board recognizes the need for orientation of new board members and the need to acquire skills and knowledge relating to their roles as board members. The board is prepared to provide resources and materials for orientation of new board members.
2. The board provides an information package to each new board member. This package consists of:
 - a. The library board's bylaws and policy manual
 - b. Municipal bylaw establishing the municipal library board, or municipal bylaws and intermunicipal agreement respecting the intermunicipal library board.
 - c. The library board's rules of order for board meetings
 - d. Information about the responsibilities of board members, including ethical responsibilities, fiduciary duty, and other individual board member responsibilities
 - e. List of board members, including their term start and end dates
 - f. List of board committees (if applicable), including which board members are currently serving on those committees
 - g. Financial statements and budget
 - h. Annual report
 - i. Sources of library funding
 - j. *Libraries Act* and Libraries Regulation
 - k. PLSB's suite of provincial policies, including:
 - i. The Public Library Network Policy
 - ii. The Electronic Resources Operational Policy
 - iii. Resource Sharing Operational Policy
 - iv. SuperNet Operational Policy
 - v. Library Resources for People with Print Disabilities Operational Policy
 - l. Introduction to the local library system and the services it provides

- m. Library's current plan of service
 - n. Map of area served by library
 - o. Names and positions of staff, including an organizational chart
 - p. Information about the relationship between the library board and staff, especially between the library board and the library manager
3. A board member's information package is distributed to each new board member at their first board meeting or shortly thereafter. The board secretary and members of the board delegated by the secretary are responsible for the information package preparation and distribution, as well as ensuring the package is updated when necessary
 4. The orientation process is the responsibility of the vice chair, treasurer, and the library manager. This process includes an explanation of the materials in the new board member's orientation package and a tour of the library.

Continuing Education of Board Members

5. The board recognizes the importance of having informed board members. To ensure this, the board provides, within the limits of its budget, financial support for attendance at library conferences and relevant workshops and membership in library organizations.
6. Board members are expected to regularly attend library or board member courses or conferences in the area, as time and budget guidelines permit.
7. Within budget guidelines, expenses incurred by individual board members for travel, subsistence, lodging, and registration fees are reimbursed, as per established procedure.
8. Board members are expected to provide a verbal report on conference attendance to the board.
9. All board members regularly attend board member workshops, as time and budget guidelines permit.

Association Memberships

10. The board purchases an annual institutional membership in the Alberta Library Trustees Association (ALTA). The board chair is the voting representative.
11. Expenses incurred by individual board members for association memberships may be reimbursed, with prior approval by board motion.

Staff Orientation and Continuing Education Policy

The [name of municipality] Library Board recognizes the importance of informed and well-trained staff. It supports this policy by providing, within the limits of its budget, orientation programs; encouragement and support for attendance at library conference, workshops, and library-related courses within and outside the Municipality; and institutional membership in library organizations.

Orientation

1. New employees are given orientation and training that prepares them to best provide service to the public.
2. Orientation and training is the responsibility of the library manager and includes an understanding of:
 - a. the role of the library in the community
 - b. the role of the library in the larger library community, including participation in both the local library system and the Provincial Library Network
 - c. the responsibilities and duties of the board and staff
 - d. the library board's policies, services, goals, and objectives, and
 - e. specific training for the employee's position.
3. Each new employee is given a staff handbook for personal use and study along with job-specific material provided by the employee's supervisor.

Education

4. The library manager may, within the limits of the budget, approve staff attendance at library-related meetings, workshops and conferences without prior board approval.
5. Within budget guidelines and with prior approval of library management, expenses incurred by individual staff members for travel, meals, lodging, and registration fees may be reimbursed, as per established procedure.
6. The library board supports and encourages the ongoing training of library staff through staff development workshops and regular system training sessions. With the authorization of the board, the library manager may occasionally close the library to allow staff the opportunity to attend these training opportunities.
7. The board supports and encourages informal, ongoing sharing of information among library staff as part of their continuing education.

Further Formal Education

8. The board supports staff attending formal education programs related to their work at the library to further their education.
9. Employees wishing to take an unpaid leave of absence for the purpose of further education must apply to do so as per established procedure.
10. For an absence for the purpose of further education, the Board may hold an employee's position for a maximum of two (2) years.

Library Association Memberships

11. The board purchases an annual institutional membership in the Library Association of Alberta (LAA). The library manager is the voting representative.
12. Within budget guidelines and with prior approval of the library manager, other association institutional memberships may be purchased.
13. Expenses incurred by individual library staff members for association memberships may be reimbursed, with prior management approval. The library manager approves individual memberships for library staff members. The board approves individual memberships for the library manager by board motion.

Finance

Description from Libraries Regulation

“Finance, including designation of expenses for which board members and staff will be reimbursed, the form and manner in which those expenses shall be claimed, and the appointment of signing officers for the board.” (Libraries Regulation 7(1)(c))

Policy Considerations

This required policy defines how library boards manage their financial affairs, including reimbursing staff and board members for library-related expenses, and appointing signing officers for the board. Library boards are corporations with full management and control of their financial affairs, and have a legal responsibility to manage those finances.

It is not reasonable to expect board members to subsidize the library board with personal funds while on board business. The library board reimburses staff and board members for library expenses incurred using a personal method of payment. However, staff and board members also have a responsibility not to abuse their position. They should not claim frivolous or unrelated expenses or seek to use honoraria as a prime source of income.

Consider what expenses to reimburse for – usually most expenses incurred on a personal method of purchase for library business can qualify (e.g. travel expenses, books, program materials). Also consider what expenses will not be reimbursed (e.g. alcohol, meals over a predetermined amount).

Library boards must also designate signing officers for board expenses. Library boards often appoint certain board officers to be signing officers (e.g. board chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, etc.). Consider who will be a signing officer(s) for the board and how to prevent dishonesty of expenditures (e.g. by not having signing officers sign off on their own expenses). Also, consider how many signing officers to have – most boards appoint two to three.

Because library boards are corporations independent of the municipalities that formed them, if the municipality provides financial services to the board (e.g. accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll services) then this relationship should be governed by a written agreement. If this is the case, the board’s financial policy should be consistent with this agreement. Please refer to PLSB’s document *Board-Municipality Agreements Questions to Ask* for more information about drafting board-municipality agreements.

Procedure Considerations

Use a written form to manage expense reimbursement. Refer to the sample form attached.

The board receives a financial update on the library board’s budget at every board meeting, usually prepared by the library manager. A member of the board, such as the board treasurer, may assist with the preparation of this report.

Policy Sample: Finance

Finance Policy

The [Name] Library Board is accountable for the effective management of the board's financial resources. While the day-to-day administration of finances is delegated to the library manager, the board continuously monitors the financial status and ensures compliance with legislation by requiring regular and timely financial reports. The board treasurer reviews all financial reports, statements and reports to the board regularly at board meetings.

1. The board tenders bank accounts at the financial institution best able to meet the financial needs of the board. The board considers interest rates, loaning policies, financial products, and banking fees as it makes its decision where to tender its accounts.
2. The board chair, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary are appointed signing officers for the board. Additional signing officers may be appointed from the board by board motion. Two signing officers must sign for all financial expenditures. Signing officers cannot sign off on funds being issued to themselves.
3. The fiscal year of the board is January 1 to December 31.
4. The board prepares an operating budget annually. The estimate of municipal funds required for the following year shall be annually submitted to municipal council(s) as per the *Libraries Act*.
5. The library manager is authorized to administer funds according to the budget approved by the board. Expenditures over \$5000, expenditures outside the scope of the original budget, re-allotments, or over-expenditures of funds requires the prior approval of the board by board motion.
6. Financial donations to the [name of municipality] Library Board are encouraged and greatly appreciated. The board may consider spending funds donated on projects, initiatives or operational priorities specified by the donor. However, the library board has final authority over the use of funds donated.
7. The board reimburses staff and board members for library expenses incurred using a personal method of payment that are related to:
 - a. Professional development, including courses, workshops, and conferences
 - b. Attending meetings on behalf of the library board
 - c. Materials purchased for the library (e.g. books purchased at a local bookstore, materials purchased for library programs, etc.)
 - d. Other library-related activities approved in advance

8. Expenses that may be claimed include:
 - a. Travel-related expenses, including
 - i. Mileage for work-related travel in the claimant's personal vehicle. Mileage reimbursement is paid at the current rate set by the Government of Alberta expense policy for use of a private vehicle. Fuel costs for the claimant's personal vehicle is not eligible for reimbursement.
 - ii. Fares for other methods of transportation (e.g. bus fare, taxi fare)
 - iii. Vehicle rental charges, including fuel charges
 - iv. Parking charges
 - v. Hotel charges
 - vi. Restaurant meal charges. Unlike other expenses, meals are reimbursed at a set rate and do not require receipts. These rates are: breakfast – \$10.00, lunch – \$15.00, supper – \$25.00.
 - b. Registration, tuition, and other similar charges incurred while attending approved library-related professional development.
 - c. Charges for collection items and other materials purchased for the library.
 - d. Other library expenses not listed above that are approved in advance.
9. All staff reimbursements are approved in advance by the library manager. All reimbursements of the library manager are approved in advance by the board chair. All board member reimbursements are approved by board motion. The approver may set limits on how much may be spent on a given expense for reimbursement.
10. To be reimbursed, the claimant submits original receipts and a completed expense claim form to the appropriate approver as described in point 9. Note that restaurant meal reimbursements do not require receipts, as described in point 8.
11. The library manager may operate a petty cash account in the amount of \$350 for purchases not in excess of \$50.
12. The board may obtain a credit card for library-related purchases. Signing officers of the board and the library manager may use the board's credit card as required to make purchases consistent with this policy. Only the board signing officers and the library manager are authorized to use the board's credit card. Signing officers and the library manager will not share card access information (e.g. PIN) with other library staff. The board credit card is stored securely when not in use.

