

POLICY: **DISPLAYING AND DISTRIBUTING INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

SECTION: **II – General Policies - Miscellaneous**

MOTION#/DATE: **08 - – May 12, 2008**

Effective Date

May 12, 2008

Policy Objective

To establish the conditions and context within which Toronto Public Library supports the distribution and posting of community information from individuals, community groups, agencies, institutions and government.

Policy Statement

In keeping with the Library's mission, the display and distribution of material provides residents with opportunities for full participation in the life of their community. In fulfilling this service role, the Library strives to create a welcoming environment for everyone. The Library provides access to information about community activities and events and space to display materials in a variety of formats, including bulk publications (e.g., community newspapers and magazines, cultural brochures, continuing and full-time education calendars).

All requests to display and distribute materials will be handled in a fair and consistent manner.

Priority is given to display or distribute materials from the Toronto Public Library and Toronto Public Library Foundation.

Because space is limited at branches, it may not be possible to display all materials that are acceptable under this policy. The Library will display and distribute materials in appropriate locations for a limited time, subject to the availability of space.

Depending on the availability of space, the Library will also display or distribute materials:

- produced by or about the City of Toronto, its agencies, boards and commissions;
- about statutory programs related to public safety and education (e.g., seat belt safety, fire safety);
- regarding meetings, activities, events and volunteer information in the area;
- of educational, recreational and informational content;
- about cultural events including music, film, art, theatre, festivals and celebrations;
- in languages other than English. Additional information in English about the sponsor or the event may be required.

All material becomes the property of the Toronto Public Library Board and the Library reserves the right to dispose of the material as it sees fit. The display of materials does not constitute an endorsement of any group or its views.

The Library will not display or distribute:

- materials that contravene the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, federal or provincial laws and regulations, municipal by-laws and/or Toronto Public Library policies and procedures;
- materials whose primary focus and/or editorial policy is partisan or political in nature and communications from political representatives. However, political materials may be eligible when they announce community meetings or forums for discussion of community issues;
- faith-based materials whose primary purpose and/or editorial policy is promoting faith;
- materials that are primarily devoted to the sale, advertising, solicitation, or promotion of commercial products or services;
- personal ads and notices and notices of items for sale or rent;
- materials in unsuitable formats (e.g. tear-offs or oversize materials);
- materials that invite participation in medical research, including trials or testing.
- contests, surveys and pledge forms;
- fundraising with the exception of Toronto Public Library Foundation or local community-based materials;
- petitions.

Decisions to refuse display or distribution of materials may be appealed. An appeal must be made in writing to the City Librarian.

Scope

This policy applies to all materials displayed on and/or distributed on Library premises from individuals, community groups, agencies, institutions and government.

Application

This policy applies to any individual or group wishing to display and/or distribute information in Library premises and to all Library staff involved in the review and approval of this information.

Accountability

City Librarian is responsible for:

- Receiving appeals and notifying appellants of the decision in writing.

Marketing and Communications are responsible for:

- reviewing and approving materials for system-wide distribution within the criteria set out in this policy;
- communicating with publishers for bulk publications distribution;
- reviewing and approving questionable material received from branches and providing either distribution instructions or reason for declining.

Managers are responsible for:

- communicating this policy and procedure to all employees;
- approving materials within criteria set out in this policy;
- approving the selection of bulk publications for branches in their jurisdiction;
- responding to customer comments about materials that are posted/distributed.

Branch staff are responsible for:

- approving requests that comply with the policy to post/distribute materials from their branch only;
- seeking guidance from Marketing and Communications regarding the acceptability of materials to determine whether or not materials comply with the policy;
- forwarding requests to post/distribute materials to more than one location to Marketing and Communications for approval.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – References

Appendix 2 – Definitions

Appendix 3 – Enquiries

Appendix 1: References

Toronto Public Library Policies

Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy as amended.

Communications Policy as amended.

Materials Selection Policy as amended.

Rules of Conduct Policy as amended.

Use of Library Space for Art Exhibits Policy as amended.

Provincial Legislation

Ontario *Human Rights Code*, 1990, c. H.19 as amended.

Federal Legislation

Criminal Code (R.S., 1985, c. C-46) as amended.

Appendix 2: Definitions

Bulk Publications: Community newspapers and other publications (e.g., magazines, cultural brochures, continuing and full-time education calendars) that are delivered in bulk for pick-up from the branches.

Appendix 3: Enquiries

Director, Marketing and Communications

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Manager, Marketing and Communications

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