



## Sport, Culture and Heritage

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Attention: Municipal Administrators

A new Public Library Allocation of Grants Regulation will come into effect on April 1, 2024, establishing a predictable, regulated funding model for all public libraries across the province.

### Highlights:

- The new regulation consolidates all provincial library funding into a single, simplified, and regulated operating grant.
- The formula provides predictable and responsive funding to better support local planning.
- A stabilization component ensures that no library will lose provincial funding due to the formula change.

Municipal interests in the public library funding model, as shown through consultation and in AMM resolutions and policy papers, has included:

- consideration of funding caps,
- concerns about the effects of decreasing population in a per-capita system,
- barriers to entry for municipalities currently without access to library services,
- a desire to have residents be able to access the most convenient library,
- a recognition that there are base costs in providing service regardless of population, and
- a funding structure that better reflects the actual cost of delivering services and which is responsive to local funding increases.

The new grant structure incorporates these priorities as the foundation. This new approach is designed around the goals of sustainability, resilience, and cooperation, with clear paths to continued development. It incentivizes partnerships and cooperation between municipalities in providing library services.

The previous formula examined each municipality's per capita contribution to the library's operating budget, with a hard cap on provincial matching at \$8.50 per capita. This per capita matching was disconnected from the operating needs of the library and did not recognize any municipal investment beyond the cap. The new formula is focused on the total amount of operating funding provided to the library from all municipal partners in the previous year. The base amount of the grant matches 100% of the combined municipal operating funding up to \$20,000 multiplied by the number of municipalities partnering to provide service. Where the total municipal operating funding is more than the base amount, that municipal investment is also matched, at a percentage rate which increases with the number of municipal partners. A stabilization component ensures that no library loses provincial funding because of the formula change, as long as the total municipal operating funding meets or exceeds 2023 levels.

The new model consolidates all previous regulated and unregulated provincial grants within a single regulated model that is responsive to municipal investment and development decisions. It removes conditions and restrictions on the library's use of grant money, giving libraries the flexibility needed to better address local needs.

The new regulation can be reviewed online at [https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/\\_pdf-regs.php?reg=134/2023](https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=134/2023). Information, guidelines, and tools to aid in municipal and library planning processes are available on the Public Library Services section on the department's website at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/pls/>. