



## **LIBRARY POLICY**

**Policy Title:** COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

**Date of Last Review:** January 2026

**Policy Type:** Board - Operational

**Approved by Library Board:** April 2021

**Policy Number:** BPL020

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### **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the criteria used for selecting and acquiring materials for Belleville Public Library's collection (the collection), as well as the responsibility for maintaining the collection.

This policy applies to all formats in the collection, including print, audio-visual and digital materials. This policy will apply to items purchased by the Library, or donated to the Library, including works donated by the author or creator of the item.

### **Guiding principals**

Belleville Public Library Board (the Library) strives to provide a dynamic collection of materials that is regularly evaluated and available in a variety of formats to serve the needs and support the interests of all members of our community.

The collection shall be balanced and represent diverse points of view and may include materials that some members of the public consider to be controversial in nature. The presence of an item in the library does not indicate an endorsement of its content.

The Library endorses the Ontario Library Association's Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual (2020). (Appendix A)

The Library endeavors to provide equitable access to the collection and will provide opportunities for patrons and community groups to recommend or request items for the collection.

The Library selects materials in the two official languages, English and French, as well as materials which reflect the diverse linguistic or cultural heritage of the community.

The materials budget will be maximized through coordinated and controlled expenditure and will be monitored closely to ensure budget targets are met. Collection purchases will be made throughout the year and not concentrated in one quarter.

## **Collection as capital assets and circulation targets**

The physical items collected by the Library are considered capital assets and are tracked in accounting systems and outlined in the annual financial audits. There is a calculation used to demonstrate the depreciation of the value of these assets each year (i.e. an amortization schedule).

The Library approved an asset management plan in 2025 in partnership with the City of Belleville that identified a target number of items circulated relative to population for the period ending in 2034. This provides a guideline and goal for Library staff, and it also helps determine the projected cost of maintaining library services. The approved target number of items circulated annually per population is **7 checkouts per person**.

See Appendix D for current information on checkouts per population.

## **Use of development charge funds and collection size**

The City of Belleville collects funds from developers building new housing and a portion of these funds are allocated to the Library. The collection of development charges (DC funds) is done to ensure that necessary public infrastructure and municipal services are maintained as the population grows.

DC funds are collected in a reserve fund and then used each year as per the Board approved operating budgets. The funds must be used to increase the size of our collections as the population of Belleville grows.

See Appendix E for information on the current makeup and holdings for our borrowing collection, with a per capita collection size indicated to guide future growth and use of DC funds.

## **Selection of materials**

The Library Board delegates the overall responsibility for the collection to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Selection responsibility for specific portions of the collections will be delegated to staff.

In selecting materials, staff will use their professional resources, judgment, knowledge and experience. Selection will be founded on staff familiarity with existing collections, their awareness of the needs of Library users, and their knowledge of current and future trends in informational and recreational materials suitable for public library use.

The Library will make the final decision about what to order for the collection, how many copies of a given title will be ordered, and which formats will be purchased.

What is ordered, and what remains in the collection, is based on the following criteria:

- a. recommendations by critics or reviewers
- b. public demand
- c. relationship of subject to existing collection
- d. importance of subject matter in relation to community needs
- e. authority or significance of author
- f. quality of writing, production and illustrations
- g. accessibility criteria and features
- h. authority and standards of publisher
- i. suitability of format for library use
- j. Canadian content

The Library does not keep, acquire or purchase material that Canadian courts have ruled to be obscene, hate propaganda or seditious.

Special consideration is given to materials with Canadian content, that record the Canadian experience or that relate to life in Canada or the lives and works of Canadians.

We will provide collections relating to Indigenous cultures, languages, and peoples, including books, audio and video materials. Our collection will include titles by and about First Nation communities. Specific attention will be paid to the Huron-Wendat, the Anishnaabe, and the Haudenosaunee, on whose traditional land the Library is located.

### **Patron requests**

There will be a process in place for patrons to suggest or request items for purchase for the collection. All Collection Material Purchase Suggestion forms (Appendix B) are reviewed by Library staff who will apply to the customer request the same selection criteria that are applied to all materials purchased by the Library.

