

Artificial Intelligence Policy

Policy Number:	GOV - 15
Policy Category:	Governance
Approved by:	OPL Board
Accountability:	CEO or Designate
Approval Date:	August 21, 2025
Effective date:	August 22, 2025
Next Review Date:	2028
Supersedes:	

Purpose:

This policy provides a framework for the responsible, ethical, and equitable use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the Oakville Public Library (OPL) to enhance services for both library customers and staff.

As a public library, OPL plays a unique role in promoting information and digital literacy, and OPL's approach to AI will prioritize human-centered service, transparency, privacy, and respect for community values. By aligning AI use with OPL's mission and core values to ensure equitable access, foster curiosity and belonging, support lifelong learning, uphold intellectual freedom, and deliver exceptional service, OPL commits to using technology to enhance our role in the community.

Through AI, OPL aims to connect people to what inspires them in a responsible and ethical way while respecting the privacy, security, and inclusivity of all community members.

Scope:

This policy applies to all library employees, including but not limited to full-time, part-time, temporary, students and volunteers, referred to hereafter as "staff". Additionally, this policy applies to all Library Board members.

The individual customer use of AI tools is out of scope of this policy. The OPL Customer Code of Conduct policy, Internet Access and Acceptable Use policy, and Customer Privacy Policy apply to all customer activities, including those undertaken using AI tools provided by or accessed through resources provided by OPL. This includes the use of third-party applications or platforms that incorporate AI functionalities and are accessed via OPL-provided services, databases, or technology offerings. Customers are responsible for ensuring their use of these tools aligns with all applicable OPL policies and terms of use.

Policy Statement:

Oakville Public Library acknowledges the transformative potential of AI tools in improving library services and operations. The Library is committed to adopting AI technologies in a responsible manner that aligns with its values and enhances library services.

This policy establishes principles for the secure, responsible, and effective use of AI tools by staff, while mitigating associated risks. It aligns with relevant legislation, frameworks, and best practices for ethical AI use.

All AI tool selection, usage guidelines, and implementation practices outlined in this policy will align with and comply with the Town of Oakville's Information Technology Services (ITS) AI guidelines and policies as issued and regularly updated.

We will:

- **Utilize AI Responsibly and Transparently:** OPL's use of AI will be in support of its strategic goals and in ways that are open and understandable to all library customers and stakeholders. OPL staff will make every effort to recognize the limitations and biases of AI tools, critically evaluate their outputs, and use professional judgment when making decisions.
- **Uphold Privacy and Security:** Data used by AI will adhere to the highest privacy and security standards, respecting legal and ethical frameworks. Personal Information (PI) and other restricted or confidential information will never be uploaded to an AI tool unless the tool has been explicitly approved by OPL for that purpose. The entry into public AI systems of sensitive or confidential information, or any data, text, and images that could compromise OPL is strictly prohibited.
- **Ensure Human Oversight:** Library staff will always play a role in overseeing AI functions, verifying information, and ensuring outputs align with our standards for accuracy and appropriateness, as well as compliance with organizational standards and values. AI tools enhance productivity but do not replace professional decision-making.
- **Protect Intellectual Property:** AI use will respect copyright, intellectual property, and the creative contributions of authors, artists, and creators. All content produced or assisted by AI will be clearly attributed.
- **Promote Digital Equity and Inclusion:** AI tools and services will be implemented in ways that are accessible, inclusive, and free from biases that could disadvantage any community members.
- **Commit to Continuous Learning and Ethical AI Literacy:** We are dedicated to continuous learning and digital literacy to deepen our understanding of AI and its applications within a library setting. As AI technology evolves rapidly, we are

committed to staying current on best practices and ensuring our approach to AI remains informed, responsible, and ethically grounded.

The Library recognizes that enforcement of AI use guidelines relies primarily on staff education and professional responsibility rather than technical restrictions. OPL will ensure staff receive appropriate training on ethical AI use, privacy protection, and responsible application of AI tools as provided through Town-approved training platforms outlined in the Town's AI guidelines.

Policy Governance and Interpretation:

Library leadership, with support from human resources and other relevant departments, will oversee the interpretation and application of this policy. Any ambiguities or concerns about AI use will be reviewed by the CEO, or authorized delegates.

Accountability, Responsibilities and Consequences of Non-Compliance:

Failure to adhere to the ethical and responsible guidelines for AI use as outlined in this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employer:

- Evaluate and approve AI systems for staff use in alignment with Town ITS guidelines
- Ensure approved systems comply with privacy, security, and organizational standards
- Provide staff training and guidance on AI policy requirements
- Review this policy annually to ensure continued relevance and compliance

Leaders:

- Ensure staff understand and follow AI policy requirements
- Provide guidance on appropriate AI use within their areas
- Serve as first point of contact for AI-related questions
- Report policy violations or concerns to EMT

Employees:

- Read, understand, and comply with AI use policies and procedures
- Use only Town-approved AI tools as specified in guidelines
- Protect confidential information by never inputting sensitive data into AI tools
- Report any AI-related security or privacy concerns immediately to supervisor

- Seek approval from management before using any AI tools not on the approved list
- Oversee and verify AI-generated content for accuracy

Town ITS:

- All AI tool approvals must ultimately align with Town of Oakville Information Technology Services guidelines and approval processes
- Library-specific AI tool requests require coordination with Town ITS through established procurement and approval channels

References

Government of Canada – Responsible Use of AI

<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/digital-government-innovations/responsible-use-ai.html>

United Nations Resolution on Artificial Intelligence

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/ltd/n24/065/92/pdf/n2406592.pdf?token=eA7Nky8Twa1uWLZI9H&fe=true>
<https://www.un.org/en/ai-advisory-body>

Urban Libraries Council – AI Leadership Brief

https://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/AI_Leadership-Brief_October2023.pdf

Definitions:

Artificial Intelligence

A machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments. Different AI systems vary in their levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment.

Generative AI

A type of AI that produces content such as text, audio, code, videos and images. This content is produced based on information the user inputs, called a “prompt,” which is typically a short instructional text.

Public AI

An AI system made broadly accessible by a vendor to any user, typically via a public platform or interface. These systems often collect user inputs and outputs to continuously train and improve their algorithms. Data processed by public AI may be transmitted and stored outside the organization’s infrastructure, raising considerations around data privacy and control.

Private AI

An AI system that is developed, hosted, or procured for exclusive use within an organization. It operates in a controlled environment, ensuring that data remains within the organization's infrastructure or under strict contractual data protection measures. Private AI is designed to maintain greater confidentiality, security, and compliance.

Responsible AI

A framework of principles and practices that guide the ethical, transparent, and accountable design, development, and use of artificial intelligence. Responsible AI emphasizes fairness, safety, privacy, inclusivity, and human oversight.

Personal Information

Recorded information about an identifiable individual that goes beyond basic contact details. This includes data such as personal history, opinions, identifying numbers, biometric data, and any other information that could reasonably be linked to a specific person.

Confidential Business Information

Non-public information shared or maintained in confidence, which provides a business with a competitive advantage or operational privacy. This may include proprietary data, trade secrets, strategic plans, contracts, or sensitive internal communications, and is subject to reasonable measures to ensure its protection.