

Policy 2100

Public Use of Facilities	
Approved	November 4, 2004; September 28, 2023
Most Recent Review	September 2023

Policy Statement

The Okotoks Public Library (OPL) seeks to provide quality Library services to all users in a safe and pleasant environment. The facilities will provide an environment that is welcoming, physically comfortable, clean, safe and supports the technological and informational needs of its community.

The OPL strives to maintain an atmosphere of decorum and has a responsibility for public and Staff safety as well as the safety of public property. Everyone who uses the OPL is expected to behave in a manner that supports this aim.

Purpose/Rationale

The OPL is a place where people gather to create, explore, and learn. The public uses the Library for reading, browsing, quiet study, and participation in Library programs. In order to create and maintain safe and welcoming shared spaces, the OPL may restrict use of certain areas and impose rules concerning the use of the facility.

This policy extends to the public and Staff areas for both users and employees. It includes the physical facilities, equipment, furniture, materials and bulletin boards. The policy also extends to groups who rent OPL meeting rooms.

Definitions

Child/children refers to anyone under the age of eighteen (18).

Service animals refers to qualified animals needed to assist an individual with a disability. Qualified service animals are those designated by the Province of Alberta.

Procedure

Staff members are to apply these rules in a fair and positive manner to the benefit of all.

Conduct that is disruptive, is unsafe, prevents the enjoyment of the Library by others or interferes with Library operations is not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to:

- violent, threatening, abusive, discriminatory, disruptive, intrusive or harassing language or behavior of any kind;

- damage, misuse or theft of Library materials, equipment and property;
- interfering with the designated use of computers and networks;
- soliciting, canvassing and/or unauthorized selling and
- unreasonable noise.

Details

1. Abusive or Threatening Language

The use of threatening, abusive or harassing language or behavior is prohibited.

2. Access to Staff Only Areas

Staff workrooms, Staff kitchen, Staff washroom, storage rooms and private offices are not open to members of the public.

Members of the public are permitted in Staff Only areas of the Library only with the permission of or accompaniment by an authorized Staff member.

3. Animals and Pets

Animals are not allowed in the Library unless they are in programs approved by the Library or qualified service animals, as designated by the Province of Alberta. Library users bringing service animals into the Library will need to show their Service Dog ID card upon request.

4. Bulletin Boards and Distribution of Free Materials

- 4.1 The OPL makes a bulletin board available to individuals or groups on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of the individuals or groups requesting their use, for the promotion of educational, cultural, intellectual, civic or recreational activities by community members and organizations.
- 4.2 The bulletin board is to be used to display posters, pamphlets or other informational material on behalf of cultural, educational, social service and volunteer agencies in the community.
- 4.3 From time to time the OPL may need to judge the relative importance of posters and notices and may refuse those of lower priority.
- 4.4 The OPL will refuse to display any items considered by the Director to be inappropriate and/or unsuitable to or for a Library environment and/or the public served by the Library. All posted items must be approved by the Library Director prior to posting.

5. Misuse of Library Property

Damage to, theft of or unauthorized use of Library materials, equipment or property is prohibited.

6. Political Use of Library Space

- 6.1 The Library will not support, endorse or advocate the viewpoints or beliefs of any one candidate, political party, partisan organization or group.
- 6.2 Posting or distributing partisan election or campaign material in the Library or on Library property is not permitted.
- 6.3 Once the writ is dropped (Nomination Day in municipal elections), no elected official or candidate from that level of government will be invited to speak or present at Library events, except for all-candidates meetings, until after the election has concluded.
- 6.4 During an election campaign, candidates for political office, representatives of political parties and registered third party advertisers may not use open Library space or property to solicit or advocate among Library users and may not use open Library space or property to make public statements or host media events unless they are part of a shared Library program or announcement.
- 6.5 The Library is not available for public use in distributing literature, canvassing, signing petitions, surveying or demonstrating.
- 6.6 Activities must not intimidate or harass Library users; must not block, hinder or impede travel to or from the Library, and must not disrupt the orderly operation of the Library and its services.

7. Photographing, Filming or Video Recording

- 7.1 Library Staff will coordinate with members of the media who wish to film, record or photograph Library events, Staff or users.
- 7.2 Library Staff are to advise users to obtain permission from others before photographing, recording or filming them.

8. Proper Attire

Library users are required to wear appropriate attire, including shirts and footwear.

9. Quiet Study Areas

In a designated quiet study area a member of the public who is behaving in any way that disturbs other Library users will be asked to move to a different part of the Library.

10. Telephones

- 10.1 Library telephones are for Library business use and emergencies only.
- 10.2 Staff members will make the determination of what constitutes an emergency.
- 10.3 The Library Staff will not take phone messages for patrons.

11. Smoking

Smoking, vaping, using chewing tobacco or holding lighted tobacco is prohibited in the

Library.

12. Soliciting

- 12.1 Posting notices, distributing circulars, canvassing, selling, soliciting or engaging in other commercial activity must not be conducted without prior written approval of the Library Director.
- 12.2 All commercial activity, including direct selling or promotion of a product, shall be confined to the rented meeting rooms unless it is a promotion or an activity sanctioned by the Library.

13. Sports Equipment

Use of sports equipment on Library property such as skateboards, scooters, and inline skates in the Library is prohibited.

14. Washrooms

- 14.1 Library materials are not to be taken into washrooms in the Library.
- 14.2 If Library users are locked in the bathroom and need assistance from Staff, a Staff member is authorized to bypass the lock and enter the washroom.