

# CORPORATE POLICY



Policy Title: **City of Waterloo Museum - Interpretation and Education Policy**  
Policy Category: **Administration**  
Policy No.: A-025  
Department: Community Services  
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Author: Karen VandenBrink, Museum and Collections Manager/Curator  
Attachments: N/A  
Related Documents/Legislation:  
*Copyright Act*  
*Occupational Health and Work Act*  
*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.*  
Key Word(s): Museum, interpretation, education

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Through its interpretation and education programs, the Museum reaches audiences of all ages, interests, and abilities, and serves as a resource for the community.

Interpretation and education programming offer the community opportunities to interact more closely with the Museum's collections and knowledge, and may complement other formal and informal sources of learning.

## **PURPOSE:**

This policy outlines how the Museum will execute its interpretation and education functions to serve the community.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

**Education Program:** interactive learning opportunities, which may or may not be linked to formal curriculum, using objects in the Museum's collection to contribute to learning.

**Interpretation:** a communication process, designed to reveal meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage, through involvement with objects, artifacts, landscapes and sites (source: *Interpretation Canada*).

**Mandatory Policy, *Municipal Act*:** No  
**Policy Administration Team, Review Date**  
**Corporate Management Team, Review Date**

**Museum:** the City of Waterloo Museum, as an institution that collects, preserves and makes available to the public heritage resources, which it holds in trust for society.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to the City of Waterloo Museum and associated collection, Museum staff, volunteers, and Council.

**POLICY COMMUNICATION:**

This policy will be communicated by:

- posting on the City of Waterloo website
- posting on the City of Waterloo intranet available to staff
- sharing with relevant interested parties and collaborators
- providing training to staff and volunteers

**POLICY:**

**1.0 General**

Museum interpretation and education programming will include public programming, education programming and special event programming that are consistent with the Museum's mission, and meets the needs and interests of the community.

The types, variety, and number of programs offered by the Museum will be influenced by factors such as space, the availability of artifacts in the collection, staff resources, annual budget, and hours of operation.

All programming will:

- Provide both enjoyment and a meaningful heritage experience for every participant.
  - Provide visitors with accurate and objective interpretive content.
  - Be developed following established principles of interpretation.
  - Consider cultural ownership, citizenship and the principles of stewardship in planning, implementation and/or delivery process.
  - Ensure that ethical practices are adhered to by all staff members when planning, implementing and delivering programming.
  - Be delivered in safe and secure spaces.
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- Meet municipal, provincial and federal requirements that have an impact on interpretation and education programs, including, but not limited to, the *Copyright*

*Act, Occupational Health and Work Act, Ontario Elementary and Secondary Curriculum, and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.*

All Museum staff and volunteers who are planning, implementing and/or delivering educational programming will:

- Demonstrate commitment to conservation of the Museum's collections and any items on loan to the Museum by following the City of Waterloo Museum's Conservation Policy.
- Promote accuracy and fairness, inclusivity and respect in interpretation and education programs
- Maintain program quality and consistency by following the City of Waterloo Museum's Research Policy to develop and deliver interpretive content.

Where and when applicable, programming will consider enhancing the Museum's product by including partner organizations and individuals. A 'memorandum of understanding' should be developed for every partnership project to provide structure and ensure the benefit to all partners.

## **2.0 Role of the Museum and Collections Manager/Curator**

The Museum and Collections Manager/Curator will provide overall leadership for the delivery of general public, formal education, and special event programming.

The Museum and Collections Manager/Curator will establish priorities for the development of interpretation and education programs.

Funding for interpretation and education programming will be identified by the Manager as part of the budget development and approval process.

The Museum and Collections Manager/Curator will support provision of quality programming by ensuring that all staff, volunteers and resource people associated with the activities of the Museum is appropriately trained and qualified. Where required, the Museum and Collections Manager/Curator will provide support or training opportunities.

The Museum and Collections Manager/Curator may also call upon external consultants and service providers to assist with the development and implementation of quality programming.

The Museum and Collections Manager/Curator will liaise with community groups and special interest organizations to determine areas of heritage programming required and develop new programs and program delivery mechanisms.

The Museum and Collections Manager/Curator will ensure that the facility provided for general public, formal education and special events programming is safe and meets the needs of the program.

### **3.0 Public Programming**

Public programming will include, but is not limited to, general visitation to the Museum and outreach programming for special interest groups and events.

The City of Waterloo Museum will offer public programming on a year-round basis with extended days and hours during peak or increased visitation periods.

Special consideration will be given to the interests, expectations and demographics of the community and visitors when planning, implementing and delivering public programming.

### **4.0 Education Programming**

Education programming will include, but is not limited to, regular on-site programming, special events, workshops, outreach programs, school visits and/or conferences.

The City of Waterloo Museum may offer education programming to coincide with the school year.

When developing education programming, staff will establish clearly defined learning outcomes based upon the objectives set out in provincial curriculum and the Museum's mission and vision statements.

When possible, education programming will be developed to be adaptable based upon the needs of the participants.

### **5.0 Special Events Programming**

Special events will include (but are not limited to) events, workshops, one-day or multi-day events, outreach programming and/or field trips. The City of Waterloo Museum will offer quality special events programming as required.

Special events programming will serve to promote heritage education, community involvement in heritage preservation, and to build an enduring relationship with the community the Museum serves.

Special events programming will consider the interests, expectations and demographics of the community.

## **6.0 Program Evaluation**

All programming activities will involve establishing learning objectives and outcomes in the planning phase. These objectives and outcomes are an essential component of the program delivery and evaluation process. Regular review and revision of programming will take place based on program evaluation results.

### **REVIEW:**

The policy shall be reviewed by staff every four years and shall be updated as required.

### **COMPLIANCE:**

In cases of policy violation, the City may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.