

Report to / Rapport au:

**Ottawa Public Library Board
Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa**

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File Number: OPLB-2021-0907

SUBJECT: Semi-Annual Performance Measurement – January – June 2021

OBJET: Cadre de mesure du rendement semestrielle – Janvier à juin 2021

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

**Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa prenne
connaissance de ce rapport à titre d'information.**

BACKGROUND

The Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Board approved the Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) at its meeting in May 2013 (Board Report # OPLB2013-0052). The PMF ensures that Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are reviewed and re-aligned each term of the Board, with the organization's Strategic Plan and industry best practices in mind. In June 2019, the Board approved a new Strategic Plan with one overarching statement: "By 2023, we will increase the number of active cardholders by 25 percent by improving OPL's community relevance."

Following the adoption of the new Strategic Plan, and in accordance with the Performance Measurement Framework (PMF), on February 11, 2020, the Board approved an updated list of Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The new indicators introduced a focus on customer and employee experience as key influencers in the customer's journey to becoming an active cardholder.

The PMF monitors four employee (E) and four customer (C) KPIs on a semi-annual basis. The list below identifies the specific measures in alignment with OPL's 2020-2023 Strategic Directions and highlights important customer and employee trends. All KPIs are new, except for "Total Twelve-Month-Active Cardholders (C2)":

- Redesign Library Experience

C1. Cardholder Growth Rate (Customer Experience)

C2. Total Twelve-Month-Active Cardholders (Customer Experience)

- Build Capacity

E1. Average Applicants per Job Posting (Employee Experience)

E2. Employee Turnover Rate (Employee Experience)

E3. Active Cardholder to Full-Time Equivalent Ratio (Employee Experience)

E4. New Employee Referral Ratio (Employee Experience)

- Promote OPL's Value

C3. Economic Benefit per Cardholder (Customer Experience)

C4. New Cardholder Referral Ratio (Customer Experience)

Measurement groups (C1-C4 and E1-E4) comprise a strategic view of important facets of customer and employee journeys. Customers and employees are central to the Library's Vision and Mission, and the focus of the new set of KPIs. This information is necessary to inform strategic decision making and marks a shift away from traditional Library metrics and toward strategic indicators. Additional background information about the KPIs is available in the February 11, 2020 Board report (OPLB-2020-0202).

Indicators C1 and E1 represent early touch points in the customer and employee experience. Both KPIs focus on activation and acquisition to assist in evaluating if OPL is attracting new customers and employee candidates. Understanding changes in these measures can inform decision making as the Library redesigns the experiences of customers and employees and builds capacity. “Cardholder Growth Rate (C1)” measures the activation of new memberships as a percent change in comparison to the same period in the previous year. “Average Applicants per Job Posting (E1)” provides critical information about the acquisition of OPL candidates based on job postings.

Once visitors and candidates become employees or cardholders, monitoring retention becomes critical to ensure that OPL retains valuable skills and knowledge on the employee side and continues to provide valuable public services to customers. “Total 12- Month Active Cardholders (C2)” includes any customer who used online resources or physical services at least once in the previous 12-month period. “Employee Turnover Rate (E2)” provides an indication of whether permanent employees leave within a period of less than two years (referred to as regrettable turnover).

As customers continue to use services, economic benefit is created for the cardholder, community, and residents. Economic benefit is the estimated value generated through programs, activities, and services. Direct benefit is value created by the usage of free services provided by OPL in lieu of paid alternatives. Indirect benefit is value created through spending by OPL staff; that is, employee spending of wages at local shops and services, creating jobs and additional economic value. “Economic Benefit per Cardholder (C3)” focuses only on the direct added value customers receive. The measure accounts for traditional usage statistics related to the benefits of card membership (access to collections, registered programming, and online resources). Measure C3 is reported only in Period 2 (July-December) with the refresh of the annual economic benefit report. Period 2 reporting occurs annually each April.

Growth in memberships and evolving and innovative services require adaptive staffing models. Shortages in staffing can lead to longer wait times or fewer service offerings and decrease customer and employee satisfaction. “Active Cardholder to Full Time Equivalent Ratio (E3)” helps OPL understand whether staffing models are responsive to changes in the active cardholder base. The measure looks at the Total 12-Month Active Cardholder figure as a ratio of staffing Full Time Equivalent positions.

