



POLICY

Policy Name	Program Registration and Attendance		
Section & Number	Management	Effective Date	2026-09-16
Motion Number	N/A	Last Review	2026-09-16
Author	Manager of Programming & Promotions	Next Review	2030
Policy Maintenance	Reviewed by Management		

Policy Statement

St. Catharines Public Library (SCPL) is committed to providing fair and equitable access to its programs for all members of the community. This policy establishes a consistent framework for managing program registration and attendance to maximize participation, ensure the responsible use of library resources, and create a positive experience for all. It provides clear guidelines on registration, cancellations, and attendance to ensure that opportunities for learning and engagement are available to the widest possible audience.

Scope

This policy applies to all participants attending SCPL programs, as well as the library staff responsible for managing program registrations and attendance.

Definitions

Drop-in Program: A program that is open to the general public that does not require pre-registration, where participants are admitted on a first-come, first-served basis up to room capacity.

Registered Program: A program requiring customers to register in advance due to limited space, materials, or specific age requirements.

Regulations

SCPL collects, uses, and retains personal information during the program registration and attendance tracking process in strict accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56* (MFIPPA) and the Library's Privacy and Confidentiality of Customer Information Policy.

Operational Guidelines

Age Requirements & Supervision of Children

Library programs are designed for specific age groups to ensure activities are safe and appropriate. While chronological age is our primary guideline, we recognize that developmental readiness varies. Placement outside of a program's designated age range is permitted under the following conditions:

- **Caregiver Consultation:** Caregivers are responsible for assessing their participant's unique developmental needs and are encouraged to consult with Programming staff to identify the most suitable program placement.
- **Staff Discretion:** Library staff reserve the right to recommend or facilitate alternative program placement to preserve safety, group cohesion, and a supportive learning environment for all participants.

Children ages 5 and under must be accompanied at all times by a caregiver in the program room or space to provide direct and active supervision.

SCPL's drop-in programs: While library staff monitor overall room capacity to comply with safety and fire regulations, individual attendee participation and attendance are not supervised. Participants are welcome to arrive, depart, or remain for as much or as little of the session as they choose. Children 11 and under must receive direct and active supervision by an adult caregiver in the room for the entire duration of their stay.

Late Arrivals

If a registered participant is more than 15 minutes late to a program without notifying library staff, their spot is forfeited. Staff may offer the forfeited spot to a drop-in participant or waitlisted community member present at the branch.

Attendance Procedure

Acknowledging that unexpected circumstances may prevent attendance, customers are encouraged to cancel their registration or inform library staff if they are unable to attend a program or single event within a multi-week series for which they have registered. Cancellations should be made at least 24 hours

in advance whenever possible to ensure staff have adequate time to prepare program materials and to allow individuals on the waiting list the opportunity to attend.

To ensure fair access to our high-demand programs, SCPL monitors program registration and attendance to identify patterns that limit availability for other community members. Registration and attendance are monitored on a rolling six-month basis:

- Each unexcused absence remains active on a customers' attendance record for six (6) months from the date of the missed program, after which it expires.
- Customers who accumulate three (3) unexcused absences within a rolling six-month period without providing a minimum of 24 hours' notice of cancellation to library staff may have their program registration privileges suspended for two (2) months (60 days), following the process outline below.
- Once the suspension is complete, the active absence count is reset to zero, and customers may register for programs again with a clear record.

Process for monitoring unexcused absences:

1. First Absence: No formal action is taken.
2. Second Absence (Warning): After a registrant misses two (2) programs in total without notice, staff will send an email reminder regarding our attendance and cancellation policy.
3. Third Absence (Suspension): If a registrant misses three (3) programs without providing notice, staff will temporarily suspend the customers' ability to register for a period of 2-months (60 days). An email notification will be sent to notify the customer of their temporary suspension.

For clubs and programs that run as a multi-week series, attendance is tracked across all sessions. If a registrant misses three (3) sessions of an ongoing club or series without providing notice, staff will notify and remove the customer from the registration list. The vacated spot will be immediately offered to the next person on the waitlist.

Program registration suspensions do not restrict access to library premises, nor do they affect borrowing privileges. Individuals with suspended registrations are welcome to attend any library program as a "drop-in" participant on the day of

the event, provided space remains available after all registered attendees have been accommodated.

Appeals Process for Registration Suspensions

The St. Catharines Public Library recognizes that unforeseen circumstances, such as sudden illness or family emergencies, can prevent attendance. If a customer believes their program registration privileges have been suspended in error, or if there were valid extenuating circumstances for their absences, they may request a review of their suspension.

To appeal a suspension, customers should contact the Manager of Programming & Promotions.

When requesting an appeal, please provide:

- The name and date(s) of the program(s) missed
- A brief explanation of the circumstances

Reinstatement of registration privileges is at the discretion of library management and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Implementation & Communication

Upon registration, customers receive automated email confirmations that include SCPL's Terms of Registration which outline the key principles of the Program Registration and Attendance policy, and details about the program for which they have registered, including date, time and location, as well as any specific information pertaining to that program.

Library staff will proactively communicate with customers regarding program absences and program registration suspensions.

Reference

Policy (G24) Children and Teens in the Library

Policy (G31) Privacy and Confidentiality of Customer Information

Policy (G20) Programming