

## Markham Public Library Equity and Inclusion Statement

Public libraries play an integral part in promoting a culture that fosters inclusion, recognizes diversity and promotes equity. MPL is committed to providing inclusive services and spaces for the community and library staff, based on respect and dignity. MPL will work to eliminate systemic oppression, unconscious bias and barriers to equity in our workplace and in the services we provide to the community.

MPL's inclusive service commitment extends to all. We recognize and affirm the dignity of those we serve regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, age, mental health, ability, size, housing status, race, culture, ethnicity and beliefs.

As a learning organization, MPL provides access to opportunities to learn from and understand each other in the Markham communities. As an employer, MPL is committed to creating a work culture where staff are able to share the full expression of their diverse lived experience. MPL provides access to information that represents a wide range of perspectives in order to foster diversity of thought and support democratic access to ideas and knowledge. MPL offers services and collections through a range of platforms and technologies to reduce economic barriers to access, as well as to expand participation for community members with different learning needs and preferences.

MPL affirms its commitment to Reconciliation and acting on the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 92 Calls to Action* as they relate to our work. MPL recognizes that reconciliation and justice for First Nations people includes the protection and recognition of their Treaty Rights, and is distinct from the needs of other equity-deserving groups.

MPL will work towards equity and inclusion by:

- Implementing the MPL Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Plan which seeks to eliminate social and economic barriers to library services for the community and building an equitable and inclusive work culture for staff
- Providing ongoing training and support to increase awareness among our staff on topics including anti-racism, unconscious bias, cultural competency development, anti-oppression and reconciliation
- Engaging underserved and equity-deserving groups to identify opportunities in programs, collections and services in-branch, online and in the community
- Seeking opportunities to ally with and actively amplify the voices of equity-deserving groups in the community
- Answering the Calls to Action of the TRC, including educating all MPL staff on the legacy of Residential Schools
- Building relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Metis people and communities in commitment to reconciliation
- Offering programming and collections that celebrate the full range of diversity in the community
- Championing accessibility in our spaces and services, eliminating barriers to participation for community members with disabilities, and addressing stigma and bias based on mental health and neurodiversity
- Supporting the implementation of the City of Markham's *Diversity Action Plan* and *Eliminating Anti-Black Racism Action Plan*