

## **020 - OPLB      Bilingualism**

### **Legislative Background**

The Board of the Ottawa Public Library (the Board) operates according to the Public Libraries Act (“the PLA”), as well as other acts such as the Municipal Act and the Conflict of Interest Act, and is responsible for ensuring that public library services are delivered effectively and efficiently to residents in the City of Ottawa (“the City”).

In accordance with the PLA, the Board “...may conduct its meetings in English or French or in both English and French.” (ref. 17)

In addition, the OPL Board Rules of Procedure By-Laws (2015) indicates “...minutes of the proceedings and the by-laws and resolutions of the Board shall be kept in accordance with the Board’s language policy.”

### **Guiding Principles**

The Ottawa Public Library Board (OPLB) recognizes both official languages as having the same rights, status, and privileges. To this end, the OPLB recognizes bilingualism as a core value and is committed to bilingualism and to the provision of a strong bilingual context for all services and programs.

#### **Services to the Board**

- The presence at Board meetings of bilingual staff knowledgeable in board policy issues for members of the Board to request minor clarifications in the language of their choice.
- The public release of meeting agendas, dispositions, and action summaries in both official languages.
- The right of individuals to address the Board in their official language of choice.
- Providing interpretation services at Board meetings; if services are requested a minimum of two (2) business days in advance of the Board meeting.

#### **Public Services and Programs**

- Ensure customers receive services in the official language of their choice.
- Take the necessary steps to provide the appropriate number of bilingual employees within branches and departments at all times.

- Ensure that programs and services are offered in both official languages, and that employees having full knowledge of the appropriate culture develop those aimed at one official language group.
- Designate an annual amount of the materials budget to French language materials. The designated amount shall be based on the highest percentage of the following four data sets: mother tongue, home language, first official language spoken (provided by Statistics Canada) and the new inclusive definition of a Francophone (provided by the Office of Francophone Affairs and introduced by the Government of Ontario in June 2009).

### **Public Complaints and Communication**

- Publish all informational, publicity, promotional, and marketing documents, developed by the Ottawa Public Library and intended for the public, in both official languages.
- Promote library programs and services in both English and French.
- Ensure a process for management follow up on customer complaints concerning services in both official languages.
- Prepare communications pieces for spokespersons with sections in both official languages.

### **Language of Work**

- Encourage employees to work in the official language of their choice, notwithstanding above with respect to public services and programs.
- Provide appropriate language training, as required.
- Assist employees who must or wish to write in French.
- Develop and organize training programs in both official languages.

<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>Last Review Date:</b>
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