Customers and employees who stay with OPL, and who typically derive benefits from services, often promote OPL's value by word of mouth. It is important to confirm whether new cardholders or employees were referred to OPL from someone who used the Library, as referrals can be an indicator of satisfaction and efficiency, and link directly to the creation of new 12-Month-Active Cardholders. “New Cardholder Referral Ratio (C4)” and “New Employee Referral Ratio (E4)” track the percentage of customers and employees that were created based on the referral of an OPL customer or employee, respectively. Both measures required the creation of new data collection methods which began in Period 1 2020.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with a performance measurement update for the January – June 2021 period. In accordance with recommendations presented in the 2020 Semi-Annual Performance Reports (OPLB-2020-1006, OPLB-2021-0405), it remains that Period 1 2021 results should not be used for benchmarking “normal” Library operations compared to future KPI results.

DISCUSSION

January to June 2021 was the third semi-annual reporting period to occur during the Coronavirus pandemic. During the period, OPL continued to deliver services during two Provincially mandated stay-at-home orders to combat increasing COVID-19 rates. Despite these circumstances, the Library demonstrated its important role in the community, showing improvements across customer and employee KPIs. Notably, Total 12-Month Active Cardholders increased from 214,241 in Period 2 2020 to 232,959 in Period 1 2021 (a percent change of +9%). The Period 1 2021 result is approximately 12,000 active users less than Period 2, 2019 result, the last measurement period prior to the pandemic.

Factors that contributed to the KPI results included stable hours of operation and curbside services, and when possible, enhanced library services, and the return of Sunday hours to help meet community demand. In Period 1, the Library implemented new projects to improve access to Library services. The implementation of the *Materials Recovery Model (MRM)* and *Full Online Registration (FOR)* helped to further eliminate barriers to service and membership acquisition which are evident in the KPI results.

The move to MRM was adopted at the Board meeting of October 13, 2020 (OPLB-2020-1004) and was effective January 1, 2021. The adoption of the MRM aimed to

eliminate fees as a barrier for all customers, while increasing the number of potential cardholders, as well as access to, and recovery of, materials. An increase in the measure “New Cardholder Referral Rate” coinciding with the beginning of 2021 indicates a positive reception of the changes with new library cardholders. A more detailed analysis of the implementation of the MRM will be provided as an addendum to the next semi-annual performance measurement report in April 2022.

While the creation of new memberships overall remained low in Period 1 due to limited in-branch services, the introduction of FOR on June 1, 2021 began to address this limitation. During the month of June there were a total of 757 new member registrations, over 550 of which were online.

Charts and tables displaying measurement results as well as further discussion for each measure are presented in the Business Analysis Implications section of this report. Please note that measures that are not available are marked with 'N/A'. In the case of “New Cardholder Referral Rate (C4)” and “New Employee Referral Ratio (E4)”, historical data is not available. The measure “Economic Benefit per Cardholder (C3)” is reported annually in the Period 2 PMF report and is not presented in this report.

A timeline summarizing important changes to services affecting the current reporting period include:

Starting December 26, 2020:

- All open OPL branches continued to operate with reduced COVID-19 hours of opening;
- Customers were not permitted inside library branches or the Bookmobile during the provincial shutdown period;
- In-branch services were not available during this period; and,
- All open OPL branches and bookmobile services offered “curbside” returns and holds pickup, except for Kiosk Services which were closed.

Starting January 1, 2021:

- Materials Recovery Model is implemented.

Starting February 22, 2021:

- 25 of OPL's 28 open branches offered returns and holds pick up inside the branches, as well as a limited browsing service, and use of a reduced offering of public computers;
- All branches were subject to occupancy limits;
- Rosemount, Orléans, and Metcalfe branches offered contactless returns and holds pick up inside the branch;
- The Bookmobile offered browsing of a reduced collection at all stops; and,
- Hours of operation remained consistent.