### **Accessible formats**

There will be a feedback process in place to allow patrons to request accessible items for the collection (Appendix B). The Library will provide access to a collection of accessible materials that serve the needs of individuals with visual or print disabilities. If requested, the Library will assist patrons to access the broad collection of accessible works available from the Centre for Equitable Library Access.

### **Collection maintenance**

In order to maintain a current and relevant collection, it is necessary to withdraw materials from the library collections regularly and systematically.

The following criteria are considered when withdrawing materials:

- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Physical condition
- Frequency of use
- Availability of other copies
- Relevance to needs and interests of the community

If still needed, items may be replaced or rebound. Replacement depends on the demand for the title, the availability of more current materials on the topic and the extent of the coverage of the subject in the collection.

Withdrawn material will be donated to the Friends of the Belleville Public Library (FOL) for sale in their Bookstore. Items that are not accepted or sold by the FOL may be sold at a Library book sale or donated to other community groups. When all other options have been exhausted, discarded books will be placed into recycling.

### **Parental responsibility**

Responsibility for a child's or teen's choice and use of materials rests with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The Library believes in the freedom of the individual, and that parents or legal guardians must interpret and maintain their own standards for what items are borrowed from the Library.

Library users of all ages have open access to the Library's collections. Selection for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children or teens may access materials their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may consider inappropriate.

### **Controversial material**

The Belleville Public Library Board regards the right of access by an individual to information, controversial or non-controversial, through the public library as an important element of a democratic society.

The presence of any material in the Library does not indicate an endorsement of its contents. The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. In the case of controversial issues, an effort is made to see that all points of view are represented.

While library staff will attempt to guide individuals and groups to materials suitable for their use, the ultimate responsibility for the choice made by the patron lies with the patron and/or their parent(s) or guardian(s).

Request for reconsideration of material must be made in writing and on the understanding that selection will not be determined by pressure from any group or individual nor will material serving the purpose of the Library be removed from the collection. Completed

Request for Reconsideration of an Item in the Collection forms (Appendix C) are forwarded to the CEO for review. Acknowledgement of the request will be sent within 5 business days and a written response will be sent within 30 days.

If the patron is still not satisfied, a written request for the review to be appealed will be forwarded to the Library Board for their consideration at the next scheduled Board meeting. The Library Board and the CEO will jointly rule on the appeal and report the decision to the complainant within 30 days of the meeting.

### **Labeling of collections**

The Library does not label materials to indicate approval or disapproval of the content.

### **Closed shelves**

No catalogued book or other item will be placed on closed shelves, except due to space limitations or to protect it from damage or theft.

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Approved by Belleville Public Library Board

Signature of Board Chair:



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Date: 20 January 2026

Signature of Chief Executive Officer:



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Date: 20 January 2026

## **Appendix A: Ontario Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual**

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### **Introduction**

The Ontario Library Association and its divisions are committed to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the freedom to read and freedom of the press, as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Ontario Libraries have the important responsibility to facilitate expressions of knowledge, creativity, ideas, and opinion, even when viewed as unconventional or unpopular.

The Ontario Library Association declares its acceptance of the following principles for libraries:

1. Equitable access to library service to the public is based upon the right of the citizen, under the protection of the law, to judge individually on questions of politics, religion and morality.
2. Intellectual freedom requires freedom to critically examine and create other ideas, opinions, views, and philosophy of life, other than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general and including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional, uncommon or unpopular.
3. The free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that the freedom to read, listen, view, and create is fundamental to such free traffic.
4. Library governance ensures that the principles of intellectual freedom and expression of thought are upheld.

### **Library Service, Collections and Resources:**

It is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and to implement it consistently in the selection of books, periodicals, films, recordings, and other materials including the provision of access to electronic sources of information and access to the internet. Materials are not excluded from library collections based on race, place of birth, origin, ethnic origin, ethnicity, citizenship, age, creed, disability, family structure, sex, and sexual orientation.

It is part of the library's service to its public to resist any attempt by any individual or group within the community it serves to abrogate, censor or curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view, listen or participate by demanding the removal of, or restrictions to library information sources in any format.

## **Library Programming, Events, and Space Bookings**

It is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and expression by implementing it consistently when hosting programs and events within the public space of the library including rented public space by individuals and community organizations.