Sample Expense Claim Form

NOTE: Attach all original receipts

Name:

Address:

Date Claim Submitted:

Mileage Claims

Date	Purpose of Trip, Including Destination	Total km travelled	Reimbursement (km x \$0.51)

Other Claims

Date	Description	Subtotal	GST	Grand Total

Claimant Signature:

Approval Signature:

Print Name:

Print Name:

Date:

Date:

Personnel

Description from Libraries Regulation

“Personnel, including job descriptions and performance appraisals for employees and volunteers, qualifications for staff positions, working hours, conditions of employment and a grievance procedure.” (Libraries Regulation 7(2)(a))

Policy Considerations

Whether paid staff or volunteers, people are a board’s most valuable resource. They are key to providing personal, effective library service to residents of your community. It is essential for library boards to provide effective personnel policies that are consistent with the Libraries Regulation and other applicable provincial and federal legislation. The board also considers how to apply library personnel standards to library volunteers.

This policy must include job descriptions for employees and volunteers, directions on performance appraisals for employees and volunteers, qualifications for staff positions, working hours, conditions of employment, and a grievance procedure. A library board that employs staff must also follow employment laws and regulations including but not limited to the Employment Standards Code and Regulation, and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHS).

Library boards develop inclusive hiring and employment practices that encourage the employment of Indigenous people, people with disabilities, and others that reflect the community the library serves. As employers, library boards should also be aware of their duty to accommodate employees with disabilities and their responsibility not to discriminate on the basis of race, colour, physical or mental disability, or other protected grounds. Refer to the *Alberta Human Rights Act* for more information.

Well-written job descriptions provide direction and expectations to staff members as they complete their duties. When creating job descriptions, consider not only the duties that each employee must complete but the competencies that are required to fulfill those duties. Be sure that job descriptions include information about all the elements of the job, including who the position reports to, who reports to the position (if anyone), qualifications for the position, and any special requirements for the position (e.g. driver’s licence, ability to lift a certain weight).

Performance evaluations help reassure staff that they are continuing to fulfill the expectations of their positions, or provides guidance if they are not fulfilling expectations. It is best practice that all staff are evaluated at the end of their probationary period (if applicable) and again on an annual basis, using a written form.

All library staff members need to have basic qualifications to complete their work. It is best practice that all library staff over the age of 18 possess at least a high school diploma. In larger centres, the library manager and possibly other staff also possess specialized library training,

such as a library operations certificate, a library technician's diploma, or a Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) or equivalent degree accredited by the American Library Association (ALA).

Volunteers play an important role in the delivery of library service to the community. Library volunteers are a supplement to, not a substitute for, paid staff. All library boards should employ at least one paid staff member, so that core operational activities do not depend on volunteer labour. Train your volunteers when they begin their positions so they know their roles at the library, and evaluate them regularly to ensure they are meeting the requirements of their position and to assure them that their work is competent and valued.

Describe working hours and other conditions of employment (e.g. vacation time, leaves for illness or bereavement) clearly in board policy. Note that some working conditions may be required by other employment legislation.

If staff members have a grievance with another staff member or board member, a grievance procedure can help both parties to better understand their differences and work towards a resolution.

Because library boards are corporations independent of the municipalities that formed them, if the municipality provides human resources services or benefits to the board (e.g. shared benefits plan, human resources support) then this relationship should be governed by a written agreement. If this is the case, the board's personnel policy should be consistent with this agreement. Please refer to PLSB's document *Board-Municipality Agreements Questions to Ask* for more information about drafting board-municipality agreements.

Procedure Considerations

Ensure volunteers have significant tasks that enhance the services and capabilities of the library. Volunteers who do not have meaningful work often leave their positions quickly.

The library board evaluates the library manager. This is usually done via a committee, which may include the board chair or whichever member of the board is assigned as the liaison between the library manager and the board. The library manager is responsible for the evaluation of all other library staff and non-board volunteers.

Library staff first bring their grievances to the library manager or their direct supervisor. The library manager brings their grievances to the board or a designated board committee. If the grievance is with a particular member or members of the board, those members do not review the grievance and excuse themselves from all discussions and decisions regarding the grievance.

Policy Samples: Personnel

Personnel Policy

Conditions of Employment

1. The library manager is supervised by the library board acting as a whole, not by individual board members. The board chair is the primary contact person between the library board and the library manager, and provides guidance and direction to the library manager in between board meetings. The library manager is responsible for the supervision of all other library staff and library volunteers.
2. Hours of work need to be flexible to cover the range of library hours of opening. The library manager makes the work schedules in consultation with employees.
3. Employees are paid in accordance with the library board's approved salary grid. Each employee receives his or her initial placement on the salary grid with their letter of employment. Each employee is eligible for an annual one-step increase on the grid following a successful performance evaluation. The whole grid may receive an annual cost of living increase at the discretion of the library board during the budget process.
4. Extended benefits (e.g. drug coverage, dental coverage, extended medical benefits, short-term and long-term disability leave) are paid through the library board's extended benefits provider. The company which provides these benefits and the level of benefits provided is chosen by the library board. Employees receive information about these benefits when they are hired and when benefits provided change.
5. Full-time employees are entitled to one unpaid one hour lunch break and two paid fifteen minute breaks (normally one before lunch and one after lunch) per day. Part-time employees receive breaks in accordance with Alberta Employment Standards.
6. Full-time employees receive paid vacation time according to the following schedule:
 - a. After 1 year of service: 15 vacation days per year
 - b. After 5 years of service: 20 vacation days per year
 - c. After 10 years of service: 25 vacation days per year
7. Part-time employees receive vacation time and vacation pay in accordance with Alberta Employment Standards.
8. Vacation time is awarded on the employee's anniversary date. The chair, or if absent any other officer of the board, may approve vacation time for the library manager. The library manager or her designate approves vacation time for all other employees.

9. Employees are encouraged to use their vacation time within the year it is awarded. Up to one week of vacation time may be carried over to the next year for any employee with the approval of the board by board motion.
10. Full-time employees may take up to 10 days per year as paid sick leave, replenishing each year on the employee's anniversary date. Part-time employees earn sick leave time at the rate of one-quarter (1/4) of the number of hours in an employee's normal workweek for each calendar month in which the employee has received pay for at least twice (2) the number of hours in the employee's normal workweek. Part-time employees may claim up to 10 sick days per calendar year from these credits.
11. After the third consecutive workday absent from work, employees must produce a doctor's note.
12. Any employee may also take up to three consecutive days of paid sick leave to care for an ill family member.
13. Any employee may take up to five days bereavement leave following the death of the employee's spouse; or the death of the child, mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle, or cousin of the employee or the employee's spouse.

"Employee's spouse" includes the husband, wife, common-law spouse or same-sex spouse of the employee. "Child" includes biological children, adoptive children, or foster children.
14. If the employee must travel an extended distance to attend a funeral, additional leave may be granted at the discretion of the library manager.
15. Other unpaid leaves are granted as required by Alberta Employment Standards.

Performance Evaluation

16. The primary purpose of performance evaluation is to compare actual results with desired results and to design action plans for the future. The essence is guidance, mentoring, and development for continuing improvement. It is also an opportunity to thank employees for their efforts on behalf of the library. The library board is an employer, and so it takes steps to evaluate its employees on a regular basis.
17. All employees, including the manager, are evaluated at the end of their six-month probationary period. They complete the performance evaluation form with their supervisor once a year. However, performance conversations also take place throughout the year, as described in the performance evaluation form.
18. The library manager is evaluated by the personnel committee of the board. The personnel committee consists of three board members. The board chair should be one of the board members who sits on this committee.

19. The library manager meets with the personnel committee, and they complete the evaluation form together. The completed evaluation form is then placed in the library manager's personnel file. The chair of the personnel committee reports on the library manager's performance evaluation to the board.
20. The library manager is responsible for evaluating the other library staff. All staff interview with the library manager, and they complete the evaluation form together. The completed evaluation form is then placed in the staff member's personnel file.
21. The library manager is responsible for evaluating the library volunteers. All volunteers interview with the library manager, and they complete a written evaluation together. The completed evaluation is then placed in the volunteer's personnel file.

