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MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

To / Destinataire OPLB Trustees

cc: Library Senior Management Team (LSMT)

From / Expéditeur Sonia Bebbington, Chief Librarian / CEO
Alexandra Yarrow, Manager, Board & Strategic Services

Subject / Objet Intellectual Freedom Implementation update #2 / Mise à jour no. 2 de la mise en oeuvre de la liberté intellectuelle **Date:** May 29, 2023

The purpose of this memo is to advise trustees of a revised date for the administrative implementation of the Intellectual Freedom Position Statement (“the Statement”), subsequent to the October 11, 2022 Board report, “Intellectual Freedom Update” (OPLB-2022-1011-11.6) and the January 25, 2023 memo to the Board (Item 13.4).

Context

In June 2022, the Board approved the Intellectual Freedom report (OPLB-2022-0601), which included amendments to the Statement, and directed staff to align operations with the amended Statement no later than April 1, 2023 and provide the Board with status updates regarding implementation, as well as a close-out report no later than Q3 2023.

The October 2022 Board report denoted key tasks and the projected timelines for each. The below table provides an update regarding these tasks since the recent January 2023 memo.

Table 1: Intellectual Freedom Implementation Key Tasks

Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrated advice from employee working groups and subject matter experts into revisions to the Meeting Rooms, Display Space, and Notice Board Policy packages;• Canadian Library Month, “Read between the lines /Lire entre les lignes,” stats• Media Literacy Week 2022 virtual programming about navigating online information and digital parenting stats;• Annual reporting on 2022 intellectual freedom challenges;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board trustee and OPL leadership team sessions about intellectual freedom, held in collaboration with the Centre for Free Expression at Toronto Metropolitan University; • Legal counsel regarding the draft revisions to the Meeting Room Rental Policy, Display Space Policy, and Notice Boards Policy packages, as well as related policies and all supporting documents; and, • Library Senior Management Team review of legal input.
In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of intellectual freedom education program for all employees, as well as specific training based on roles (as required); • Additional opportunities to foster community discussions about the importance of intellectual freedom; and, • Legal counsel: final follow-up questions regarding policy suites.

Several considerations have contributed to a prolonged timeline for finalizing the revisions of administrative documents since the January 2023 update to the Board. These include:

- Additional discussions with the legal firm to resolve follow-up questions;
- Analysis of recent challenges, resulting in staff initiating revisions to documents to ensure important changes to our process related to book challenges (“Requests for Reconsideration”) which includes raising the level of accountability for the decisions; and,
- Operational pressures, including other commitments for the project lead.

Given the above, the implementation date for intellectual freedom will be Q1 2024.

Please feel free to contact Alexandra Yarrow at Alexandra.Yarrow@BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca for any additional questions.

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