Starting March 8, 2021:

- 28 of OPL's 31 open branches offered returns and holds pick up inside the branches, as well as a limited browsing service, and use of a reduced offering of public computers;
- All branches were subject to occupancy limits;
- Rosemount, Orléans, and Metcalfe branches offered contactless returns and holds pick up inside the branch;
- The Bookmobile offered browsing of a reduced collection at all stops; and,
- Hours of operation remained consistent.

Starting April 8, 2021:

- All 31 open branches offered curbside returns and holds pick up;
- Customers were not permitted to enter library facilities;
- The Bookmobile and Homebound Services continued;
- Hours of operation remained the same; and,
- Borrowed items could be returned when branches were open.

Starting June 1, 2021:

- Full Online Registration is introduced; and,
- Sunday Hours are available at select locations.

Starting June 14, 2021:

- Book drops open 24 hours, seven days per week.

In summary, the Coronavirus pandemic continued to challenge public libraries around the world in the first half of 2021. During the period, OPL continued to adjust to the demands of a challenging environment, providing services to customers while maintaining public health protocols. The Library has begun to welcome new customers, retain active customers who continue to use online and in-branch services, and see greater referrals from satisfied customers. All of these positive actions occurred despite a series of necessary Provincially mandated stay-at-home measures to halt increasing rates of Covid-19 infections. As staffing and recruitment results edge back to pre-pandemic levels, there is evidence of growing numbers of applicants interested in OPL as an employer, a low rate of turnover, and a stable customer-to- staff ratio. Despite the continued challenges, the Vision, Mission and Strategic goals of OPL and the purpose and approach to performance measurement remain relevant.

Below is the summary chart of all indicators for Period 1 2021 followed by individual charts and observations for each measure.

Table 1. Period 1 (January-June) and Period 2 (July-December) from 2018 to 2021

Period	Code	Measure Name	2018	2019	2020	2021
1	C1	Cardholder Growth Rate	2.40	-6.08	-58.17	-73.33
	C2	Total Twelve-Month Active Cardholders	245,878	239,390	231,217	232,959
	C4	New Cardholder Referral Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A	23.68
	E1	Average Applicants Per Job Posting	66.35	96.51	47.04	58.04
	E2	Employee Turnover Rate	0.0199	0.0074	0.0093	0.004
	E3	Active Cardholder to Full Time Equivalent Ratio	532.73	516.03	498.54	502.78
	E4	New Employee Referral Ratio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	C1	Cardholder Growth Rate	1.17	-2.93	-81.67	N/A

Table 1. Period 1 (January-June) and Period 2 (July-December) from 2018 to 2021

Period	Code	Measure Name	2018	2019	2020	2021
	C2	Total Twelve-Month Active Cardholders	237,567	244,336	214,241	N/A
	C3	Economic Benefit Per Cardholder	490.55	498.44	286.54	N/A
	C4	New Cardholder Referral Rate	N/A	N/A	18.96	N/A
	E1	Average Applicants Per Job Posting	39.72	72.89	78.00	N/A
	E2	Employee Turnover Rate	0.0217	0.0093	0.0079	N/A
	E3	Active Cardholder to Full Time Equivalent Ratio	516.70	526.55	461.71	N/A
	E4	New Employee Referral Ratio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

C1 - Cardholder Growth Rate (%)