Grievance Procedure

22. An employee or library volunteer who has a grievance or concern related to his or her employment in the library first discusses the concern with the library manager in an attempt to resolve the matter. If an employee or volunteer has a grievance with the library manager, the employee discusses the matter with the board chair or any other member of the board.
23. If the library manager has a grievance, the manager discusses the matter with the board chair. If the manager has a grievance with the board chair, the manager discusses the matter with the vice chair or any other member of the board.
24. If the grievor and the library manager or board member cannot resolve the issue, a full written record of the concern should be made to the board within 15 days of the discussion.
25. The board will then refer this matter to the personnel committee of the board. This committee shall review the matter and make a recommendation to the board.
26. Three personnel committee members review the grievance, usually including one officer of the board. If the grievor's grievance is with a member or members of the personnel committee, that member or members shall not participate in any aspect of the review process related to that grievance, including the review and decision on the grievance by the whole board as described below. This may require the board to appoint a new member or members to the personnel committee, or for the personnel committee to choose an interim committee chair.
27. After receiving and considering the recommendation of the personnel committee, the board makes a decision regarding the grievance. A written record of this decision is forwarded to the grievor within 30 days of the original written concern being received. If the grievance is with a member of the board, that board member shall abstain from reviewing or voting on this matter.

28. If the response or decision of the board is unsatisfactory to the grievor, he has the right to appeal to other organizations as applicable:
- a. Alberta Employment Standards: Contact for issues related to hours of work, holiday pay, days off, maternity and parental leave, overtime hours, vacations, wage payment, and employee termination.
 - b. Occupational Health & Safety: Contact for issues related to workplace safety, including working alone.
 - c. Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta: Contact to make a request for your personal information under the FOIP act. For more information about the FOIP act, contact Service Alberta.
 - d. Alberta Human Rights Commission: Contact for questions regarding discrimination in the workplace.

Sample Employee Performance Evaluation Form

Date:

Assessment Period:

Employee Name:

Position:

Reviewer's Name(s):

PART A: Performance Objectives and Accountability

The employee and the reviewer(s) complete the first three columns at the beginning of the assessment period. The employee and the reviewer(s) work together to describe the employee's individual performance objectives for the next year, including measures and targets. Complete the last column at the end of the performance period. Add more rows to this table as needed, but try to assign employees no more than three to five objectives per year.

Before completing this section, complete the results column in the previous year's performance evaluation and reflect on those objectives and results.

<u>OBJECTIVES</u>	<u>PLAN OF SERVICE</u>	<u>MEASURES</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>
What do you and your supervisor agree you will work to achieve?	How does this objective tie into your board's plan of service?	How will you know you've achieved your goals?	What did you achieve?

PART B: Conversations Throughout The Year

The employee and his or her supervisor complete this section throughout the year. Performance management is an ongoing conversation between the employee (you), and your supervisor. Use this section to record ongoing discussions with your supervisor throughout the year, whether they are informal and spontaneous or scheduled and focused.

Conversation topics normally include:

- Your progress in fulfilling your objectives.
- Problems you've encountered, how you dealt with them, and what you learned from the experience.
- Issues you're dealing with and how your supervisor can provide support.
- Constructive feedback on your performance and how your supervisor can provide support.
- Your learning and career goals and how your supervisor can provide support.

This section is for the benefit of you and your supervisor. You can record as many or as few conversations as you like. You can write as much or as little as you like. Review these conversations with your reviewer(s) at the end of the performance period. Add more rows to this table as needed.

<u>Conversation Date</u>	<u>Key Discussion Points</u>

PART C: Reflection

The employee and the reviewer use this section to reflect on the previous year.

Employee Reflection: Summarize your work activities over the previous year. What accomplishments do you enjoy the most, or are most proud of? What did you learn? What will you focus on next year? Is there anything you would like support with?

Reviewer Reflection: What are the key results or accomplishments demonstrated by the employee over the past year? What could the employee improve on? What will the employee focus on next year?

PART D: Professional Development

Identify any courses, workshops, or other training taken by the employee over the past year:

Identify any training or development activities that the employee wants to take or that the reviewer recommends that they take:

The employee and the reviewer(s) acknowledge that this assessment has been reviewed and discussed by signing and dating below.

Employee Signature

Print Name

Date

Reviewer Signature

Print Name

Date

Reviewer Signature

Print Name

Date

Sample Library Manager Job Description

General Description

The library manager is responsible for implementing the board's plan of service through consistent operations across all library service points, and for all areas of library service and operation in coordination with library staff as necessary. This involves planning, developing, managing, organizing, evaluating, and actively engaging in the day-to-day functioning of the [name of municipality] Library Board's library (or libraries). The library manager will operate within the framework of the [name of municipality] Library Board's goals and objectives, policies, directives, budget, and the *Libraries Act* and Libraries Regulation. The library manager is committed to upholding the Canadian Federation of Library Association's position statements on [Intellectual Freedom](#) and [Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Reporting Structure

Position reports to: [Name] Library Board. The board chair shall serve as the liaison between the board and the library manager between board meetings.

Reports to position: All other library employees and library volunteers report to the library manager *[Or list direct reports, if any]*.

Responsibilities

1. The Library Board

- a. Provides regular reports to the board on all matters essential to the effective functioning of the service points and the board.
- b. Provides professional expertise, prompt and accurate library information and opinions to the board.
- c. Assists board chair in identifying assignments to working committees of the board and developing board leadership.
- d. Recommends policy for consideration by the board.
- e. Prepares library annual reports.
- f. Prepares other reports and assignments as directed by the board and/or required by municipal, provincial and federal agencies.
- g. Ensures adequate administrative support to the board for:
 - i. Board meeting agendas
 - ii. Board information packages
 - iii. All correspondence, reports and information required by the board

- iv. Complete and accurate minutes of the regular board meetings and committee meetings, with the board secretary
 - v. Administrative duties regarding contractual agreements
 - h. Participates in board and committee activities as required.
 - i. Orients new board members to library operations.
 - j. Attends board meetings. Attends board committee meetings as necessary.
 - k. Maintains a good working relationship with the library board.
2. Personnel Administration
- a. Responsible for hiring, supervising, coaching, evaluating and dismissing staff in accordance with board policy.
 - b. Maintains appropriate performance appraisal system for employees. Conducts reviews at the end of all probationary periods as required.
 - c. Determines appropriate hours of work.
 - d. Arranges staff work schedules for the purpose of providing fair and adequate staff coverage during the hours of library operation.
 - e. Ensures completion of time sheets.
 - f. Receives and handles staff grievances in accordance with board policy.
 - g. Recruits, trains and evaluates library volunteers.
 - h. Plans for and implements ongoing staff development.
 - i. Sees staff morale, teamwork and fairness as priorities and a requirement for good community relations and perception.
 - j. Maintains a high level of morale, dealing immediately with concerns and utilizing staff members in problem solving activities for the betterment of the group as a whole.
 - k. Assists board in the maintenance and development of policy relating to personnel matters, including developing and reviewing job descriptions.
3. Planning and Policy Development
- a. Leads the execution of the board's plan of service.
 - b. Prepares long and short-term program plans and proposals in consultation with the board, staff, volunteers, and other community organizations.

- c. Establishes operational program objectives, based on board directions.
 - d. Establishes ongoing plans for existing library activities.
 - e. Ensures consistency in policies and operations, to the greatest extent feasible, across service points.
 - f. Leads evaluation of existing library programs.
 - g. Compiles necessary statistics.
 - h. Maintains an atmosphere of continuous improvement.
 - i. Advises and assists the board in developing goals, objectives, and policies.
 - j. Assists the board in planning for comprehensive library services to the communities.
 - k. Interprets board policies to staff and to the general public.
 - l. Establishes and updates, as needed, efficient procedures to implement the policies adopted by the board.
 - m. Monitors and evaluates policies and procedures; researches, formulates and recommends alternative courses of action to board.
 - n. Ensures legislatively-required policies are in place and assists board in development of these policies as necessary.
4. Financial Administration
- a. Administers the approved budget and monitors day-to-day financial operations.
 - b. Researches sources for funding, completing grant applications, soliciting donations, etc.
 - c. Approves expenditures, reviewing and verifying invoices in order to pay all outstanding accounts, etc.
 - d. Maintains an accurate accounting system, keeping accurate records of financial transactions, supplying monthly financial reports to the board.
 - e. Puts together all monthly financial records including all revenue and expenditures.
 - f. Attends meetings of the board finance committee, which drafts the annual budget for review by the full board.
 - g. No later than January 31 of each calendar year, delivers books, records and accounts of the preceding year to the auditor.

