

020 - OPLB Official Languages

Legislative Background

The Board of the Ottawa Public Library (the Board) operates according to the *Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c.P.44 (the Act)*, 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 *Public Libraries Act (the Act)*, 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-Law (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 Board recognizes both official languages, French and English, as having the same rights, status, and privileges. To this end, the Board is committed to bilingualism and to the provision of a strong bilingual context for all services and programs.

To achieve this commitment, the Board ensures:

- 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 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. Services must be requested a minimum of two (2) business days in advance of the Board meeting.

In addition, the Board recognizes that public delivery of services are offered in both official languages in accordance with the OPL’s administrative policy developed in alignment with this policy direction.

Effective Date: December 11, 2018	Last Review Date: December 2018
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