

Key Revisions to Intellectual Freedom Documents

To align with library industry best practices, strengthen the administration of intellectual freedom, and considering challenges received, Library staff have revised several of the supporting documents relating to intellectual freedom over the last two decades, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Past Revisions and Responses

Date	Document	Reason for revision	Outcome
2001	Materials Selection Policy	None	First version of this policy approved by the Board
2002-2003	Public Internet Use Policy	Library union filed a grievance regarding employees' concerns about viewing explicit content accessed by customers on computer workstations. Media attention sparked wider conversation about Library Internet access, and Council motion to reconsider Internet access at the Library (April 2003).	Policies developed and revised, including revisions to Public Internet Use Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy screens on all computers; • Log in process tied to cardholder type; • Filter for explicit content for children's cardholders; and, • Process for children to receive parental consent to access unfiltered Internet.
2008	Public Internet Use Policy	Regular review period	No significant changes.
2009	Collection Management Strategy	Regular review period	Strategy developed to support the Materials Selection Board Position Statement.
2009	Materials Selection Position Statement	Three books (<i>The Anal Sex Position Guide</i> , <i>The Going Down Guide</i> and <i>The Sex Instruction Manual</i>) are challenged for being	The titles were retained.

		considered by some to be pornography. ¹	
2011	Intellectual Freedom Position Statement	New document	Administrative policy about intellectual freedom turned into a Board Position Statement.
2013	Public Internet Access Policy	Regular review period	Additional filter for illegal content added to all computer workstations, filtering now determined by workstation location rather than Library cardholder type
2014	Collection Management Framework	Regular review period	Represented a shift in OPL's approach to a more strategic Framework, to navigate the changing digital content landscape.
2014	Materials Selection Board Position Statement	A title in the adult DVD collection, <i>A Single Man</i> , was challenged for its "homosexual lifestyle"	The title was retained.
2015	Public Internet Access Policy		Changed from a Board policy to an administrative policy to align with the DOA Policy and the Board's strategic governance role
2016	Materials Selection Board Position Statement	A title in the adult nonfiction collection, <i>Surviving with Wolves</i> , was challenged.	The title was moved to the adult fiction collection once it was determined to be a literary hoax. ²

¹ "Freedom to read." *The Ottawa Citizen* <https://www.pressreader.com/canada/ottawa-citizen/20090804/281685430854171>

² Barber, Greg. "Writer Says Holocaust 'Memoir' Not True." *Washington Post* https://www.washingtonpost.com/express/wp/2008/02/29/writer_says_holocaust_memoir_not_true/

2017	Materials Selection Board Position Statement	A title in the children's nonfiction collection, <i>Pimp Your Pumps</i> by Charlotte Liddle was challenged for inappropriate language.	The title was retained.
2017	Public Network Access Policy	Customer complaint about viewing another customer visiting websites with explicit content. Media attention sparked wider conversation about Library Internet access.	Staff provided additional guidance to staff regarding asking customers to stop displaying content that make other customers feel uncomfortable, the use of privacy screens, and regarding the duty to report child pornography.
2017	Meeting Room Policy	Room booking to screen a documentary critical of European immigration policies cancelled by OPL. In 2019, the group applied to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice for a judicial review of OPL's decision which was dismissed by the Divisional Court, and their appeal was rejected in 2020.	Staff created/revised several internal documents supporting the Meeting Room Policy, including the Meeting Rooms Terms and Conditions and the Checklist for Managers: Meeting Room Bookings and Public Displays.
2017	Display Space and Bulletin Board Use	Considerations raised during recent challenges to intellectual freedom in other areas	As mentioned above, staff created the Checklist for Managers: Meeting Room Bookings and Public Displays
2017	Intellectual Freedom Position Statement	Regular review period	The Board approved changes to align the statement with the new Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) Statement on Intellectual Freedom (no significant amendments to the overall intent or purpose of the OPL Position Statement).

2019	None applicable	Drag Queen Storytime challenged by various individuals, including based on the nature of the content and the type of presenters delivering the programs, and for being “confusing” to children.	Program was held (not cancelled).
2020	Content Services Framework	Regular review period	Key change related to intellectual freedom: Clarification that OPL does not acquire material that the Canadian courts have found to be contrary to the Criminal Code and all applicable laws, and that OPL will obtain legal advice regarding potentially removing material that is found to be contrary to the law. Subsequently, an administrative Appeals Procedure was added for challenges to the collection.
2021	Content Services Framework	A title in the adult nonfiction collection, <i>Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters</i> by Abigail Shrier was challenged on the basis that it contained hate speech and ideology. Several requests to reconsider were received, and there was a large social media campaign asking OPL to remove the title.	The title was retained.
2022	Meeting Room Policy		Changes to the timeline and process for staff decisions regarding bookings, including clarification of the definition of commercial, private or not-for-profit activities.