



Library Services for Indigenous Persons Operational Policy

May 2022

Network Policy Statement

The Government of Alberta has established and sustains a network known as the Public Library Network that connects Alberta's public libraries to enable access to public library resources and services for residents of Alberta. The network is coordinated and supported by Alberta Municipal Affairs through Public Library Services Branch (PLSB).

Statement of Purpose

Public libraries have a fundamental responsibility to provide equitable access to library collections, resources, and facilities. All facets of library service should be made available to every community member. The Alberta Public Library Network aims to support public libraries in the provision of equitable access to library resources for all Albertans.

Equitable access includes facilitating engagement and full participation in library services and resources for all people in Alberta, including those citizens who reside on First Nations reserves and Metis settlements.

Policy

The Government of Alberta supports public libraries in the provision of barrier free library services for citizens living on First Nations reserves and Metis settlements.

1. Citizens living on First Nations reserves and Metis settlements will have access to public library resources through the Public Library Network at no additional charge.
2. The Government of Alberta will support equitable access by Indigenous communities to the provincial e-resource suite.
3. The local library board has primary responsibility for developing and providing equitable library service at the local level.

Principles

Indigenous persons having access to existing library services addresses, but is not limited to, such principles as:

- a) basic human rights;
- b) a safe, public space;
- c) public internet;
- d) education and lifelong learning;
- e) accessible resources;
- f) culture, language, media and all library resources.

Roles

Alberta Municipal Affairs, Public Library Services Branch (PLSB)

Provides primary support for services for Indigenous persons by:

- a) Supporting Network Participants to provide seamless access through public library service points.
- b) Providing access to the Network through the Public Library Network Policy.

Definitions

Equitable Access: Fair and open access to information regardless of user location.

Interlibrary loan (ILL): The temporary transfer of print and non-print library materials, or a copy of those materials, from one Network Participant library service point to another in response to a specific patron request. This may be done physically or electronically.

Seamless: Policy and technology discrepancies either do not limit users' access to resources and services or are not visible and/or disruptive from the user perspective.

User: A resident of Alberta who has a home library card from a Network Participant library service point in the Public Library Network

Operational Guidelines

- a) As a fundamental part of equitable library service, services and resources for Indigenous communities should be fully integrated into regular library operations.
- b) Expanding access to information for all Albertans is an ongoing priority of public libraries and PLSB.
- c) On-reserve and on-settlement library patrons will have access to public library service points that are managed by local library boards, and to all the services provided by the Province through the Public Library Network. Users will be treated by the Library Board as local residents and will need to acquire a home library card and will be subject to local/municipal card fees if applicable.
- d) On-reserve and on-settlement library patrons have the right to choose their home library within the province.
- e) Individuals have the right to visit any library and access physical materials, participate in in-region programs such as early childhood literacy activities, and access public high-speed internet
- f) Individuals have the right to access to the provincial network of e-content, interlibrary loan catalogues, all resource sharing and other initiatives.
- g) User experience of the network will be seamless.