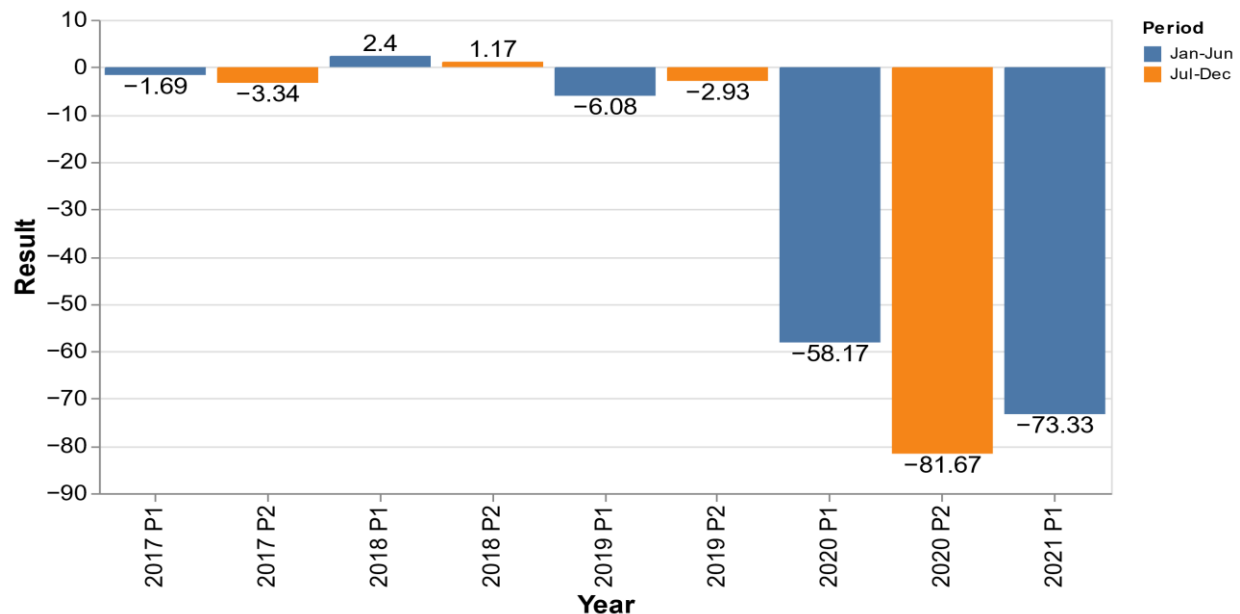
New memberships and 'Cardholder Growth Rate (C1)' decreased by 73.33 percent in Period 1 2021. In comparison to Period 1 2020, an improvement of 8.34% was realized. While membership growth continued to be significantly lower than pre-covid periods, an improvement was observed indicating the impact of enhanced services when permitted by provincial orders. These services helped to boost membership growth significantly.

Online registration for full memberships had a significant impact on results for June. Despite a limited overall impact, compared to previous months, the month of June saw a significant improvement. It is expected that with the combination of FOR and continued reopening phases providing enhanced services, improvement in future measurement periods should continue, notwithstanding any further provincial orders.

Library membership growth is closely linked to Summer Reading programs and outreach activities. Gradually, more outreach occurred as Library services were expanded. Notably, there has been a significant amount of community development

work occurring that has provided the opportunity for informing residents about the diverse services offered by OPL during the pandemic and reopening phases.

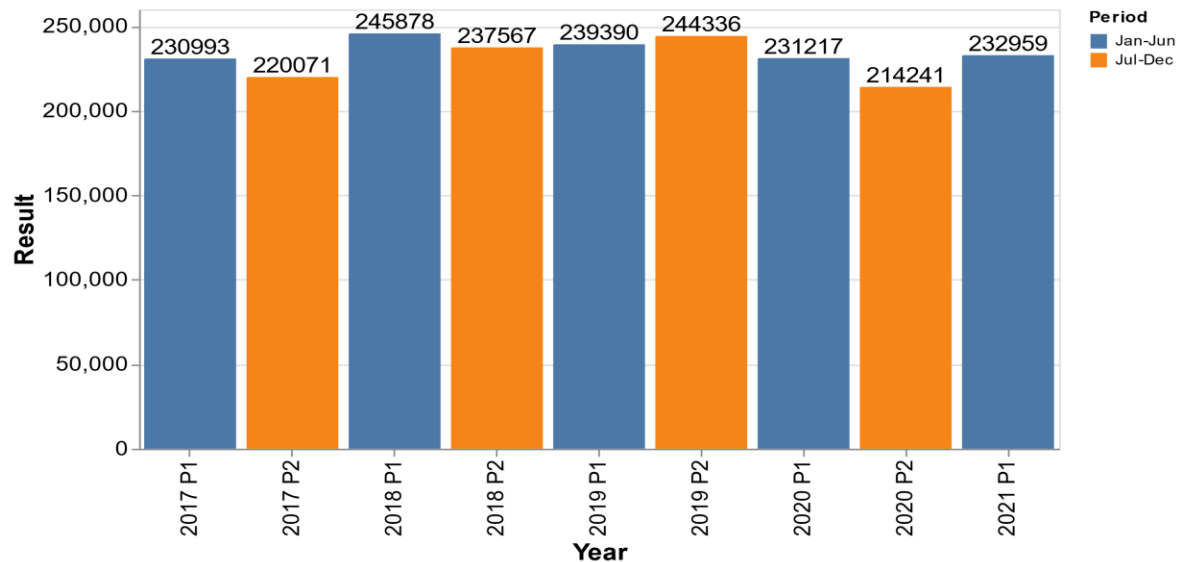
Figure 1. C1 - Cardholder Growth Rate (%)