5. Library Service and Program Duties

- a. Responsible for assessing and monitoring the needs of the community. Responsible for developing and implementing services to meet these needs.
- b. Responsible for training staff in all areas of library service.
- c. In collaboration with Library staff, monitors and evaluates performance of programs and services, the changing demographics and needs of the community, as well as trends in the industry to best serve the community. Proactively manages the provision of all services as outlined below:
 - i. Reference Services: Supplying information, answering reference queries, readers' advisory, informational programming, outreach, resource sharing, multilingual services, tours, school visits, etc.
 - ii. Circulation Services: Loans, reserves, renewals, fines, overdue fines, interlibrary loans, shut-in services, etc.
 - iii. Programs: Planning, promotion and implementation of Library programs including children's story hours, Summer Reading Programs, special events, etc.
 - iv. Collection Development / Maintenance: Selection and acquisition of print and non-print materials, supplies, equipment and gifts (according to board policy), overseeing weeding, repair and inventory. Developing collections and access which responds to the evolving needs of all patrons as identified in plan of service.
 - v. Technical Services: Cataloguing, classification, organization and processing of all materials.
- d. Coordinates network services delivery in cooperation with regional library system (*if applicable*).

6. Promotion and Public Relations

- a. Positively represents the Library at community functions, conferences, meetings and within the library community as appropriate. Promotes increased public awareness of the Library.
- b. Plans, develops and implements effective public relations programs to serve the community.
- c. Coordinates all Library correspondence and communications as appropriate.
- d. Maintains positive relations and partnerships with partner libraries.

7. Technical Responsibilities

- a. Maintains the accuracy and currency of the Library website and redesigns the website as needed.
- b. Trains staff on current technologies and encourages and supports staff in keeping up to date with emerging technologies.

8. Other Professional Responsibilities

- a. Builds strategic partnerships with the municipality and community organizations.
- b. Participates in the activities of the library system, and attends library system meetings.
- c. Participates in the activities of relevant professional library organizations.
- d. Keeps abreast of current developments in library services and programs through attendance at training workshops, seminars and conferences as budget allows.
- e. Assumes other duties as required.
- f. Oversees property maintenance where applicable.

Skills Required

Effective interpersonal skills are required in order to work effectively with the board, staff, volunteers, and the community. Specific qualities include the following:

- Ability to act as a liaison between board and staff.
- Ability to interpret board policy decisions to staff.
- Demonstrated ability to think creatively and develop plans of action, carrying plans through to successful completion.
- Demonstrated organizational skills, with an ability to recognize and set priorities, and use initiative and independent judgment in a wide variety of situations.
- Demonstrated leadership and mentorship abilities.
- Ability to select, supervise and evaluate staff, and assess training and development needs.
- Ability to motivate and lead staff to provide exemplary library service.
- Demonstrated ability to build strategic partnerships and community coalitions, and to foster positive relationships.
- Knowledge of library information systems and related software; proficiency with computers, technology, and library-related software.

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to communicate effectively and maintain a good working relationship with staff and internal and external partners.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively.
- Knowledge of accounting and financial administration.

Qualifications

- A Master in Library and Information Studies degree from an American Library Association (ALA)-accredited post-secondary institution.
- ## years of experience working in libraries (*depending on role.*)
- Criminal Record and Child Welfare Check (or Vulnerable Sector Check).
- Valid driver's licence and reliable vehicle.
- Canadian citizen or able to work in Canada.
- Ability to work evening and weekend shifts as required.
- Valid driver's licence as travel is required between service points on occasion.

Sample Library Volunteer Job Description: Volunteer Shelver

Purpose

The volunteer shelver at [name] Public Library assists library staff in reshelving returned library materials in the correct order.

Conditions of Volunteer Position

Position reports to: Library manager

Location: The volunteer shelver works at the main branch of the [name] Public Library.

Length of appointment: The volunteer shelver works throughout the year, primarily on evenings and weekends.

Time commitment: The volunteer shelver works up to 15 hours a month.

Key Responsibilities

The volunteer shelver:

- Checks the book drop regularly for returned materials and returns them to the shelving cart.
- Reshelves returned books and other materials in the correct Dewey Decimal order.
- Brings items from the shelves that are in poor condition to library staff for possible weeding.
- Answers library users' directional questions. Refers library users to other Library staff members for other assistance.

Qualifications

No previous library experience required. Customer service experience and knowledge of the Dewey Decimal system is an asset.

Support Provided

A one hour orientation to the layout and structure of the library, and the process of shelving, will be provided. The volunteer shelver is always in the library with a library employee who can answer any questions from library users that the volunteer shelver cannot answer. Library staff are always available to answer questions and provide other assistance as needed.

Benefits Provided

All volunteer shelvers will receive a free individual library card annually for the duration of their volunteer service. Volunteer shelvers are recognized with other library volunteers at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Lunch.

Collection Development

Description from Libraries Regulation

“Selection, acquisition, purchase, and disposition of library resources, including a policy regarding gifts and donations.” (Libraries Regulation 7(2)(b))

Policy Considerations

This required policy defines how library boards select and acquire new materials for their collection, and how they select and dispose of older or unsuitable materials within the collection. It also must include a section on both material gifts and donations and financial gifts and donations designated for collection development.

A library collection provides resources to assist individuals in their pursuit of educational, intellectual, and recreational enrichment in their lives. While an effective library collection maintains a balance of many subjects and perspectives, ultimately the library board is responsible for meeting the needs of the community, as identified in the community needs assessment and plan of service. The collection development policy provides staff with the necessary guidelines to assist them in the development of the collection to meet library goals and inform the public about the principles by which materials are selected for inclusion in the library collection.

Libraries use budgeted collection funds to purchase library materials. When purchasing materials, library staff may consider many factors including but not limited to:

- Plan of service and the service goals and objectives
- Population demographics including relative numbers of different age groups, incomes, education levels and other factors which influence people’s preferences and needs
- Age and size of existing collection
- Local demand
- Cultural representation to meet community needs
- Relevance to Indigenous communities
- Accessibility to print-disabled library users
- Access to other collections in the community and beyond (e.g. at neighboring libraries, through existing electronic resources)
- Membership in collection consortia such as The Regional Automation Consortium (TRAC) (if applicable)

Weeding is an essential part of collection management. A large collection is not necessarily a good collection. Discard materials that are damaged, unnecessary or outdated, but also take age, frequency of use and physical condition of materials into account when weeding.

It is best practice that donated items be held to the same standard as new materials purchased for the library. Do not accept donated materials that are outdated or in poor physical condition or do not otherwise meet the board's criteria for material selection.

More information about collection development can be found in [Best Practices for Public Libraries In Alberta](#).

While not required by law, most collection development policies contain a section on intellectual freedom, which is the right of citizens to read or view what they want without judgment or coercion. Intellectual freedom is a central value of libraries throughout Canada and across the world.

Many collection development policies state that they support the [Canadian Federation of Library Associations' \(CFLA\) Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](#) or the [Library Association of Alberta's \(LAA\) Statement on Intellectual Freedom](#), and have policies about how to respond to challenged materials. A sample challenged materials form and copies of the CFLA's and LAA's intellectual freedom statements are included in this section.

Procedure Considerations

If possible, consider a wide range of vendors when purchasing library materials, as opposed to one or two large vendors. Small bookstores, independent presses, or book fairs can provide access to many materials that may not be available from large vendors. Purchasing from these smaller vendors can allow more flexibility in choice of materials and promote diversity in the collection.

To make weeding more manageable, divide the collection into sections and establish a regular weeding schedule. It is best practice that approximately 10% of the collection be weeded each year, and the entire collection be reviewed and weeded every three to five years. Review collection statistics, and consider removing low-circulating materials from the collection. Weeding does not necessarily need to be done according to pre-made schedules. Weed damaged or outdated materials as they circulate, and train and authorize staff to do this on an ongoing basis.

Do not be afraid to turn down material donations from significant community members if they do not fit the collection policy or are in poor physical condition.

Policy Sample: Collection Development

Collection Development Policy

Background

Collection development and assessment is an ongoing consideration for public libraries. It arises from the formal and informal assessment of educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community. This collection development policy strives to meet the changing interests and concerns of the community.

Selection

1. The library manager is responsible for the selection of library materials.
2. Materials are selected to meet the information and entertainment needs of the residents of the community, and to meet the goals of the library board's plan of service.
3. The library manager uses sources such as trade publications, reviews, requests by users, and other resources to develop the library collection.
4. The library manager evaluates and selects materials according to the following criteria:
 - a. Currency of information
 - b. Popular demand
 - c. Relevance to plan of service and the service goals and objectives
 - d. Relevance to community needs and interests, considering population demographics including relative numbers of different age groups, incomes, education levels and other factors which influence people's preferences and needs
 - e. Cultural representation to meet community needs
 - f. Relevance to local Indigenous communities
 - g. Accessibility to print-disabled library users
 - h. Popularity of format (e.g. DVD over VHS)
 - i. Price and availability
 - j. Space considerations
 - k. Relationship to existing collection
 - l. Canadian content, especially where such is critical, such as law, government or finance

- m. Availability of item or similar material elsewhere (e.g. other libraries, online licensed databases)
- n. Durability (e.g. durable binding and paper)

An item need not meet all of the above criteria to be acceptable. Multiple copies may be purchased to meet the need for high-demand titles.

