

**Policy Number:** ST 02

**Policy Title:** Canadian Library Association Statement on Information and Telecommunication Access Principles

**Policy Status:**

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The Strathcona County Library Board supports the following statement from the Canadian Library Association and uses it as a guide in the provision of electronic resources and Internet services to its users.

**Canadian Library Association Statement on Information and Telecommunication Access Principles**

**Preamble**

The convergence of computers and high-speed telecommunication networks provides increased opportunity for public access to information and participation in the democratic processes of society. Conversely, access and participation could be reduced through the imposition of user fees and centralized control.

Librarians, libraries, and library organizations will work to assure the “public good” is represented in all government and corporate initiatives for information dissemination and telecommunications policy. Co-operation with other organizations and public interest groups to protect social interests will strengthen the efforts of the library community.

All people have the right to:

**1. Literacy**

- The opportunity to learn to read and write is fundamental for all people. Basic literacy includes numeracy and information literacy. Literacy is an important requirement for participating in the economic, social, cultural, and political life of the country.
- Everyone should have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to find and use information.

## **2. Universal, Equitable, and Affordable Access**

- Access to information and telecommunication network services should be available and affordable to all regardless of factors such as age, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, social and political views, national origin, economic status, location, and information literacy.
- Diverse sources of information should be developed through encouraging non-profit organizations and community groups to provide information and opinions and by preventing information monopolies.
- Opportunities should be created for broad public participation in the determination of information and telecommunication policy.

## **3. Communicate**

- Individuals have the right to create, exchange, access, and receive the widest range of ideas, information, and images.
- Individuals should have the right to choose what information to receive and what not to receive and what information to give and not give including that which others may find objectionable.

## **4. Public Space on the Telecommunications Networks**

- Government information is fundamental to participation in the democratic process and should therefore be accessible in a current, timely, accurate, and comprehensive manner.
- Access to government information should be guaranteed through active programs of dissemination.
- Opportunities to communicate electronically with elected and appointed government representatives is a vital extension of democracy.
- Government policy should encourage and support archiving of information in support of the collective human memory.
- Government policies should encourage and support the development of community information networks, such as Freenets.
- Government should provide resources for libraries and other community organizations to make electronic access to information available and to provide training to the public in the use of such technology.
- Individuals have the right to know the positive and negative personal and social consequences of the introduction of information technology.
- Individuals have the right to a safe ergonomically-sound environment and appropriate training or re-training when new technologies are introduced.

- Social policies accompanying the introduction of new and more efficient information technologies must emphasize benefits to the whole population, such as greater leisure time and shorter work weeks rather than narrow economic interests.

## 5. Privacy

- Privacy of personal information should be carefully protected and extended.
- Personal data collected should be limited to the minimum necessary and only after the prior written approval of the individual affected.
- Personal information collected for one purpose cannot be traded or sold without the express written permission of the individual affected.
- Individuals should have the right to examine personal information collected by government and corporations and have mistakes corrected at no charge.

Approved by CLA Executive Council June 18, 1994

Approved \_\_\_\_\_, Board Chairman

Date \_\_\_\_\_