

# Anti-Oppression Statement

**Oppression** is when a person or group of people who have power use it over another person or group of people in a way that is unfair, unjust, or cruel. The Colchester-East Hants Public Library (the Library) recognizes that oppression exists in our world. We stand with the communities affected by it and commit to challenging oppressive systems.

We want to make sure that all people who use our services feel like they belong. These people include:

- Indigenous people
- Black people
- People of Colour
- Members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community
- People with different abilities
- Immigrants
- Others who experience hatred and rejection in our world because of who they are.

## Creating a Welcoming Space

People like to think of libraries as safe spaces where everyone is welcome.

Unfortunately, this has not always been true. Libraries have often contributed to widespread oppression. We want to change this. We commit to:

- Making changes that help us move away from racism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression and that help us move closer to equality for everyone.

- Acknowledging our privilege and working with oppressed peoples to create a better future.

## **Diversity**

Diversity is important to the Library. Diversity means welcoming people of different backgrounds to use the Library. We commit to:

- Creating a respectful space for everyone to enjoy.
- Offering materials, programs, and services that represent the diverse people in our communities.

We understand and accept that people have different values and beliefs, which can sometimes create conflict. We work to make sure that people can enjoy the Library without other people pushing their values, customs, or beliefs on them. We commit to:

- Letting people talk openly about their beliefs.
- Not tolerating discrimination of any kind.

## **Making Change**

We believe that it is important to not only say that we are anti-oppressive but to show it by:

- Challenging oppressive systems.
- Making anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion priorities whenever we make important decisions about staffing, materials, services, and organizational change.
- Using a Social Equity Lens framework to guide decision-making in all areas of library services to create inclusion, reduce barriers, and engage with diverse groups. The framework encourages people to reflect on their own beliefs and the impact on decisions or suggestions,

We understand that we will make mistakes and we are committed to learning from them and holding ourselves responsible.

### Comments/Questions

We welcome feedback and suggestions from our community to help us with the anti-oppression work in our library. People can send feedback and suggestions:

#### By email to

- [admin@cehpubliclibrary.ca](mailto:admin@cehpubliclibrary.ca)

#### By phone to

- (902) 895-0235

#### By regular mail to

- Colchester-East Hants Public Library  
754 Prince Street  
Truro, Nova Scotia  
B2N 1G9

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