C2 - Total 12-Month Active Cardholders

During Period 2 2021, the measure “12-Month Active Cardholders (C2)” increased by 1 percent in comparison to Period 1 2020. As mentioned above, the improvement from Period 2 2020 was 9%. In March, where enhanced services were available, the Library witnessed surges in activity to renew cards and browse in-branch collections. The retention of library customers was further enhanced by a variety of online resources for reading, watching, and researching. While online use continues to grow, in-branch services and the work of front-line staff providing in-person services continued to be of great value to the community and essential for the retention of cardholders and the recovery of the KPI to almost pre-pandemic values.

Figure 2. C2 – Total Twelve-Month Active Cardholders



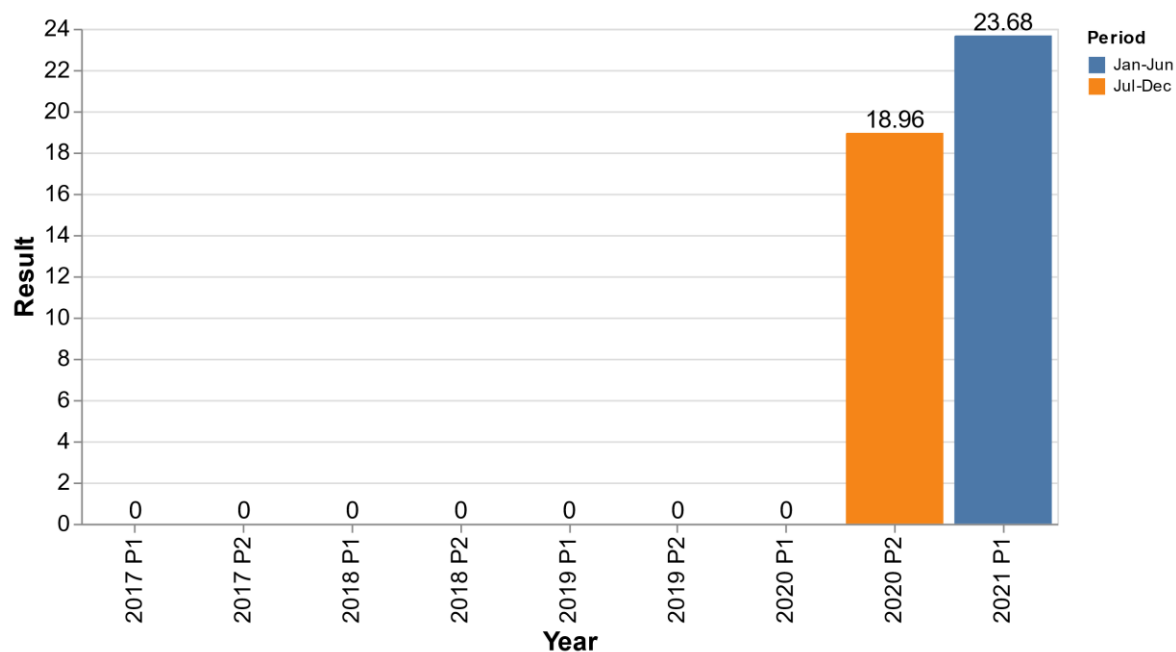
C3 - Economic Benefit per Cardholder

As noted above, the measure “Economic Benefit per Cardholder (C3)” is reported annually in the Period 2 PMF report presented normally in April of each year.

