

# INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

<b>Policy Type:</b> Foundational	<b>Policy Number:</b> FN-06
<b>Policy Title:</b> Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility	<b>Policy Approval Date:</b> March 2026
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**Policy Statement:**

Norfolk County Public Library affirms the dignity and rights of all people and is committed to fostering an environment that advances inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

The library recognizes the diversity of Norfolk County and works to ensure equitable access to library services, collections, programs, employment opportunities, and spaces.

The Norfolk County Public Library Board expects all library operations and services to reflect these principles.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to guide decision-making that promotes inclusive and equitable library services and removes barriers to participation for members of the community.

**Section 1: Definitions**

**Inclusion** is the creation of environments in which all individuals feel welcomed, respected, supported, and able to fully participate.

**Equity** focuses on justice and fairness. While equality provides the same resources to everyone, equity recognizes that individuals may require different supports to ensure fair access and opportunity.

**Diversity** refers to the range of human differences including but not limited to race, ancestry, place of origin, citizenship, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, physical ability, religious beliefs, education, and political beliefs as recognized in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

**Accessibility** refers to the removal of barriers and the design of services, spaces, information, and technologies that allow people with disabilities to participate fully.

## **Section 2: Principles**

Norfolk County Public Library is committed to advancing inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in all aspects of library governance and operations.

The library will:

- Assess barriers to accessing library services and take steps to reduce or remove those barriers.
- Provide collections that reflect diverse cultures, perspectives, and lived experiences.
- Design programs and services that support inclusive participation.
- Maintain welcoming, safe, and accessible library spaces.
- Promote respectful and inclusive interactions among staff, volunteers, and the public.
- Support staff training related to accessibility, anti-racism, and inclusive service delivery.

## **Section 3: Collections**

The library develops and maintains collections that reflect the diversity of the community and supports equitable access to information.

A broad range of authors, creators, and lived experiences will be included in the library's collections across all formats.

Collection practices are guided by the Library's Collection Development Policy and the principle of intellectual freedom.

## **Section 4: Services and Programs**

The library works with communities to develop inclusive consultation and engagement processes.

Programs and services will be designed to support equitable participation and to reduce barriers wherever possible.

The library welcomes displays, programs, and services that reflect the diversity and interests of the community.

## **Section 5: Library Spaces**

Norfolk County Public Library strives to ensure that library facilities are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive.

Facility planning, signage, and collection arrangement will support equitable access and avoid practices that create barriers or stigmatizing labels.

### **Section 6: Accountability**

The Board establishes this policy and expects it to guide library governance and operations.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing this policy through procedures, staff training, operational practices, and service planning.

### **Section 7: Legislative and professional Framework**

This policy is informed by:

- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- Canadian Federation of Library Associations Statement on Diversity and Inclusion.

### **Related Documents**

Intellectual Freedom (FN-04)

Respect and Acknowledgement Declaration (FN-05)

Workplace Harassment and Discrimination (HR-07)

Collection Development (OP-03)

Code of Conduct (Public) (OP-04)

Adult Programming (OP-06)