

	Political Elections Policy	Policy # GO-08
		Policy Type: Governance
		Approved Motion: 2026-22
		Review Date: 2030

PURPOSE

The Ramara Township Public Library operates in a non-partisan manner and is committed to supporting democratic engagement, intellectual freedom, and equitable access to information. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Library remains politically neutral while complying with applicable Ontario and federal legislation during municipal, provincial, and federal election periods.

This policy aligns with the *Public Libraries Act*, which establishes the Library Board’s responsibility to govern and manage the Library in the public interest, free from political influence.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Members of the Library Board
- Library employees
- Library volunteers
- Candidates, elected officials, political parties, and third-party advertisers

The policy applies during municipal, provincial, and federal elections and by election campaign periods.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The Library is a place for informed inquiry, not political advocacy.
- The Library does not endorse or oppose any candidate, political party, or political position.
- All candidates and political parties are treated equitably and consistently.
- Library resources are managed to prevent real or perceived partisan advantage.

AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The CEO, or designate, is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with all applicable election related legislation
- Interpreting and applying this policy
- Coordinating candidate requests and election related activities

USE OF LIBRARY SPACE, RESOURCES, AND SERVICES

The Library shall ensure that no candidate, political party, or third-party advertiser is given an unfair advantage in the use of Library resources.

General Access

- All candidates and political parties have equal access to publicly available Library services and collections.
- Library resources, equipment, supplies, staff time, and communication channels shall not be used to support or oppose any campaign.
- The Library's name, logo, or brand shall not be used in campaign or election related materials.

Use of Space

- Library space may be used by candidates or political parties as approved by the CEO in a manner that ensures it complies with this Policy (see 'Campaigning in the Library' for more details).
- Use of space does not imply endorsement by the Library.
- Campaign events must not interfere with regular Library operations or services.

Campaigning in the Library

- This restriction is based on the Library's mandate and the determination that active campaigning is incompatible with the function and purpose of the Library, consistent with applicable election legislation.
- Single-party campaigning, canvassing, solicitation, or distribution of campaign materials inside the Library is not permitted.
- Campaigning is permitted when the Library CEO, or designate, invites all Parties to a campaign event that has a set determined date and time to use the space in order to ensure fairness and equal opportunity.

Election Materials

- The Library may provide general, non-partisan election information, including how and where to vote.
- The Library may provide equal space for candidates to make available limited quantities of campaign literature or may prohibit campaign materials entirely. Any approach adopted shall be applied consistently to all candidates.
- Election signs, posters, or banners supporting specific candidates or parties are not permitted in the Library.

All Candidates Meetings

- The Library may host or permit all candidates meetings provided all eligible candidates are invited and treated equally.
- Candidates shall not be featured or promoted as part of unrelated Library programs or events.

Campaign Contributions

The Library and the Library Board shall not make campaign contributions in the form of money, goods, or services in the name or on behalf of the Ramara Township Public Library.

Municipal Elections

In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, the Library Board shall not contribute to the campaign of any candidate or political party.

Provincial Elections

In accordance with the Ontario Election Finances Act, the Library Board shall not contribute to the campaign of any provincial candidate, constituency association, nomination contestant, or leadership contestant.

Federal Elections

In accordance with the Canada Elections Act, the Library Board shall not contribute to the campaign of any federal candidate, registered party, association, nomination contestant, or leadership contestant.

PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ELECTIONS

- Library employees and volunteers may participate in political activities on their own time but must remain politically neutral while performing Library duties.
- Employees and volunteers shall not engage in campaign activities while on duty or using Library resources.
- Employees running as candidates in municipal elections must comply with the *Municipal Elections Act* and any applicable employment requirements.
- Library Board members who choose to run as candidates may continue to fulfill their Board responsibilities, provided they adhere to conflict of interest and neutrality requirements.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

- Requests for information about the Library from candidates or political parties shall be coordinated through the CEO, or designate.
- Information provided to one candidate or political party shall be made available to all others upon request during an election period.
- Candidates may request meetings with the CEO, or designate, or request a tour of Library facilities, subject to operational considerations.