Donations

- 5. The board encourages donations of books and other materials to the [name] Public Library. Such gifts are greatly appreciated.
- 6. The same principles of selection are applied to gifts as purchased materials. In general, acceptable material donations are less than three years old and in good condition, i.e. not musty, mouldy, damp, worn, malodourous, cracked, etc.
- 7. The library manager may consider spending funds donated for collection development on materials or topics specified by the donor. However, the library manager has final authority over the use of funds donated for collection development.
- 8. All material donations become the exclusive property of the [name of municipality] Library Board and are not returned.
- 9. Material donations may be used as the library sees fit, and may or may not become part of the collection. Material donations are accepted with the understanding that if the library does not add them to the collection, the library may at any time dispose of donations in any way it deems appropriate.

Material donations that are not added to the collection are generally sold at the library's regular book sale, donated to another library or organization (e.g. schools, seniors' centres), or recycled.

- 10. Receipts are not issued for donated materials or funds.

Weeding

- 11. Materials that no longer fit the stated mission and service priorities of the board, library and community are withdrawn from the collection.
- 12. Materials are examined regularly to determine suitability for the collection on the following criteria:
 - a. physical condition and appearance (e.g. damage, markings in the book, yellow pages, outdated cover art)
 - b. currency and accuracy of subject matter

- c. usage (i.e. not checked out in 3 years)
 - d. relevance to the needs and interests of the community
 - e. availability elsewhere (e.g. other libraries, online licensed databases)
13. The library manager generally keeps materials of local interest (i.e. local histories, local authors, and other materials specifically relating to the community) in the collection as long as possible, so long as the materials are still in good physical condition and the information in them is still accurate.
14. The library manager considers replacement copies when a title is withdrawn from the collection due to loss, damage, or wear, but still fits selection criteria.
15. Weeded materials are disposed of at the discretion of the library manager, generally by donation to another library or organization (e.g. schools, seniors' centres), sale to the public, or recycling.
16. Hazardously outdated materials (i.e. medical or legal materials more than five years old) are not be sold to the public or donated and instead are recycled or destroyed. Following outdated medical or legal information in a used book could cause physical harm or legal problems for members of the public.

Intellectual Freedom and Challenged Materials

17. The [name of municipality] Library Board subscribes to the *Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries* of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations, as found attached to this policy.
18. The [name of municipality] Library Board does not believe its role, or that of its staff, is to censor materials or act in any way as the supervisor of public morals.
19. If an individual strongly objects to an item, he/she may complete a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form, and submit this form to the library manager for review by the board. Only requests for reconsideration submitted on this form are considered by the board.
20. The board reviews the written request, usually at its next regular board meeting.
21. The procedure for receiving requests for reconsideration of library materials is as follows:
- a. Discussion of complaint with the library manager.
 - b. Review Selection, Acquisition, Purchase, and Disposition of Resources policy.
 - c. Provision of Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form (attached) to complainant.

- d. Informing board chair.
- e. Forming material review committee (2 members of the board and the library manager).
- f. Committee review of material, including:
 - i. Reading and/or viewing the challenged item.
 - ii. Seeking out and reading reviews and other evaluations of the challenged item.
 - iii. Determining if challenged item meets the Selection, Acquisition, Purchase, and Disposition of Resources policy.
 - iv. Providing written report of committee recommendation to the board.
- g. Communicating board decision to complainant in writing.

Sample Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

Date of Request:

Author/Creator of the item:

Title of the item:

Item format:

- Book
- Picture Book
- Graphic Novel
- DVD
- Audiobook
- Digital resource
- Other (please specify):

Request initiated by:

Address:

Phone number(s):

Email:

Requester represents (choose one):

- Self
- Name of group/organization:

1. Did you read/listen to/view the entire item? Yes / No

If not, what parts did you review?:

2. To what in the item do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages or scenes)

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading/viewing/listening to this item?

4. Do you believe there is there anything positive about this item? If so, what is positive?

5. Have you read any reviews of this item by literary critics/reviewers? What did they think of this item?

6. What would you like the library board to do about this item?

7. Have you read the library board's Selection, Acquisition, Purchase, and Disposition of Resources policy?
 - Yes
 - No

Requester's Signature:

Library Manager Signature:

Canadian Federation of Library Associations Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries

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

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations 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.

Library Association of Alberta Statement on Intellectual Freedom

Every Albertan, as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and as supported in the Alberta Bill of Rights and Alberta's Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act, has the fundamental right to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of democracy and society in Alberta.

Libraries in Alberta have a fundamental responsibility to protect and promote intellectual freedom.

Alberta libraries have a responsibility to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge, opinion, creativity and intellectual activity including those which some elements of society consider unconventional, unpopular, unorthodox or unacceptable.

To this end, Alberta libraries shall acquire and make available, through purchase or resource sharing, the widest variety of materials and communication media (including the Internet) that support the intellectual and recreational pursuits of both their communities and individual Albertans.

Alberta libraries have a responsibility to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all of the library's facilities and services to any Albertan who needs them regardless of age, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, social or political views, national origin, economic status, location and/or level of information literacy.

Alberta libraries provide service based upon the right of each Albertan to judge individually on questions of politics, religion and morality. Parents have the responsibility for determining their children's access to all library materials.

Alberta library employees do not need to endorse or support every idea or presentation contained in the materials they make available. Alberta library employees do have the responsibility to insure that all perspectives are represented in their collections.

Alberta libraries should resist all efforts to limit their ability to protect and promote intellectual freedom, while at the same time recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups. All requests for removal or limitation of access to materials must, however, follow the library's written procedures for reconsidering materials.

Resource Sharing

Description from Libraries Regulation

“Resource sharing, including participation in a provincial resource sharing network and the conditions that apply to the acquisition of library resources and information from other sources, including inter-library loans and information in electronic databases.” (Libraries Regulation 7(2)(c))

Policy Considerations

This required policy defines how library boards share resources with other libraries in the province. Resource sharing means making available to other libraries the library materials owned by a board, the information contained in those materials, and/or the staff expertise required to locate and provide the information or materials. The province supports the Alberta Public Library Network. This network enables sharing of library resources and collections, staffing expertise, technology and general support. The goal of the network is to provide equitable access to public library resources province wide for all Albertans. For network participant eligibility criteria, please see the provincial [Public Library Network Policy](#).

The Alberta Public Library Network includes interlibrary loan service linking public libraries in the province to each other. This policy must contain a statement regarding participation in provincial resource sharing through the Public Library Network, your local library system (if applicable), and other provincial resource-sharing programs (e.g., ME Libraries). This policy must also coordinate with the provincial Public Library Network policy and its associated operational policies in order for the board to benefit from participation in the Public Library Network.

Resource sharing is a mutually beneficial relationship that requires mutual reciprocity. Make library resources available as defined in the provincial [Resource Sharing Operational Policy](#). When borrowing from other libraries, ensure mutual respect and trust with lending libraries by following the policies of the lending library. Provide loan periods that are sufficient to allow for travel time, special circumstances, etc.

Resource sharing is not a substitute for effective local collection development. Make sure that your local collection continues to meet community needs by maintaining the collection as described in your library board’s collection development policy. Also ensure that the library has exhausted local or library system resources before using the resource sharing network.

Provide users with the ability to place interlibrary loan requests. However, treat all interlibrary loan requests as confidential. Note that section 36(1)(3)(d) of the *Libraries Act* prohibits charging library users for interlibrary loan services. Treat Alberta-Wide Borrowing with the same consideration as local users.

Track interlibrary loan requests and resource sharing statistics. This informs collection development and the completion of the annual report.

Procedure Considerations

Consult your local library system and Public Library Services Branch for information about procedures the library must follow for interlibrary loans.

Check for interlibrary loan requests every open day, and process them promptly.

Provide staff expertise, training, equipment, and resources to promote and support interlibrary loan service. Maintain working knowledge of resource sharing tools and interlibrary loan software. Ensure staff members follow resource sharing procedures, guidelines, and policies.

Policy Sample: Resource Sharing

Resource Sharing Policy

1. The [name of municipality] Library Board shares resources and meets the requirements of the Alberta Public Library Network provincial policy.
2. The board actively participates in resource-sharing programs and services, including but not limited to the provincial interlibrary loan program and ME Libraries.
3. The board does not charge another public library for interlibrary loan service.
4. The board does not charge a library user for interlibrary loan service with public libraries. However, the board may be charged for interlibrary loan service with academic libraries or libraries outside the province. The board may seek to recover these costs from library users who borrow materials from academic or out of province libraries.
5. The board publicizes the interlibrary loan and ME Library services to its library users through newspaper articles, posters and brochures, presentations to groups and organizations, and displays within the community.
6. Training of staff in resource sharing is the responsibility of the board and library management, in partnership with the [name] Library System and Public Library Services Branch. Training is carried out through a combination of one-on-one training, on-site visits, online training, workshops, procedure manuals, and conferences as per the board's continuing education policy and procedures.

