

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY

Board Approved: June 22, 2023

The Southgate Public Library recognizes its key commitments in fostering, cultivating, and supporting a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion. As a trusted and enduring public institution, Southgate Public Library acknowledges its responsibility to address barriers, promote, and nurture a culture that values diversity and fosters social inclusion.

Libraries strive to deliver inclusive service. The Southgate Public Library recognizes and affirms the dignity of those they serve, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, income, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical, or mental abilities.

The Southgate Public Library acts to ensure that people can enjoy services free from attempts by others to impose values, customs, or beliefs.

Section 1: Definitions

1. **Equity** - Definitions of equity vary but all focus on the ideals of justice and fairness. Whereas equality means providing everyone with the same number of resources regardless of whether everyone needs them, equity is when resources are shared based on what each person needs to adequately level the playing field.
2. **Diversity** - The range of human differences, as listed within the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, chapter H.19 s. 5 (1).
<https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code>
3. **Inclusion** - Is the act of creating environments and spaces in which any individual or group feels welcomed, valued, respected, supported and can fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

Section 2: Declaration

The Library is committed to fostering an environment which makes equity, diversity, and inclusion a priority in planning and decision making for staffing, collections, services, and spaces. Our staff training will include accessibility, antiracism, anti-oppression, and cultural awareness training. Select training opportunities are available for Southgate Public Library Board members and Southgate Public Library volunteers.

The Library endorses the CFLA Position Statement of Diversity and Inclusion prepared by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations.

<http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/guidelines-and-position-papers/position-statement-on-diversity-and-inclusion/#:~:text=The%20Canadian%20Federation%20of%20Library, strive%20to%20d>

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Section 3: Collections

The Southgate Public Library strives to provide diverse collections relating to cultures, languages, religious traditions, and peoples, in all our formats from books to audio and video materials. A broad range of authors, content creators and experiences will be included and highlighted in our collection. Our bibliographic database will use subject headings and descriptors which are more inclusive, including the use of Indigenous Subject Headings as they become available.

Section 4: Services and Programming

As we develop and deliver services and programs, we work with our community to develop inclusive consultation and engagement processes and to develop services in appropriate ways. We will seek to understand how diverse community groups define and describe themselves and we will listen to and learn from communities rather than relying on indirect sources.

In the spirit of equity, diversity and inclusion for all members, the Library welcomes the exhibit of displays and provision of programs and services that reflect and fit within the communities (e.g., displays during various religious holidays, culturally significant dates, etc.).

Section 5: Spaces

The Southgate Public Library will provide welcoming spaces for all. Our spaces will be inclusive with areas free of bias.

Related Documents:

Board, Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct
Patron Code of Conduct Policy
Collection Development Policy