



**SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT – SCENT-FREE POLICY**

**Policy No: E-2018-06**

**Date: March 19, 2018**

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**Number of Pages: 3**

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for all staff and volunteers with respect to the wearing of fragrances, scents, or scented personal products at work.

## **POLICY**

### **General**

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to the well-being of its staff, volunteers, and customers, while at work and/or within all library facilities.

### **Application**

All staff and volunteers.

### **Definitions**

**Environmental Sensitivities (ES)** describes a chronic condition whereby a person has symptoms when exposed to certain chemicals or other environmental agents at low levels tolerated by most people. The symptoms may range in severity from mild to debilitating (Source - Women's Health Matters, Women's College Hospital).

**Scent-Free or Fragrance-Free or Unscented** indicates that the product is odourless or nearly odourless and it contains no odour-masking ingredients such as a perfume, as opposed to having a smell or odour such as those associated with cosmetics or from other products such as air fresheners, cleaners, etc. (Source - The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety - CCOHS).

### **Guidelines**

In the interest of a healthy work environment and to reduce discomfort (ranging from mild to debilitating) for staff, volunteers, or customers with environmental sensitivities or allergies, the Library Board supports a scent-free workplace by asking staff and volunteers to refrain from wearing fragrances, scents, or scented products at work.

The following types of products can contain scents:

- Shampoo and conditioners;
- Hairsprays;
- Deodorants;
- Colognes and aftershaves;
- Fragrances and perfumes;
- Lotions and creams;
- Potpourri;
- Industrial and household chemicals;
- Soaps;
- Cosmetics
- Air fresheners and deodorizers;
- Essential Oils;
- Candles;
- Diapers; and
- Some types of garbage bags.

Symptoms which may be reported when exposure to scented products causes health problems include the following:

- Headaches;
- Dizziness;
- Lightheadedness;
- Nausea;
- Fatigue;
- Weakness;
- Insomnia;
- Numbness;
- Upper respiratory symptoms;
- Shortness of breath;
- Skin irritation;
- Malaise;
- Confusion;
- Difficulty with concentration;
- Asthmatic attacks;
- Mild irritation; and
- Feelings of depression or anxiety.

If an employee reports a health issue pursuant to exposure to a scented product within the workplace, it is Management's responsibility to respond to the concern and to accommodate as much as is possible. As required, the Deputy Chief Librarian will review this policy with individual staff.

This policy will be communicated during new employee orientation, through signs posted in staff areas and through Supervisors and Managers verbally informing their staff and volunteers.

Although the Library Board cannot ensure that public areas will be scent-free, it will endeavour to educate the public, especially those who consider renting space in one of the Library's facilities, about the potentially significant impact on the health of certain people (including staff members) through exposure to scents. As a result, this policy may be distributed to those considering library room rentals, and signs may be posted in the public areas asking the public to be sensitive to this issue.

**Resources:**

*Government of Canada's Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety (CCOHS)  
Women's College Hospital, Toronto, Ontario*

**Related Policies:**

*Health & Safety Policy  
Room Rental Policy*

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, March 19, 2018  
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Supersedes Policy #E-2014-13, approved May 20, 2014, Motion #2014.38  
Policy #E-2011-02, approved February 22, 2011, Motion #2011.13; &  
Policy #2008-02, approved January 21, 2008, Motion #2008.04; &  
Policy #2004-03, approved March 8, 2004, Motion #2004.24.