Provision of Resources to Persons Unable to Use Conventional Print

Description from Libraries Regulation

“Provision of library resources to persons unable to use conventional print resources, including provision in co-operation with community agencies.” (Libraries Regulation 7(2)(d))

Policy Considerations

This required policy defines how library boards provide resources to persons who are unable to use conventional print materials, and how they will partner with other organizations to provide these materials.

As public spaces funded by public tax dollars, public libraries have a responsibility to ensure they are accessible to everyone. Accessibility in public libraries means ensuring access to the library and its resources, including its collection, services, and staff. Removing barriers that prevent any member of the community from accessing resources is essential. Libraries should strive to ensure that all members of a community have access to everything the public library offers.

A print or perceptual disability is defined in Section 2 of the *Copyright Act* as "a disability that prevents or inhibits a person from reading or hearing a literary, musical, dramatic or artistic work in its original format, and includes such a disability resulting from severe or total impairment of sight or hearing or the inability to focus one's eyes, the inability to hold or manipulate a book, or an impairment relating to comprehension." This could include a person with an auditory or visual disability (e.g. deaf or blind), a physical disability (e.g. missing limb), or a cognitive disability (e.g. dyslexia). It may also include individuals with a temporary impairment (e.g. limb fracture).

The board's Provision of Resources to Persons Unable to Use Conventional Print policy includes a commitment to adequately plan for and fund services to library users with print disabilities. The policy also states that the board will procure accessible-format material, either directly, in partnership with other community organizations, or through a service provider such as the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS) or the Centre for Equitable Library Service (CELA).

The policy states that the board will secure resources (both physical and virtual) for a variety of reading preferences, ensuring options and choice for readers, including access to large print, braille, audiobooks, DAISY books, and electronic files in multiple of formats for user download. The policy also ensures that procurement of any electronic resources considers usability for people using assistive technology.

Resource provision is only one aspect of ensuring public library spaces and services are accessible. While it is not required under the Libraries Regulation, boards may also wish to

consider how else to serve print-disabled patrons in this policy, such as making accommodations in programs, space design, and marketing. Library boards and staff are encouraged to consult [*Best Practices for Public Libraries in Alberta*](#) for more information about accessibility for public libraries.

Procedure Considerations

All staff have some training in both accessibility principles and resources. Library boards ensure that library staff have taken disability awareness training, since staff members are often the first point of contact for users entering the library.

All staff are trained in using the accessible resources and devices that the library offers.

A staff member is appointed by library management to be the accessibility advocate for the library. This is someone who cares about accessibility, sees things through the “accessibility lens,” and who is willing to be trained and be an inclusivity advocate.

Board members are invited and encouraged to participate in disability awareness training.

Policy Sample: Persons Unable to Use Conventional Print

Provision of Resources and Service to Those Unable to Use Conventional Print Policy

1. A library user unable to use conventional print may have a print disability. A print or perceptual disability is defined in Section 2 of the *Copyright Act* as "a disability that prevents or inhibits a person from reading or hearing a literary, musical, dramatic or artistic work in its original format, and includes such a disability resulting from severe or total impairment of sight or hearing or the inability to focus one's eyes, the inability to hold or manipulate a book, or an impairment relating to comprehension."
2. The [name of municipality] Library Board believes library users unable to use conventional print materials should have full access to library services and programs. It is essential that library services for library users with print disabilities be incorporated into all aspects of library service.
3. Services to library users with print disabilities shall be incorporated into library planning, including the plan of service. Every library user with a print disability has unique needs, and a broad range of library users with print disabilities live in every community. The library board shall plan its services to meet the needs of a broad range of library users with print disabilities.
4. Services to library users with print disabilities shall be treated as essential core services during the budgeting process, and adequate funds shall be allotted to these services.
5. In addition to procuring its own resources and offering services, the [name of municipality] Library Board shall work with or use the resources of other local, regional, provincial, and national organizations to provide services to library users with print disabilities. Such organizations may include:
 - a. The regional library system
 - b. Public Library Services Branch, Government of Alberta
 - c. Local community services organizations (e.g. Alberta Health Services, schools, social services)
 - d. Regional or national organizations [e.g. Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA), Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS), Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD)]
 - e. Other organizations as required

6. One staff member is chosen by library management to be the Accessibility Advocate for the library. This staff person is passionate about accessibility, sees library materials and services from an accessibility viewpoint and is trained to be an inclusivity advocate.
7. All staff members shall be trained on how to provide services to library users with print disabilities. While the Accessibility Advocate takes the lead in providing services to library users with print disabilities, they should not be the only one who knows how to provide these services.
8. The [name] Library Board recognizes that people with print disabilities read in a variety of ways. The library board shall endeavor to provide materials in a format appropriate to the library user, from whatever source is available. Formats may include: talking books (e.g. Books on CD, DAISY books, audiobooks), braille, ebraille, EPUB, etext, Word, large print, etc.
9. Any library user who self-declares that they have a print or perceptual disability may access the library's accessible-format collection. The parent or legal guardian of a dependent library user may also declare on that user's behalf.
10. Library staff shall incorporate the needs of library users with print disabilities when planning library programs. Staff shall take whatever steps are reasonably possible to ensure library users with print disabilities are able to participate in all library programs, and shall regularly evaluate programs to ensure they are being delivered effectively to those with print disabilities.
11. The library board shall ensure that the library building is accessible to people with print disabilities by consulting with print-disabled members of its community, as well as adhering to building codes and design standards (e.g. Barrier-free design). The library board shall budget for appropriate building renovations and upgrades when necessary, but may also consider smaller changes such as accessible desks and clear, glare-free, easy-to-read signage or tactile signage.
12. The library board shall promote library services to persons with print disabilities through local media and partner organizations. Services may be promoted in standard and alternative formats, depending on the needs of the audience.

Conditions Under Which Library Resources Will Be Loaned

Description from Libraries Regulation

“The terms and conditions under which library resources will be loaned to members of the library for use in a location other than the library.” (Libraries Regulation 7(2)(e))

Policy Considerations

This required policy defines how library boards will loan resources to patrons for use outside the library.

For many people, the loan of materials is the service most commonly associated with public libraries, and usually the most popular service offered by the public library. It is essential that the library deliver this service well.

This policy should focus on getting materials in the hands of library users at a time and place convenient to them, with as few restrictions as possible. This policy should also facilitate the return of materials to the library in good condition and in a timely manner, so they can be borrowed again by another library user and do not have to be frequently replaced.

Most libraries have some materials that are not lent to the public, either because they are fragile, difficult to replace, or heavily used in the library. The policy should indicate which materials are excluded from the general lending policy, being careful not to contravene the provincial Resource Sharing Operational policy.

While loan periods, renewal periods, and fees for damaged and overdue books (if applicable) may be listed in this policy for information, they should also be listed in the board’s safety and use bylaws so that they are legally enforceable. Refer to Section 3 of this document for more information about drafting and maintaining safety and use bylaws.

Procedure Considerations

It is best practice to require patrons to present their library card when checking out materials, and for patrons to stipulate who else may use their library card in written format, to protect patron privacy.

Ensure that all library staff members responsible for circulation are trained in proper materials check-in and check-out procedures.

Policy Sample: Loan of Resources

Conditions Under Which Library Resources Will Be Loaned Policy

The intent of this policy is to make the widest possible selection of library items available to all users of the [name] Public Library, and to facilitate the return of library items in good condition and in a timely manner. The [name of municipality] Library Board will uphold its obligations under the Alberta Public Library Network Policy.

1. A cardholder must present his or her library card to borrow materials. Cardholders must give prior written approval for anyone else to pick up materials on their behalf.
2. As per the library board bylaws, an eligible cardholder may borrow a maximum of fifty (50) circulating items at any one time, of which not more than five (5) may be items from the Video collection.
3. Books, audiobooks, and CDs may be borrowed for a period of three (3) weeks.
4. Items from the Video collection (i.e. DVDs / Blu-Rays), and circulating magazines may be borrowed for a period of one (1) week.
5. Digital resources not provided by the library system may be borrowed for a period of time as stipulated by the content provider.
6. Interlibrary Loan (ILL) items may normally be borrowed for a period of three (3) weeks. This loan period may vary for out-of-system loans, as stipulated by the loaning library.
7. Items in the reference collection or items deemed by the library manager to be irreplaceable may not be borrowed.
8. A maximum of two renewals per item are permitted.
 - a. An item may not be renewed if another cardholder in the library system has placed a hold on that item.
 - b. Renewals may not be possible for ILL items.
 - c. Extended due dates may be granted at the discretion of the library manager or staff designated by the library manager in the event of holiday travel, anticipated hospitalization or recuperation, or other extenuating circumstances.
9. Renewals may be made in person, over the phone, or via the Library's online catalogue.
10. It is the responsibility of cardholders to ensure items are returned on time. As per the library board bylaws, overdue fees are as follows:
 - a. Overdue fees shall only be charged to adult cardholders. No overdue fees will be charged to child or young adult cardholders.

- b. Overdue fees for adult cardholders shall be assessed at \$0.25 per item per day. No adult cardholder shall accrue more than \$5.00 in overdue fees until the outstanding fees are repaid.

