



Corporate Accountability Policy

Governance & Oversight

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Purpose	1
Scope	1
Definitions	2
Statement of Policy	2
Policy Details	3

Purpose

This policy sets Burlington Public Library’s (BPL) expectations for responsible and ethical business practices. It directs how the Library Board conducts its business to comply with legislative requirements, protect public trust, manage organizational risk, and govern effectively.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Members of the BPL Board
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors and service providers acting on behalf of BPL

All records, information assets, and business activities conducted by or on behalf of BPL. It includes direction for:

- Stewardship of library resources

- Accountability and transparency to the public and stakeholders
- Privacy protection and records management
- Risk management
- Policy governance and oversight

This policy governs BPL's responsibilities as a not-for-profit corporation. Customer responsibilities and expectations for use of library services are addressed in Library Services policies.

Definitions

Corporate Accountability: BPL's duty to act responsibly, transparently, and ethically, and follow applicable laws, Board direction, and maintain public trust.

Personal Information: Recorded information about an identifiable individual, as defined by applicable privacy laws.

Record: Recorded information in any format (digital or physical) created, received, or maintained as evidence of business activities or legal duties.

Risk: Circumstances that threaten the likelihood of achieving organizational goals and objectives.

Risk Management: The system of identifying, evaluating, monitoring, and responding to risks and opportunities.

Statement of Policy

BPL is committed to conducting its business with integrity, accountability, transparency, and care.

The Library will:

- Manage resources and information responsibly.
- Protect privacy and confidential information.
- Maintain accurate and reliable records.
- Identify, prevent, and manage organizational risks.
- Maintain policies that support effective governance.
- Maintain public confidence through ethical and transparent decision-making.

- Comply with applicable laws, regulations, and professional standards.

Policy Details

Governance and Accountability

The Board is responsible for establishing governance policies and overseeing BPL's governance framework. The Board ensures policies align with legislation, strategic priorities, and organizational values.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing Board policies, establishing operational procedures, ensuring compliance, and reporting on corporate accountability matters to the Board.

The library will maintain a regular review cycle for Board policies and ensure policies remain current, effective, and relevant. Policy reviews will follow a maintenance schedule. Legislative changes, strategic planning processes, emerging risks, operational experience, or customer concerns may prompt additional or more frequent reviews.

Transparency and Public Trust

BPL will act in a manner that promotes accountability and public confidence. We will:

- Make Board policies publicly available.
- Create and maintain corporate records to support transparency and accountability.
- Report significant privacy breaches, record incidents, and major risks to the organization through established governance processes.
- Steward public resources responsibly.

Risk Management

BPL recognizes that managing risk is essential to achieving its strategic objectives and operating sustainably. We will:

- Embed risk awareness in organizational culture and decision-making.
- Identify, assess, monitor, and respond to organizational risks.

- Maintain appropriate controls to protect people, assets, services, and information.
- Integrate risk management into strategic planning, governance, and major organizational decisions.
- Regularly report significant risks and response strategies to the Board.

The Board establishes BPL's risk appetite and oversees the effectiveness of risk management practices.

Information Governance and Records Management

BPL records are corporate assets and will be managed throughout their lifecycle to meet legal, operational, historical, and business requirements. We will:

- Maintain records that are accurate, reliable, accessible, and secure.
- Retain records following approved retention schedules.
- Protect records from unauthorized access, alteration, loss, or destruction.
- Securely dispose of records once retention requirements are met.
- Use documentation to support transparency and informed decision-making.

The Board delegates authority to the CEO to establish and maintain records retention schedules, procedures, storage services, and operational practices required to implement this policy.

Privacy and Protection of Personal Information

BPL is committed to protecting personal information entrusted to the Library and recognizes privacy as fundamental to intellectual freedom and public trust. We will:

- Collect only information required to conduct library business and deliver services.
- Inform individuals about the purpose for which personal information is collected.
- Use and disclose personal information only for approved purposes or as required by law.
- Maintain appropriate administrative, physical, operational, and technological safeguards to protect personal information.

- Ensure individuals have access to their own personal information as required by law.
- Design services, facilities, technologies, and business practices with consideration for privacy.

Research

The Library may allow an external partner to use customer library records for valid research. Research must follow this policy and be reviewed by the research organization's ethics committee.

The CEO is the Privacy Officer and is responsible for BPL's compliance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O 1990 (MFIPPA) and Canada Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL).

Artificial Intelligence

BPL recognizes both the opportunities and responsibilities that come with using artificial intelligence (AI). We use technology to improve lives: to strengthen accessibility and inclusion, to support problem-solving, and to give staff more time for human-centred service. All AI-generated content and data stored on the library systems is BPL property and may be subject to public disclosure as required by law. We will:

- Maintain human accountability and oversight when using AI and other digital tools.
- Support ethical and responsible AI use for staff and customers.
- Be open and transparent about when and how AI is used.
- Use AI tools in accordance with established IT security and privacy standards.
- Support environmental sustainability.

Security and Surveillance

Security measures such as video surveillance will only be used when needed to support the safety of people, protection of assets, investigation of incidents, and compliance with legal obligations. We will:

- Balance security needs with privacy rights.
- Provide appropriate public notification when surveillance technologies are used.
- Permit only authorized individuals access to surveillance records.

- Follow privacy and records management requirements for surveillance information.

Operational procedures define practical processes for surveillance.

Continuous Improvement

BPL will regularly evaluate its governance practices, accountability systems, and internal controls to ensure they remain effective, proportional, and responsive to changing legal, technological, and community standards.

Document Information	Details
Approved by	The Burlington Public Library Board
Date	Motion #26-45, September 24, 2026
Amended Dates	
Associated Documents	Related Policies: • Board By-law • Finance Policy • Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Access Related Legislation: • Ontario Public Libraries Act • Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) • Municipal Act • Employment Standards Act • Canada Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)