

Policy 2350

Programming	
Approved	May 25, 2023
Most Recent Review	May 2023

Policy Statement

Okotoks Public Library (OPL) offers a wide range of programs to meet the needs of our community. Our programs support our mission to provide inclusive opportunities that enrich, inspire, and empower individuals, and which support the Library's [Plan of Service](#). OPL programs are free of charge, inclusive and open to everyone to attend on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations, in accordance with the Canadian Federation of Library Associations [Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](#) (2019).

Purpose/Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to establish the priorities and terms of programming offered by OPL. It provides a framework to assist library staff in the planning and delivery of high-quality programs, and it outlines the objectives and expectations for external facilitators who are providing programming services in collaboration with OPL.

This policy applies to all programming organized and facilitated by library staff, in addition to co-sponsored and partnership programs and events offered to the Okotoks community through the library.

This policy does not apply to:

- any events or programs offered independently by individuals or groups renting a library space or meeting room. For meeting room rentals, please refer to Policy 2300 – Meeting Rooms.
- events which are developed for special purposes such as library fundraising or participation in annual celebrations within the Town of Okotoks or Foothills County.

Procedure

1. OPL schedules, develops, and presents a wide variety of programs that provide opportunities for information, learning, and entertainment. Programming is an integral component of library services that:
 - expands the Library's role as a community resource;
 - introduces patrons and non-users to Library resources;
 - provides entertainment;
 - provides opportunities for lifelong learning;
 - expands the visibility of the Library.

2. Ultimate responsibility for programming at the Library rests with the Library Director, who administers programming under the authority of the Town of Okotoks Library Board. The Library Director, in turn, delegates the authority for program development and management to appropriate departmental staff.
3. When planning programs, consideration is given to criteria which includes, but is not limited to:
 - relation to Library collections, resources, exhibits, mission, and service goals;
 - community needs and interest;
 - presentation quality and treatment of content for intended audience;
 - representation of diverse cultural backgrounds, opinions and viewpoints;
 - presenter background/qualifications;
 - availability of program space;
 - budget and staffing considerations and;
 - connection to other community programs, exhibits or events.
4. The Library's philosophy of open access to information and ideas extends to Library programming, and the library does not knowingly discriminate through its programming. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by participants.
5. The Library does not offer any programs that support or oppose any political candidate, ballot measure or specific religious conviction. Programs whose purpose is to provide information about societal issues or religious traditions as part of a multicultural education are permitted. The Library upholds the principle of intellectual freedom and supports the right of individuals to read, speak, view and exchange differing points of view on any subject. To accomplish this, the Library may present controversial programs that provide public access to diverse perspectives on an issue.
6. Registration for programs may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited. When limits must be established, attendance will be determined on a first come, first served basis, either with advanced registration or at the door. The Library has some programs specifically geared toward chronological age groups. These specific age-based programs are specially planned for providing social development and a learning experience for targeted audiences. Programs may be held on-site, off-site or online.
7. All library programs are not to be used for commercial, religious, or partisan purposes or the solicitation of business. However, recognizing that program attendees may wish to purchase items like books written by speakers or recordings made by performers, the library may permit the sale of such items in conjunction with a library-sponsored program. All plans to sell such items must be arranged in advance and approved by the Library Director. Program presenters are responsible for the handling of all sales. The Library reserves the right to use video or photographs taken of program participants for internal use, publication, in library promotional outlets, and for evaluation purposes.

8. External organizations or individuals collaborating with OPL on programs must coordinate marketing efforts with OPL staff and secure staff approval before distributing any promotional materials. OPL reserves the right to revise and edit any copy provided by a program presenter as appropriate for the Library's various promotional outlets.

9. External Program Facilitators

- 9.1 In addition, OPL draws upon other community resources in developing programs and actively collaborates with other community agencies, organizations, educational and cultural institutions or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored public programs. Professional performers and presenters that reflect specialized or unique expertise may be hired for Library programs; performers and presenters will not be excluded from consideration because of their origin, background or views, or because of possible controversy. Library staff who present programs do so as part of their regular job and shall not be hired as outside contractors for programming.
- 9.2 Community members interested in offering a program can refer to the Community Program Agreement. OPL requires a cleared vulnerable sector check (VSC) for all external program facilitators working with children, youth and vulnerable adults, and for all OPL staff with programming in their job description. OPL is not responsible for reimbursing external program facilitators the costs associated with obtaining a VSC.

10. Virtual Programs

- 10.1. In an effort to reach the greatest number of patrons, OPL may also offer virtual programs. These programs will utilize Library approved virtual meeting platform(s) that participants may use to access virtual programs from their own devices and may include programs that are simultaneously run at Library facilities along with programs that are solely offered virtually.
- 10.2. While hosting the virtual program, the Library may mute attendees, lock the event after the program has begun, dismiss participants and the like.
- 10.3. Participants are required to use their own equipment to attend OPL virtual programs. Okotoks Public Library will make its best good faith effort to use a virtual program platform that will be compatible with the widest array of hardware and operating systems.
- 10.4. The Okotoks Public Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of its virtual events.