



# **OWWL LIBRARY SYSTEM**

## **SYSTEM AND MEMBER LIBRARY RELATIONSHIP POLICY**

### **OWWL LIBRARY SYSTEM'S PURPOSE**

The OWWL Library System (the System) exists to support the expansion and improvement of public library services in Ontario, Wayne, Wyoming, and Livingston Counties. The System provides to its members consultation services, technology support, advocacy, and guidance on library-related topics. The System also acts as a forum for discussion, coordination of services, and distribution of State and Federal aid across the four counties.

### **SYSTEM RELATIONSHIPS WITH MEMBER LIBRARIES**

The System proudly offers support to its 42 Member Libraries in the form of continuing education, policy development, technology consultations, governance consultations, and administrative consultations.

All guidance, advice, and opinions offered by the System and its staff are advisory in nature and should never be used in lieu of appropriate legal counsel or opinions from area-specific professionals.

Member Libraries have their own elected or appointed Boards of Trustees that individually govern their actions. The System holds no administrative or governance control over Member Libraries except in limited instances where System Policies impact shared resources, access to System-wide information, technology support, or other support services. The System is also responsible for an annual assurance to the Division of Library Development that Member Libraries comply with NYS Minimum Standards for Libraries.

The System holds no employer/employee relationship with any of its Member Libraries. Each library employs its own Director and staff and oversees the organizational structure as it sees fit.

The System holds no responsibility or liability in governance or management decisions made locally by any of its Member Libraries.

The System holds no fiscal responsibility to any of its Member Libraries except as outlined in approved contracts or New York State Education Law in relation to the disbursement of State Aid.

The System operates as an independent entity from all Member Libraries. Under no circumstances may a Member Library or any external organization use OWWL Library System information for

business purposes, including but not limited to contacting vendors, obtaining pricing, establishing vendor relationships, or generating contracts, agreements, or other binding obligations. Any information or actions resulting from such unauthorized use shall be discarded and considered invalid without legal effect.

The System offers continuing education to member library staff and Trustees on a variety of topics. It is the responsibility of the individual staff member, Trustee, or local library to document continuing education to comply with any institutional or State requirements.

The System holds no responsibility for any of its Member Libraries' technologies, computers, or software except as outlined in System policies and approved agreements between the individual libraries and the System. System technology support is available for technology in compliance with the System's Computer Support Policy.

The System exists to support library services and does not support, endorse, or advocate for any one individual or group of individuals outside the context of benefiting our Member Libraries.

## SYSTEM POLICIES IMPACTING MEMBER LIBRARIES

Several System policies impact the relationship between the System and Member Libraries.

To receive System support and access to System-services, member libraries must adhere to the following policies:

- **Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy** – Sets Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requirements for E-Rate funding to subsidize member library Internet costs.
- **Brand Usage Policy** – Outlines the appropriate use of "OWWL" and System logos.
- **Code of Conduct Policy** – Sets conduct expectations for interactions involving System staff.
- **Computer Support Policy** – Outlines support and limitations of member library devices.
- **Confidentiality of Patron Records Policy** – Complies with Civil Practice Law 4509 and the non-disclosure of patron information or library records.
- **Construction Aid Policy** – Provides guidance and requirements for applying for the NYS Library Construction Aid program.
- **Data Breach Policy** – Details the responsibilities and conditions for data-related services.
- **Delivery Policy** – Details the guidelines for the System's delivery service to member libraries.
- **Email Account Policy** – Details System email account creation, deactivation, and rules for using OWWL email accounts.
- **Mileage and Scholarship Reimbursement Policy** – Details requirements for requesting mileage reimbursement from the System and obligations for use of awarded System scholarships.
- **Pest Management Policy** – Instructs member library and the System in handling potential pest outbreaks in libraries.
- **Procurement Policy** – Provides System guidelines for large-scale procurement on behalf of member libraries. This policy does not impact local purchases of Member Libraries.

- **Reduced Match Eligibility Requirements** – Outlines eligibility requirements for reduced match for the NYS Library Construction Aid program.
- **Systems Access and Confidentiality of Library Records Policy** – Outlines requirements for access to information systems such as Evergreen, email, and patron data.
- **Wi-Fi Access Policy** – Stipulates Wi-Fi access and management of wireless access points at member libraries.

Full policies may be found at <https://owwl.org/system/policies/>

## CONSULTATIONS ON SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Any System consultation regarding potentially sensitive topics such as governance, funding, management, personnel, or other administrative control shall be limited to communications between the System’s Executive Director and Member Library administration (Directors and/or Trustees).

All communications regarding sensitive information will remain confidential between the System’s Executive Director, appropriate System staff, and the Member Library representative(s) unless information could result in legal consequences or potential damages to the Member Library.

System staff have the right to share any concerning information, even if considered confidential, with the System’s Executive Director.

## REQUESTING SUPPORT

- Support for governance and administrative-related topics may be sent to the Executive Director.
- Support for Outreach Services may be sent to the Program Director.
- Support for the Annual Report may be sent to the Finance Director.
- Support for all technology-related topics, Evergreen support, or Cataloging requests must be initiated by opening a ticket. Please see Computer Support Policy for more information.

## AGREEMENTS BETWEEN MEMBER LIBRARIES AND THE SYSTEM

All agreements between the System and Member Libraries shall be evaluated and renewed on an annual basis. Such agreements include, but are not limited to: the System’s Plan of Service; Free Direct Access Plan; OWWL Cost Shares; and OverDrive Funding Commitments

## SYSTEM-WIDE DECISION MAKING

When appropriate, System-wide policies, activities, or agreements affecting Member Libraries will be presented to the Directors’ Advisory Council, or corresponding sub-committee, for discussion, input, and advice prior to implementation. The System Board holds the ultimate authority on the System’s activities and agreements.

*Amended: January 8, 2025; November 13, 2024;  
August 14, 2024; February 14, 2024; March 8, 2023;  
February 8, 2023; September 14, 2022  
Adopted: November 10, 2021*