Libraries create welcoming community spaces where community members are free from discrimination and may engage in peaceful assembly. Libraries may cancel or deny permits to individuals or organizations when speech or displays are used in a way that is unlawful.

### **Applicable legislation:**

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: Section 2(b) of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* protects “freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication”.

Criminal Code: Section 63 pertains to Unlawful Assemblies and Riots. Section 297 pertains to defamatory libel. Section 318 pertains to hate propaganda.

Ontario Human Rights Code: Sub-section 13 pertains to infringing on freedom from discrimination.

Revision approved at the OLA AGM, January 30, 2020

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**Appendix B: Collection Material Purchase Request Form**

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**BELLEVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**COLLECTION MATERIAL PURCHASE SUGGESTION**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please enter as much information as possible.*

**AUTHOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PUBLISHER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **YEAR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ISBN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REASONS FOR PURCHASING THIS ITEM:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Library Card Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place a hold on this title for me if/when ordered:**  Yes/ No

**Place an interlibrary loan request for this title if not purchased:**

Yes/ No

*Thank you for your request. We cannot guarantee that all items suggested will be purchased or obtained through interlibrary loan.*

**Appendix C: Request for reconsideration of collection item form**

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**Belleville Public Library**

**Request for Reconsideration of an Item in the Collection**

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher/Distributor \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person requesting reconsideration \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Belleville Public Library Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you request reconsideration of this item? Use an additional page if necessary.

To what aspect of the item do you specifically object? Use an additional page if necessary.

Did you read, view, or listen to the item in its entirety? If not, what portions of it did you read, view, or listen to?

What would you like your library to do about this item? Use an additional page if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix D: Target number of annual checkouts per population for asset management planning

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### Board approved asset management target:

Number of checkouts per population = 7 ckos / person

### Current number of checkouts per population:

Year	Population (2021 Census)	Total annual circulation	Number of checkouts / person
2025	55,071	427,498	7.8

### Projected population and target annual circulation

Year	Population projection	Target total annual circulation (7 ckos/person)
2026	60,000	420,000
2031	65,000	455,000
2036	68,000	476,000

The population projection is based on a “medium” growth scenario.

Source: *Population, Housing and Employment Growth Forecast Update for the City of Belleville*, by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. (2022)

## **Appendix E: Current collection size with growth targets**

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The total number of items in our collection (volumes) are recorded in our annual public library survey statistics that we submit to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming each year.

The totals from the 2024 public library survey are as follows:

- Print volumes = 77,956
- Physical media = 10,700
- eBooks = 98,710
- eAudiobooks = 34,540
- Print periodicals = 25
- Electronic periodical titles = 1,578
- Special collections – physical = 274
- Special collections – digital = 16,812

### **Total collection items = 240,595 items**

Population in 2025 (based on 2021 census) = 55, 071

This equals a total number of collection items per population of **4 items / person**.

### **Projected population and target collection size**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population projection</b>	<b>Target total number of collection items per population (4 items / person)</b>
2026	60,000	240,000
2031	65,000	260,000
2036	68,000	272,000

The population projection is based on a “medium” growth scenario.

Source: *Population, Housing and Employment Growth Forecast Update for the City of Belleville, by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. (2022)*

**Collection size as of 31 December 2025:**

<b>Library Collection</b>	<b>Number of items</b>
<b>Adult Fiction</b>	
Fantasy	415
General Fiction	8,987
Inspirational	741
Mysteries	3757
Romance	1,257
Science Fiction	376
Western	185
<b>Total adult fiction</b>	<b>15,718</b>
<b>Audiobooks</b>	
Junior	203
Adult	2,584
<b>Total audiobooks</b>	<b>2,787</b>
<b>Board books</b>	<b>837</b>
<b>CDs</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Chinese</b>	
Junior	177
Adult	239
<b>Total Chinese</b>	<b>416</b>
<b>Cognitive Care Kits</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>DVDs</b>	
Junior	1,585
Adult	5,971
<b>Total DVDs</b>	<b>7,456</b>
<b>Easy Readers</b>	<b>2,338</b>
<b>French</b>	
Junior	1,610
Adult	414
<b>Total French titles</b>	<b>2,024</b>
<b>Graphic Novels</b>	
Junior	2,345
Teen	2,028
Adult	884
<b>Total graphic novels</b>	<b>5,267</b>