C4 - New Cardholder Referral Ratio

Period 1 2021 marks the second report on the measure "New Cardholder Referral Ratio (C4)". Data collection for the measure began in July 2020. During Period 1 2021, the new cardholder referral ratio was 23.68 percent, an increase of 4.72% from Period 2 2020. The proportion of new cardholders who were referred may be the result of the introduction of FOR, as well as the provision of enhanced in-branch services and stable hours of operation. A sharp increase in referrals was observed in January 2021 offering a more tangible link to the implementation of the MRM.

Figure 3. C4 – New Cardholder Referral Rate (%)

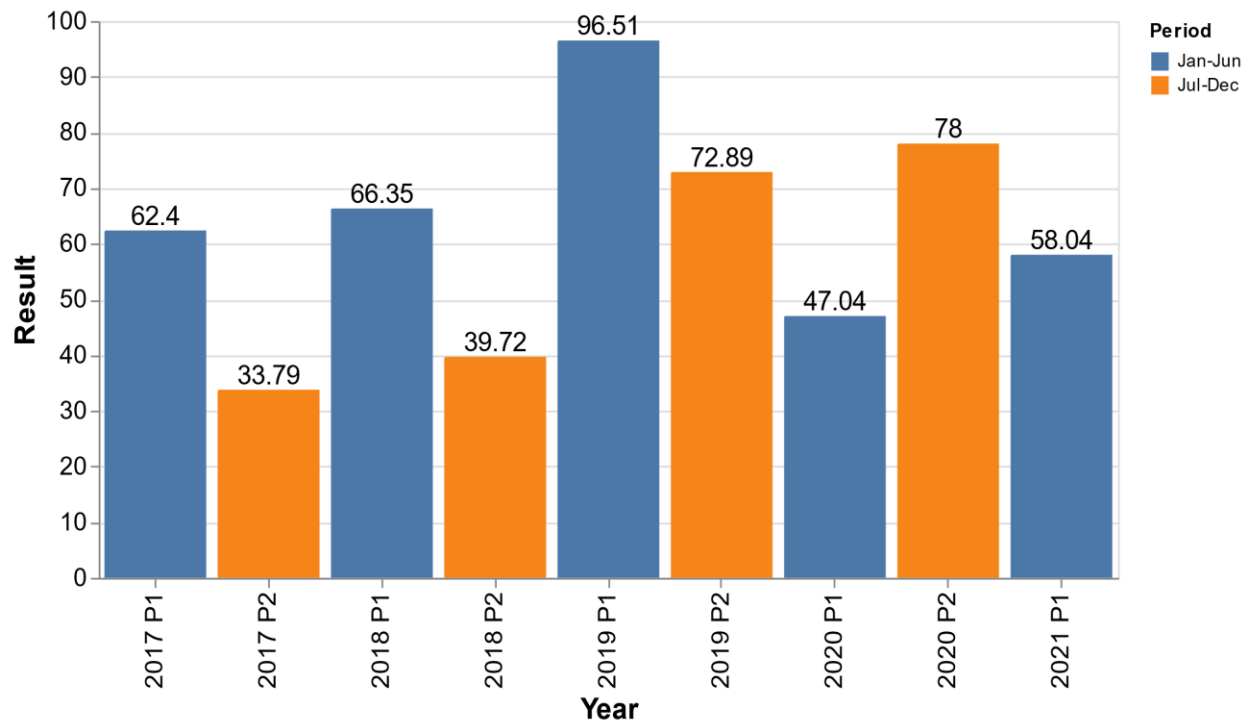


E1 - Average Applicants per Job Posting:

OPL accelerated active recruitment throughout Period 1 2021. During the period, the “Average Applicants per Job Posting (E1)” was 58.04. Results for the measurement period were higher than Period 1 2020 likely due to the system-wide closure that began on March 16, 2020 that led to a hiring freeze.

Results for this period demonstrate strong interest in a variety of Library positions. In Period 1 2021 there were 22 more positions posted compared to Period 1 2020. The increased number of postings also demonstrates the popularity of entry level positions and customer service roles. The Library offers a variety of positions that attract new talent and diversity, which was reflected in the results for the period.

