

# Georgina Public Library Board Policy Manual

## Policy Title: Programming

### ***Intent***

Georgina Public Library (GPL) offers programming as part of its public service mission to connect the community with knowledge, information, and opportunities for discovery. GPL is committed to preserving and promoting universal access to a broad range of material, experiences, and ideas in a welcoming and supportive environment.

Library programs are designed to respond to community needs and interests while aligning with the priorities outlined in GPL's Strategic Plan. They reflect the Library's vision, mission, and values.

Early literacy programming is a core service of GPL, providing opportunities for babies, preschoolers, and school-aged children to develop foundational skills. In addition to early literacy, GPL's core programming includes ongoing initiatives for all ages – from children and teens to adults and seniors – that support multiple literacies, digital skills, lifelong learning, and cultural enrichment. For adult audiences in particular, GPL programs aim to showcase the Library's collections and resources, provide access to subject-matter expertise, support skill development and job readiness, and foster connections among residents and communities.

GPL distinguishes between these ongoing core programs and special one-time or series programs. Core programs (e.g. storytimes, technology training workshops, book clubs) form the foundation of our service offerings and are maintained consistently to meet enduring community needs. Special or one-off programs are offered periodically to address emerging interests or unique opportunities, often in collaboration with community partners, ensuring that new topics and diverse viewpoints can be explored without compromising our core service delivery.

### ***Scope***

This policy applies to all library-organized or co-sponsored programs, whether delivered on-site, off-site, or virtually. It does not apply to events run by outside organizations on library premises that are simply renting space (see the Room Rentals Policy for those terms).

### ***Regulations***

#### **Program Development and Delivery**

1. All library-initiated programs (including those proposed by external individuals or groups) must be approved in advance through the Library's internal review process (Manager, Library Community Engagement, in consultation with the CEO/Director of Library Services). This ensures that

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- each program meets the criteria of this policy and aligns with GPL's strategic priorities.
2. Programs will be developed and delivered in compliance with all GPL Policies, including Codes of Conduct for the Public and Employees.
  3. Programs will be delivered by qualified staff and/or appropriate subject matter experts. All presenters (staff or external) are expected to uphold GPL's standards of conduct and contribute to the Library's safe, supportive, and welcoming environment. Presenters working with vulnerable groups (such as children or other at-risk communities) must meet any screening or security check requirements as per Library policy.
  4. Programs will be developed with consideration for the principles of accessibility, equity, and inclusion. These include, but are not limited to, access for people with disabilities, and delivery at times and locations and through channels that maximize convenience and encourage attendance by the target audience. The Library affirms its commitment to providing equitable program access to all community members, as reflected in our Inclusion and Diversity policies.
  5. While the Library may not present all sides of an issue within a single program or series, GPL is committed to balancing viewpoints across its programming mix over time and providing a forum for a diversity of ideas. Programming proposals from individuals and community groups are welcomed; they will be evaluated based on their alignment with the Library's mission, this policy's criteria, and the availability of resources. (Approval of any given proposal is not guaranteed and applies to a single instance; repeat or future proposals will be reviewed separately on their own merits.)
  6. Programs may cover a range of topics and ideas which are of current interest and possible future significance, including topics and ideas which reflect current conditions, trends and controversies. Children's access to programming is the responsibility of their guardians.
  7. Library-sponsored programming receives priority use of Library rooms and spaces.
  8. Any program fees or revenues collected will be handled in accordance with the Library's established financial protocols. GPL programs are offered free of charge whenever possible, with fees only being charged on a cost-recovery basis for certain special programs or materials. All fees and applicable taxes (e.g. HST) will be transparently communicated, and the Library will ensure compliance with municipal and federal requirements when handling program revenues. Cash, debit, credit, or mobile pay options are accepted methods of payment for program fees.
  9. Library branch staff are responsible for promotion of programs through flyers, media releases, library web page, social media, and other available options.
  10. The Library strives to accommodate all individuals who wish to attend a program. However, attendance may be limited when required by fire code, safety considerations, or the nature of the program.

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When limits are necessary, participation will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis, or via pre-registration (as specified for the event). Certain programs may also have age-based restrictions to ensure content appropriateness. When demand exceeds capacity, GPL may give preference to Georgina Library cardholders, while still accommodating others as space permits

11. Program Refunds:
  - non-attendance does not constitute a notice of withdrawal from a program.
  - All refund requests must be submitted in writing to the appropriate Georgina Public Library program organizer at least five (5) business days prior to the program start date.
  - It is the participant's responsibility to ensure the program content meets their expectations before registering.
12. Cancellation/Termination of a class/program: all efforts will be made to contact registered participants if a class/program needs to be cancelled or re-scheduled for any reason. Full refunds will apply in this situation, if required.
13. Programs may be developed and delivered through collaboration between GPL, Town of Georgina or other external organizations. Co-sponsorship of programs with other non-profit agencies is encouraged. The Library's role may include, but is not limited to, Library staff time in planning the program, providing space for the program, and promotion of the program. GPL will formalize roles and expectations with partners when co-delivering programs (e.g. via a program agreement), to ensure a shared understanding of responsibilities. Commercial products or services may not be advertised or sold at Library-sponsored programs. Partners, sponsors, or vendors may display their name, logo, and general informational materials for the purpose of acknowledgement or recognition and may share information about their services in an informational capacity. However, direct sales activities, transactions, or solicitation of business are not permitted on Library premises. Exceptions may be made for authors invited to present at the Library, who are permitted to sell their own books in connection with their program. Additional exceptions for specific events (e.g., maker fairs or similar community events) may be approved at the discretion of the CEO/Director of Library Services.
14. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by the participants, any more than the purchase of materials for the library collection constitutes an endorsement of the contents of the materials or the views of the creator. Library staff select topics, speakers, and resource materials for library-initiated programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Topics, speakers, and resource materials are not excluded from library-initiated programs because of possible controversy. This stance is in line with the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries and the Ontario Library

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Association’s Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual, as well as the American Library Association’s interpretation, Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource.

15. Public use of Library rooms for programs/meetings are authorized through Service Georgina and the Town of Georgina Community Services Department. Set rental rates apply and will only be waived with Director of Library Services/CEO approval.

## Reconsideration of a Program

1. The Library believes that a vital society encourages members of its community to actively participate in an open exchange of ideas and opinions. The Library offers a wide selection of programs inspired by the community’s diverse needs and interests.
2. Library programs are developed to serve the diverse informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the community. The content or manner of expression in a program may be perceived as offensive by some individuals. GPL affirms the right of any person or group to choose not to attend a program. However, no individual or group has the right to prevent or limit others’ access to Library programs.
3. Library customers who object to specific programs may submit a written request for reconsideration to the Manager, Library Community Engagement (or designate) or CEO/Director of Library Services (or designate), if they feel that the content of the program is not consistent with the criteria outlined in this policy, the Ontario Library Associations Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual, and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries.
4. Requests for reconsideration will be reviewed by senior staff, and a written response will be provided to the customer once the review is complete. Programs will proceed as scheduled while any request is under review. If the requester is not satisfied with the staff’s decision, they may submit an appeal in writing to the CEO (or designate) within 5 business days of the response. The CEO will review the appeal and make the final decision on the matter.

POLICY HISTORY:	
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