

Policy: Intellectual Freedom

Board motion number: 69:21, October 12, 2021 Chair's signature: _____

Intent

The public library is a democratic institution, and no individual or minority group should be allowed to limit the community's freedom to read. Democracy cannot flourish unless material representing all legal viewpoints is freely available. The Bonnechere Union Public Library subscribes to the *Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries* (April 12, 2019) by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations and the *Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual* (December 2005) by the Ontario Library Association, which affirm the basic policies of the library.

Policy

1. Every person in Canada has the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.
2. Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.
3. It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.
4. It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.
5. Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.
6. Board members, employees, and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.