<b>Hotspots</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Junior Fiction</b>	<b>5,657</b>
<b>Korean</b>	
	Junior 124
	Adult 123
<b>Total Korean titles</b>	<b>247</b>
<b>Large Print</b>	<b>3,973</b>
<b>Lifejackets (PFD)</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Literacy</b>	<b>275</b>
<b>Local History</b>	<b>1,249</b>
<b>Magazines</b>	<b>371</b>
<b>Museum and Park Passes</b>	
Quinte Conservation Park Pass	7
Canadian Canoe Museum Pass	2
Glanmore Museum Pass	6
Ontario Parks Parking Pass	3
<b>Total museum and park passes</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Non-Fiction</b>	
	Junior 8,997
	Adult 12,060
	Biographies 3,408
<b>Total non-fiction</b>	<b>24,465</b>
<b>Picture Books</b>	<b>7,581</b>
<b>Puzzles and Games</b>	<b>239</b>
<b>Sensory Kits</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Special Collections</b>	
	Jourard 143
	Peter C. Newman 30
	Farley Mowat 56
<b>Total special collections</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>Teen Fiction</b>	<b>2,779</b>
<b>Ukrainian</b>	

	Junior	54
	Adult	47
<b>Total Ukrainian titles</b>		<b>101</b>
<b>Total physical collections</b>		<b>84,145</b>
<b>Overdrive – Audiobooks</b>		
	Shared Collection	30,127
	Advantage titles	72
<b>Total Overdrive – audiobooks</b>		<b>30,199</b>
<b>Overdrive – eBooks</b>		
	Shared Collection	101,260
	Advantage titles	814
<b>Total Overdrive – ebooks</b>		<b>102,074</b>
<b>Overdrive – Magazines</b>		<b>4,506</b>
<b>Total Overdrive collections</b>		<b>136,779</b>
<b>Total collections</b>		<b>220,924</b>

## Appendix F: Cost per circ and average item costs of collection purchases

Collection – Physical	Amount Spent in 2025	Total Circs in 2025	Cost per Circ (per item)
Adult Fiction	\$27,000	69,474	\$0.39
Adult Non-Fiction**	\$22,000	29,116	\$0.76
Children Fiction	\$7,500	36,540	\$0.21
Children Non-Fiction	\$5,500	14,343	\$0.38
Children Picture Book	\$8,500	63,149	\$0.14
Young Adult Fiction	\$5,000	12,419	\$0.40
Large Print	\$7,000	13,765	\$0.51
Literacy	\$500	428	\$1.17
Multilingual***	\$3,500	4,731	\$0.74
Periodicals	\$1,000	2,852	\$0.35
CD Audiobooks (adult and children's)	\$12,000	3,489	\$3.44
DVD (adult and children's)	\$20,000	36,709	\$0.55

\*\*Includes biographies, memoirs and young adult non-fiction titles.

\*\*\*Includes French, Chinese, Korean, and Ukrainian adult and children's titles.

The chart below gives a snapshot on how much an average item costs the library.

Collection Item	Average cost (per item)
E-Audiobook (Overdrive and Hoopla FLEX)	\$67.64
E-Book (Overdrive)	\$48.39
Audiobook	\$63.99
DVD – Feature Film	\$35.58
DVD – TV Series	\$41.13
Adult Non-Fiction book	\$38.72
Adult Fiction book	\$32.88
Adult Paperback	\$13.92
Large Print Book	\$36.27
Junior Picture Book	\$13.83
Junior Fiction	\$18.74
Junior Non-Fiction	\$24.19
Teen Fiction	\$26.31
Literacy	\$22.56

<b>Collection – Digital</b>	<b>Amount Spent in 2025</b>	<b>Total Circs in 2025</b>	<b>Cost per Circ (per item)</b>
Overdrive (Libby)	\$40,000	81,600	\$0.49
Hoopla	\$42,000	15,683	\$2.68
Kanopy	\$3,000	3,306	\$0.91
Medici TV	\$2,500	593	\$4.22