11. Cardholders are encouraged to inform the library immediately about lost items.

- a. As per the library board bylaws, the cardholder will be charged the purchase price of the book as listed in the library's integrated library system (ILS).
- b. Replacement charges may be waived if a replacement copy in new or pristine condition is provided by the cardholder.
- c. If an item is found by a cardholder after the replacement costs have been paid, that item becomes the property of the cardholder and cannot be returned to the library for reimbursement.

Hours of Service

Description from Libraries Regulation

“Hours of service at each library service point.” (Libraries Regulation 7(2)(f))

Policy Considerations

This required policy defines the hours of service at every service point the library board operates. It is important that public libraries encourage all residents of the community to use the services and materials that they provide. While many library services are now delivered online, many library boards have a goal of being a community gathering place, or a comfortable place for library users to read, visit, or learn. An important part of achieving these goals is being open at times that are convenient to library users.

Libraries are open to the public as much as possible, within the limits of community expectations, budget, and staff. Hours of opening are consistent; predictable; easy for users to understand; and include a mixture of daytime, evening, and weekend hours. (Evening hours are hours of opening after 4:00 PM). Hours of service for each service point, including mobile libraries, are identified separately. Weekends adjacent to statutory holidays have open hours to allow for access in lieu of being closed for the statutory holiday (if local demand exists).

If available, mobile library service is provided at times convenient to the needs of the local community, including evenings and weekends. The length of mobile library stops is determined according to the number of potential people to be served. While it is recommended that stops be a minimum of 30 minutes in length, local factors are taken into consideration when determining the locations and lengths of stops.

Hours of opening are based on an assessment of both current and potential library users. Factors to be considered when assessing hours include:

- surveys, users’ requests
- book drop usage
- attendance counts
- opening hours of neighbouring libraries

These factors should also be considered when determining seasonal or summer hours, if applicable.

Once hours of opening are set in policy, they are annually reviewed as part of the budgeting and plan of service process. Open hours are adjusted as needed to take into account changing demographics and circumstances, e.g. the nature of the community is taken into account - young people, families with children, seniors, shift workers, commuters, etc.

Usually, this policy also includes a list of holidays when the library is closed, and direction on how the library manager can close the library in emergency situations.

Procedure Considerations

Hours of opening are displayed outside service points and posted on the library website.

Whenever hours of service are changed, stakeholders are properly notified well in advance. This includes library users, employees, your library system, your municipality, and Public Library Services Branch.

Ensure that required operational changes can be completed before the change in hours takes effect (e.g. changes in employee schedules).

Policy Sample: Hours of Service

Hours of Service Policy

1. The [name of municipality] Library Board sets hours of service that are convenient for members of the community.
2. The hours of service for the main branch are as follows:
 - a. Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
 - b. Tuesday, Thursday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
 - c. Saturday: 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
3. The hours of service for the satellite branch are as follows:
 - a. Monday, Wednesday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
 - b. Saturday: 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
4. Both branches are closed to the public on designated holidays including: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Heritage Day (August long weekend), Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day.
5. At their discretion, the library manager may authorize that one or both branches be closed in emergency situations (e.g. power failure, extreme weather conditions). Whenever possible, the library manager should inform the board chair or if the chair is not available at least one other board member of an emergency closure.
6. Other closures not specified in this policy are approved in advance by board motion.
7. The public is notified of library closure dates in advance, except in emergencies.

Areas Not Normally Used For Library Purposes (e.g. Meeting Spaces)

Description (from Libraries Regulation)

“The terms and conditions for use of any areas of a building managed by the board that are not normally used for library purposes, including who may use those areas.” (Libraries Regulation 7(2)(g))

Policy Considerations

This policy defines the terms under which space not normally used for library purposes can be used by the public. These areas are often known as meeting spaces. A meeting space is defined as any area within the library that may be reserved by an individual or group for a use that is not part of the library’s regular programming. The space may or may not be physically isolated (e.g., a separate room with a door); however, during the reserved time, the space is solely for the use of the party who made the reservation. The library may or may not charge a fee for use of the space but some form of reservation in advance (e.g., booking through library staff or software) is required. Use of meeting space is different than regular walk-in use of library facilities.

Many public libraries have a meeting space. The board uses this policy to ensure that any group using this space meets certain standards for use, to ensure that the space is not damaged, abused or used for inappropriate purposes.

Although the Sample Areas of the Library Not Normally Used for Library Purposes policy refers to rental fees, library boards are not required to charge a fee for the use of meeting spaces. However, even if meeting space is made available to the public free of charge the board should still note terms and conditions for use and who may use these areas in its policy.

If the library charges rental fees for its meeting space those fees may be listed here for reference purposes, but it is best that the fees are also listed in the board’s safety and use bylaws so they are legally enforceable.

Procedure Considerations

This policy is frequently made available to members of the public, so be sure that information and procedures on how to book and access the room are clear. Sample questions to ask when drafting public rental information and procedures include:

- How big is the meeting space?
- Is the meeting space physically isolated (e.g., a separate room with a door)?
- Are there any materials that the public can use with the space (e.g. tables & chairs, TV with DVD player, data projector)?

- Is there a specific staff member that is in charge of space bookings?
- How do users book the space? Is there a form for bookings?
- How do users get access to the space? Do they get a key, will a staff member let them in, or is there another method? How will they secure the space once their rental time is up?
- What conduct is expected of users? What happens if users don't follow these expectations?
- What constitutes damage? Who is responsible for the cost of repairs, if they are needed?

The library keeps a written record of reservations to avoid double booking.

Policy Sample: Meeting Spaces

Areas of the Library Not Normally Used for Library Purposes Policy

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the use of the [name] Public Library meeting room by members of the public, while ensuring that the room remains in good repair. The meeting room measures about 450 square feet, and holds about 40 people comfortably. The meeting room includes 45 chairs, 10 rectangular tables, and a whiteboard.

1. Members of the public complete and submit the appropriate form to book the library meeting room.
2. The meeting room is only available for use by the public during regular library open hours. A library staff member will open the meeting room for renters at their scheduled time.
3. As per the library bylaws, the fees for use of the meeting room are as follows. Payment is due in full at the time of booking:
 - a. Not-for-profit groups and private individuals: \$10.00 per hour.
 - b. For-profit organizations: \$20.00 per hour.
4. The board reserves the right to refuse rental requests at its discretion.
5. Renters are responsible for setting up the room for their events and returning the room to its original condition once their activity is complete.
6. Renters will not permit any actions which may be deemed a nuisance, annoyance, or contrary to any federal, or provincial law or regulation, or municipal bylaw. Renters will obey all library policies.
7. Renters are responsible for the conduct of participants at all times during their rental period and are held totally responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing lost or damaged equipment, supplies, or furnishings.

Section 3: Safety and Use Bylaws

Section 36 of the *Libraries Act* allows library boards operating a service point the option to pass safety and use bylaws. Safety and use bylaws are related to policy, but also have unique characteristics. Unlike the policies described above, a board *may* pass bylaws, but is not required to do so. The bylaws passed by a library board are legally enforceable, like a municipal bylaw. The board's safety and use bylaws help protect the library and the people and items within the library.

Note that the library board's safety and use bylaws are not municipal bylaws. The municipality passes only one bylaw related to library service: the one that establishes the library board. This bylaw is sometimes referred to as an establishment bylaw. The library board's safety and use bylaws are passed by the board itself, as defined in the *Libraries Act*.

Safety and use bylaws are also different from policies. Safety and use bylaws are legally enforceable. Policies describe rules and best practices for the library, but they cannot be legally enforced. Safety and use bylaws must be passed by board motion and then accepted by municipal council(s) to be fully passed and legally enforceable. Policies can be changed by board motion alone. For these reasons policies should broadly describe the rules and best practices for the library, but it is best that safety and use bylaws only include the terms and conditions described in the *Libraries Act*.

As per section 36 of the *Libraries Act*, the safety and use bylaws may include the terms and conditions under which:

- the public may be admitted into the building,
- library materials may be used or borrowed by members of the public, and
- borrowing privileges may be suspended or revoked

They may also include fees that are to be paid for:

- issuing a library card,
- use of those parts of the building not used for library purposes (e.g. meeting spaces)
- photocopying
- receiving information in print, electronic, or other format
- receiving, on request, a library service not normally provided by a public library (e.g. business consultation services).

Note that fees for any of the following are prohibited:

- admittance to the parts of the library building used for public library services
- using library resources on library premises
- borrowing library materials that are normally lent by the library (NOTE: this doesn't affect the ability to charge for issuing library cards.)
- receiving interlibrary loans
- consultation with library staff
- receiving basic information service.

It is best practice that bylaws are passed by three readings over at least two different meetings. This is to ensure accuracy and correctness, but it is not required. Library board bylaws may be passed by a single motion of the board

Once passed, the library board must forward a copy of the bylaws to municipal council. Council may disallow a library board's bylaws by not accepting them at council meeting. If council does not accept the bylaws they go back to the board for revision, and the revised bylaws must be re-submitted to council for acceptance at their next meeting. Because these are the board's bylaws, note that it is up to the board to make revisions to the bylaws, not municipal council. This process continues until council accepts the bylaws. Once your bylaws have been accepted by council, the bylaws become legally enforceable. The board must then submit them to PLSB.