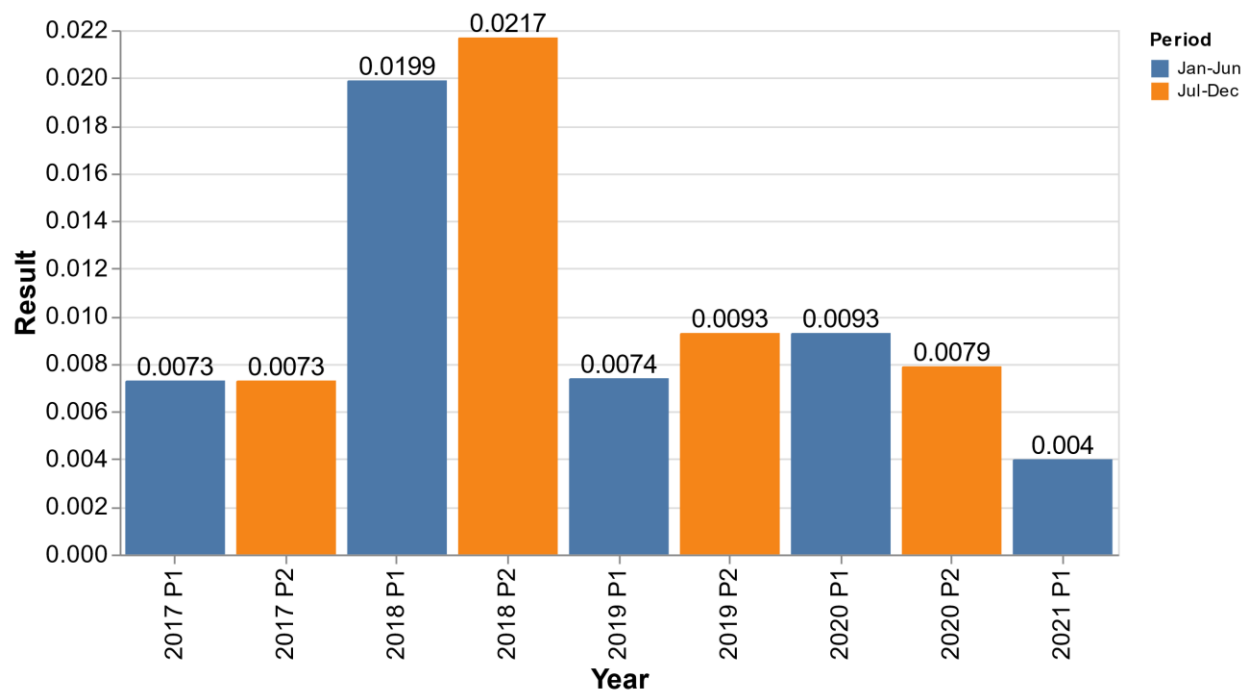
Figure 4. E1 – Average Applicants Per Job Posting



E2 - Employee Turnover Rate:

“Employee Turnover Rate (E2)” results in Period 1 2021 were low and consistent with previous periods. Regrettable employee turnover, as a sub-category of turnover, is low at the Library and occurs most frequently in entry-level positions. Monitoring regrettable employee turnover is important to see the potential impact of large organizational changes and environmental factors on job satisfaction and tenure at OPL.

