# REPORT

## Oakville Public Library Board

## Meeting Date: August 21, 2025

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| **FROM:** | Oakville Public Library |
| **DATE:** | August 12, 2025 |
| **SUBJECT:** | **Artificial Intelligence Policy - August 21, 2025** |

**RECOMMENDATION:**
That the Artificial Intelligence Policy (Appendix A) be approved.

**KEY FACTS:**
The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- During the June 19th meeting, OPL's first Artificial Intelligence Policy was introduced, establishing a governance framework for the ethical, responsible, and transparent utilization of AI technologies throughout all library operations.
- The policy provides clear guidelines for the appropriate use of AI tools, while safeguarding customer privacy, protecting organizational data, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory mandates, and preserving public trust.
- The framework is informed by recognized standards and best practices from the Government of Canada, United Nations, and Urban Libraries Council.
- The policy aligns with OPL's strategic priorities concerning innovation, digital literacy, and equitable access, and will undergo regular reviews to ensure its relevance as AI technology advances.
- After the June 19th meeting, the policy was refined with minor clarifications in response to questions raised by the board, although no specific amendments were requested.
- Subsequently, the Town ITS department established organizational guidelines for AI use. The policy has been revised to ensure full compliance with these guidelines, including enhanced accountability structures and alignment with Town-approved training requirements.

**BACKGROUND:**
As Artificial Intelligence technologies become more common in public institutions and libraries, Oakville Public Library recognizes the need for a policy framework to guide their ethical and responsible use. The rapid growth of AI, especially generative AI, offers opportunities to enhance services but also poses risks to privacy, security,

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intellectual property, and ethics. To uphold its commitment to intellectual freedom, equitable access, and digital literacy, OPL is proactively defining AI adoption and governance. The policy ensures AI tools align with OPL's values, standards, and legal obligations, providing a clear framework for informed, accountable decision-making as AI becomes integral to digital tools and workflows.

The policy was brought to the OPL board for first review on June 19, 2025. While the Board requested no specific amendments, the policy was refined with minor clarifications in response to questions raised by the Board.

## COMMENT/OPTIONS:

This policy addresses the current absence of formal AI governance at both the Library and municipal levels, positioning OPL as a forward-thinking public institution committed to ethical technology implementation.

Key policy elements include:
- Transparent and responsible AI use that supports OPL's strategic objectives while recognizing the limitations and potential biases of such tools.
- Robust privacy and security protections prohibiting unauthorized data input
- Mandatory human oversight for all AI-generated outputs
- Intellectual property protection through proper attribution and copyright respect
- Equity-focused implementation ensuring accessible, bias-free AI tools
- Commitment to ongoing staff development through Town-approved training platforms

This governance framework balances innovation with appropriate safeguards, reflecting OPL's values while providing flexibility for future technological developments.

Subsequently, the Town of Oakville ITS department has issued a set of guidelines for generative AI use that apply to all municipal staff, including library employees. Key points:
- Approved Tools: Only Microsoft Copilot (free version) and embedded AI features in approved enterprise software are currently permitted. All other AI tools, including ChatGPT, are prohibited.
- Permitted Uses: Staff may use AI for drafting emails, summarizing non-sensitive documents, research assistance, and learning code. All AI-generated content must be reviewed for accuracy before use.
- Restrictions: Staff cannot input confidential, personal, or organizational data into AI tools. Public-facing AI-generated content requires proper attribution and review. No enforcement tools are mentioned.

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- <u>Compliance:</u> The guidelines emphasize transparency, accountability, and data security. Staff are encouraged to complete AI awareness training through available platforms.

The policy has been revised to address Board feedback from the June 19 meeting and to ensure full compliance with the recently released Town Information Technology Services AI Guidelines, including enhanced accountability structures, as well as requirements for approved tools and training protocols.

Staff recommend Board approval of the OPL AI Policy to formalize OPL's responsible approach to AI adoption and ensure consistent, ethical practices across library operations.

**APPENDICES:**
Appendix A - Artificial Intelligence Policy (2025)

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