An intermunicipal board that passes bylaws must forward a copy of its safety and use bylaws to all the councils of all the municipalities that are party to the intermunicipal agreement. All councils must accept the bylaws for them to be legal and enforceable.

Whenever the board wishes to make changes to any part of its bylaws, including any bylaw schedules, it must pass the changes by board motion and submit the bylaws to municipal council to be accepted once again.

Policy Sample: Safety and Use Bylaws

Safety and Use Bylaws of the [name of municipality] Library Board

Approved by the [name of municipality] Library Board on:

Accepted by [name of municipality] Council on:

The [name of municipality] Library Board enacts the following bylaws pursuant to the *Libraries Act*.

1. Definitions

Definitions in these bylaws shall mean:

- 1.1. board: the [name of municipality] Library Board.
- 1.2. applicant: a person applying for a library card.
- 1.3. cardholder: the registered user of a current library card.
- 1.4. cardholder categories shall include the following:
 - 1.4.1. adult: any person 18 years and older.
 - 1.4.2. young adult: any person 13 through 17 years of age.
 - 1.4.3. child: any person up to and including 12 years of age.
 - 1.4.4. family: two or more members of the same family residing in the same home.
 - 1.4.5. ME Libraries borrower: a cardholder whose card is registered in the ME Libraries program. This could include non-residents with a card from another library.
- 1.5. good standing: a cardholder whose card is active, and not suspended or revoked by the library that issued the card.
- 1.6. library manager: the person charged by the board with operation of the [name] Public Library.
- 1.7. library: the [name] Public Library.
- 1.8. library resources: any resources, regardless of format, that are held in the board's collection, or borrowed by the cardholders of the [name] Public Library.
- 1.9. loan period: the period of time, as set out in schedule B, which a cardholder may borrow library resources and includes any renewal of an original loan period.
- 1.10. ME Libraries: A provincial program that allows library cardholders to borrow materials from any library in Alberta that participates in the Alberta Public Library Network.

- 1.11.non-resident: any person who does not have a residence within the service area and does not pay property or business taxes within the service area (see "service area").
- 1.12.resident: any person who has a residence within or pays property or business taxes within the service area (see "service area").
- 1.13.service area: the [name of municipality] and the [name] divisions of the County of [name].

2. Admittance to and Conduct in the Building

- 2.1. The building is to be open free of charge to the public for library purposes at the hours posted.
- 2.2. No person using the library building shall:
 - 2.2.1. Contravene any board policy
 - 2.2.2. Create any unnecessary disturbance for other library users
 - 2.2.3. Take away any library item from the building unless the item has been properly checked out in accordance with library circulation policies and procedures.
 - 2.2.4. Solicit other library users and staff for personal, commercial, religious, or political reasons.
- 2.3. Except with the permission of the library manager, no person shall:
 - 2.3.1. Bring any animal, other than a service animal, into the building.
 - 2.3.2. Bring a wheeled vehicle or conveyance, other than a wheelchair, walker, baby carriage or stroller, into the building.
- 2.4. Persons who do not act in accordance with these bylaws shall be asked to put an end to their actions. If the action continues or the seriousness of the action justifies it, library staff will direct the person to leave the building. Library staff may also ask for outside assistance, including contacting local law enforcement officers.
- 2.5. All persons entering or otherwise using the library building shall comply with applicable public health regulations.
- 2.6. No member of the public is to be left in the library building for any purpose without a library staff person present at all times, unless that member of the public has been previously authorized to use the library building without staff present in accordance with library policies. [Name of municipality] staff shall have access to the building in relation to building concerns. Law enforcement officers or fire fighters may have access to the building in emergency situations.

3. Procedures for Acquiring a Library Card

3.1. Anyone is eligible to apply for a library card. However, non-residents are encouraged to apply for a library card at their local library.

3.2. A library card is issued upon:

3.2.1. Completion of an official [name] Public Library card application form.

3.2.2. Presentation of one piece of photo identification bearing the applicant's permanent address if an adult or young adult is applying for a card. If a child is applying for a card, a parent or legal guardian must present photo identification bearing his/her permanent address. The library may also accept a combination of other forms of identification or other documentation bearing the permanent address.

3.2.3. Payment of any applicable fees as outlined in Schedule A.

3.3. Applicants will receive a library card which:

3.3.1. is valid from the date of issue to the date of expiry, unless suspended or revoked by the library manager under these bylaws.

3.3.2. remains the property of the [name of municipality] Library Board.

3.4. A library user may participate in the ME Libraries program if the library user is a cardholder in good standing at a public library participating in the ME Libraries program.

4. Responsibilities of a Cardholder

4.1. The cardholder named on a library card will be the only person that may use the card. The cardholder may designate alternate people to access his/her library records or collect holds on their behalf.

4.2. A cardholder will return or renew any library items on or before the due date as provided in Schedule B.

4.3. A cardholder is responsible for all library items borrowed on their card and will compensate the library for all library items damaged or lost while borrowed on their card.

4.3.1. In the case of a child or young adult card, the parent or legal guardian who signed the child or young adult cardholder's application form is responsible for all library items borrowed on that library card and will compensate the library for all library items damaged or lost while borrowed on that card.

4.3.2. In the case of a library card listed on a family application form, the designated cardholder indicated on the family application form is responsible for all library items borrowed on all library cards listed on that application form, and will compensate the library for all library items damaged or lost while borrowed on those cards.

4.4. Loss or theft of a current library card must be reported immediately to the library. Cardholders are responsible for all library resources borrowed and all charges attributable before the loss or theft of the card is reported.

4.5. Cardholders must notify the library of any change of contact information as soon as possible.

5. Loan of Library Resources

5.1. There is no charge for using library resources on library premises, borrowing library resources normally lent by the library, consultation with members of the library staff or receiving basic information service.

5.2. Loan periods for library resources are set out in Schedule B.

5.3. Library resources may be reserved and/or renewed in accordance with current library policies and procedures.

6. Penalty Provisions

6.1. The procedures for demanding the return of overdue resources are as set out in Schedule C.

6.2. As per these bylaws, cardholders are responsible for all charges resulting from failing to return or the late return of library resources. The fine schedule is outlined in Schedule C.

6.3. A library card may be suspended or revoked if the cardholder has repeatedly violated the terms of these bylaws. The decision to suspend or revoke a library card will be made by the library manager or by staff designated by the library manager.

6.4. In cases of serious dereliction, the board may prosecute an offence under the *Libraries Act*. Such an offence is punishable under the *Libraries Act*.

6.5. Any fine or penalty imposed pursuant to an offence under 6.4 inures to the benefit of the [name of municipality] Library Board in accordance with the *Libraries Act*.

7. Service Fees

7.1. Service fees, including charges for the use of library premises not normally used for public library purposes (i.e. the library meeting room), are listed in Schedule D.

SCHEDULE A – Fees for the Issuance of Library Cards

Resident individual adult card fee: \$5.00 per year

Resident family card fee: \$10.00 per family per year

Non-resident individual adult card fee: \$15.00 per year

Non-resident family card fee: \$20.00 per family per year

Card fees may be waived at the discretion of the library manager or by staff designated by the library manager. All library cards are subject to review.

SCHEDULE B – Loan of Library Resources

1. A cardholder in good standing may borrow a maximum of fifty (50) circulating resources at any one time, of which not more than five (5) may be resources from the Video collection.
2. All circulating resources are loaned for three weeks, with the following exceptions:
 - a. Resources from the Video collection and circulating magazines are loaned for one week.
 - b. Interlibrary loan items are typically loaned for three weeks unless otherwise authorized by the lending library.
3. Renewal Periods: All circulating resources may be renewed a maximum of two times for a total loan of nine weeks, with the exception of resources from the Video collection which may be renewed twice for a total loan of three weeks.
 - a. Extended due dates may be granted by at the discretion of the library manager or staff designated by the library manager in the event of upcoming travel, anticipated hospitalization or recuperation, or other foreseeable absences.
 - b. All renewals are subject to reservations from other cardholders.

SCHEDULE C – Overdue Fees and Fees for Lost or Damaged Items

Overdue fees

Overdue fees shall only be charged to adult cardholders. No overdue fees will be charged to child or young adult cardholders.

Overdue fees for adult cardholders shall be assessed at \$0.25 per item per day. No adult cardholder shall accrue more than \$5.00 in overdue fees until the outstanding fees are repaid.

Fees for lost or damaged items

The purchase cost as listed in the library's catalogue shall be charged. If the item is found after a replacement copy has been purchased, the found item becomes the property of the cardholder and the replacement fee will not be waived.

SCHEDULE D – Service Fees

Photocopying and printing: \$0.25 per page

Meeting room rental fees – not-for-profit groups and private individuals: \$10.00 per hour

Meeting room rental fees – for-profit companies: \$20.00 per hour