
Smiths Falls Public Library



Policy Type: **Operational**

Policy Number: **OP-03**

Policy Title: **The Library and Political Elections**

Policy Approval Date: **April 2018**

Last Review Date: **June 23, 2026**

The library must act and appear to act in a non-partisan way at all times, but especially during elections, while supporting the democratic process, freedom of expression and informed discussion on political issues. The library must comply with legislation related to elections. This policy applies to Board members, employees and volunteers of the library in their dealings with candidates and political parties and the use of library resources during the campaign periods for municipal, provincial and federal elections.

Section 1: Campaign Contributions

1. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*, Section 70(4), the *Elections Finances Act*, Section 16(1), and *Canada Elections Act*, Section 404(1), the Board may not make a contribution to the campaign of any candidate or political party in the form of money, goods or services.

Section 2: Use of Library Resources and Property

1. All candidates and political parties have equal access to publicly available resources and services of the library.
2. Candidates cannot use equipment, supplies, staff or other operational resources of the library nor may they use the library's logo in any campaign material.
3. 'All-candidates' meetings can be held at the library, either as a library program or sponsored by another group, provided that all candidates are

invited to attend such meetings. A candidate cannot be featured or promoted in association with any other regular library program or event.

4. Candidates and political parties are permitted to distribute campaign materials on public right-of-ways at the library, unless prohibited by a municipal by-law.
5. In accordance with the *Canada Elections Act* section 81.1(1) federal election candidates or their representatives are allowed to campaign in facilities that are available for free to the public.
6. No campaign materials will be allowed on the library premises. The Library will promote awareness of the election; and provide general information on elections (eg. how to register to vote).
7. No election sign or poster specific to a candidate or political party can be posted on the grounds of the library or in the library building.

Section 3: Employee and Volunteer Participation in Election Campaigns

1. Any library employee running as a candidate in a municipal election will comply with Section 30 of the *Municipal Elections Act*.
2. A library employee or volunteer involved in a political campaign must be politically neutral in carrying out his or her library duties and must not participate in campaign activities during his or her working hours.

Section 4: Library Board Members as Candidates

1. Board members may continue their library board responsibilities when they are running for office.

Section 5: Requests for information about the library

1. The CEO will coordinate requests for information about the library received from candidates or political parties.
2. Information that is provided by the library to one candidate or political party will be provided to all other candidates and political parties upon request during an election.
3. Any candidate or political party may request a meeting with the CEO or a tour of the library.