



BRACEBRIDGE LIBRARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy Number: GOV-07
Title: Board Orientation, Training and Evaluation

Board Approval Date: November 2025

Category: Governance
Policy Replacing: N/A

Year of next review: 2029

PURPOSE:

The Library Board recognizes that ongoing education strengthens effective governance. Continuous training ensures that board members focus on strategic direction, policy implications, and community engagement rather than operational matters.

Section 1 - Orientation

Board Member orientation is necessary for there to be a common and shared understanding of the authority and role of the library board.

1. New board members shall receive a comprehensive orientation within two months of appointment (or prior to their first regular meeting if feasible).
2. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the board chair shall be responsible for developing an agenda to provide an orientation which shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. information on the library's vision, mission and values
 - b. an overview of the **Public Libraries Act**, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44
 - c. an overview of the board bylaws and governance policies
 - d. a discussion on the purpose, structure, code of conduct and function of the library board
 - e. a tour of the library and an introduction to employees and services
3. Each board member will receive access to the Board portal which will include, but is not limited to, links for:
 - a. the current **Bracebridge Library policies**
 - b. the library's current planning document
 - c. an overview of the annual operating plan and the current budget
 - d. an application for library membership

- e. *Public Libraries Act R.S.O. 1990*
- f. **Library Board Orientation** materials prepared by the Ontario Library Service
- g. **Cut to the Chase: Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance.** (Ontario Library Boards' Association)

- 4. Board members will receive training on the accessibility standards set out in the Regulations of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act*, including training on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

Section 2 – Ongoing Training

The Library Board recognizes that ongoing education strengthens effective governance. Continuous training ensures that board members focus on strategic direction, policy implications, and community engagement rather than operational matters.

- 1. To ensure ongoing education, the library board will:
 - a. schedule time for board training or education pieces during its regular meetings and may include activities outside of scheduled meetings
 - b. maintain a membership in the Ontario Library Association and the Ontario Library Boards' Association
 - c. assign a representative who will attend the Ontario Library Service Board Assembly meetings and report back to the library board
 - d. Annually provide funding for two (2) Board members to attend relevant conferences that the CEO feels would be valuable (i.e., OLS Superconference, Municipal conferences, etc.)
- 2. The library board will receive information from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) about training and networking offered by various organizations in Ontario.
- 3. The cost of any training must be approved by the library board before it is undertaken.
- 4. Board members will report on their participation in training events.
- 5. Board members are encouraged to participate in training opportunities that include, but are not limited to:
 - a. effective governance
 - b. planning
 - c. advocacy
 - d. funding development
 - e. decision making

Section 3 – Board Evaluation

The library board will monitor its own effectiveness in fulfilling its major responsibilities and achieving strategic goals. The evaluation process identifies key areas for board improvement and the requisite follow-up action or further training. This policy ensures that the library board assesses its effectiveness.

1. The library board will evaluate its effectiveness on an annual basis.
2. The chair is responsible for managing the process of the evaluation.
3. The library board evaluates itself in the areas of:
 - a. Board conduct and practice
 - b. Policy development
 - c. Strategic Planning
 - d. Advocacy and Community Engagement
 - e. Relationship with the CEO
 - f. Financial Planning and Oversight
 - g. Board development and training
4. To facilitate the evaluation process, the library board will develop an annual work plan in January of each year and in November, the library board will evaluate its success in completing the work plan.
5. A self-evaluation questionnaire will be distributed each year at the November Board meeting, completed anonymously and returned to the CEO by November 30. The CEO will compile the results which will be reviewed by the Chair, and presented for discussion at the December Board meeting, allowing for a review of strengths and weaknesses of the Board, and plans for improvement.

Previous Revisions: Governance #8

Related Documents: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and Ontario Regulation 165/16 Ontario Library Boards' Association. Cut to the Chase: Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance. Ontario Library Service. Governance HUB posted at <https://www.olservice.ca/gov-hub> Board Advocacy and Work Plan Committee Terms of Reference