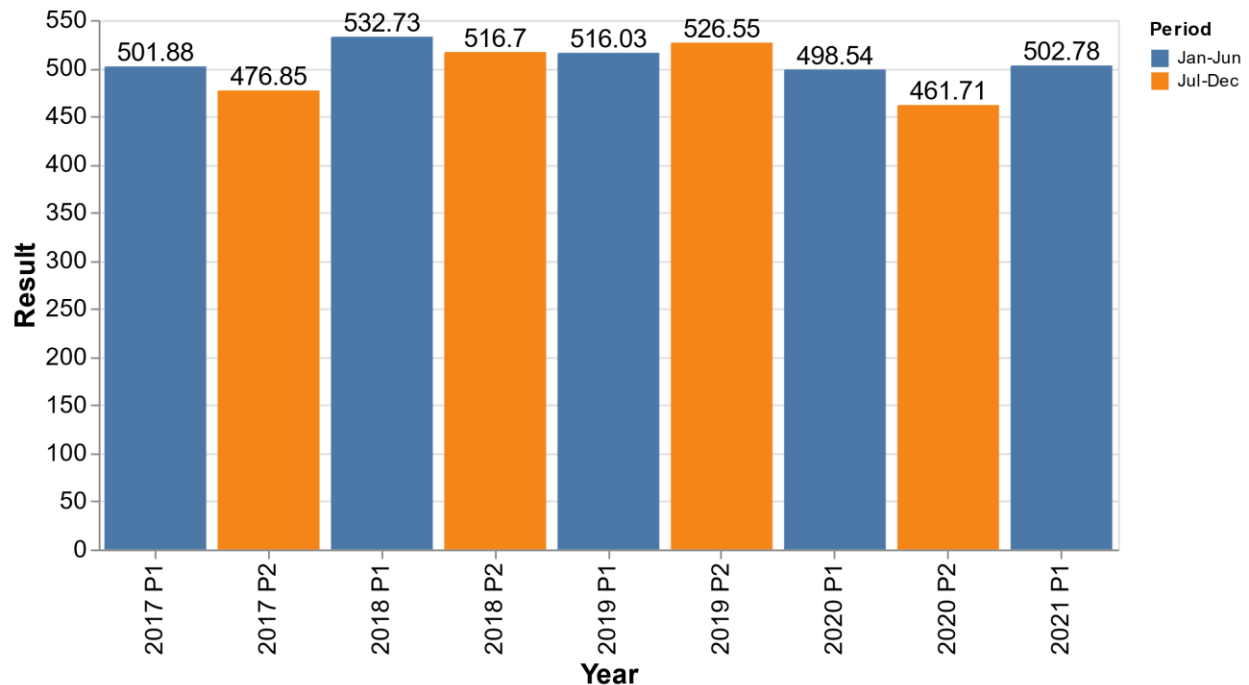
Figure 5. E2 – Employee Turnover Rate



E3 - Active Cardholder to Full-Time Equivalent Ratio:

A slight increase in the “Active Cardholder to Full-Time Equivalent Ratio (E3)” in Period 1 2021 was primarily the result of a rebound in the total 12-month active cardholders KPI. Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) measures remained stable when compared to other HR measures such as head count. As services are restored and cardholder counts change, this measurement should provide additional information regarding internal capacity and the provision of in-branch services. As shown in figure 6, this measure has increased to a level which is starting to approach the pre-covid level experienced in Period 2 2019.

Figure 6. E3 – Active Cardholder to Full Time Equivalent Ratio



E4 - New Employee Referral Ratio:

There is no evidence in the data for Period 1 2021 of any employee referrals. During the period, the only referrals observed were from positions filled by Employee Movement which is not included in the measurement definition. Approximately 19% of the total successful candidates in Period 1 2021 were new hires. Results reported to the Board for Period 2 2020 have been revoked to address a data collection error which occurred in conjunction with the establishment of the new measurement. There are currently no tangible data to present in a chart for this period. The measure will be presented in the next PMF report assuming there is reportable data.

New hires generated from employee referrals can provide benefits to OPL. In addition to providing some indication of positive sentiment from employees making a referral, employee referrals may also encourage lower turnover. While OPL values retention and referrals, it is also aware of the need for inclusivity and strives to create a workforce that draws from a diverse talent pool and is accessible to all applicants.

CONSULTATION

Internal consultations were conducted to analyze the data and determine compensatory actions taken by staff to improve services and, therefore, KPI results.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report

BOARD PRIORITIES

This report is prepared in compliance with OPL Board Policy OPLB-0010 CEO Reporting and Board Monitoring.

BUSINESS ANALYSIS IMPLICATIONS

Business analysis implications are as identified in the body of the report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

There is no supporting documentation associated with this report.

DISPOSITION

The next Semi-Annual Performance Measurement Report, including an addendum on the implementation of MRM, will be brought to the Board in April 2022 and will present results from July 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.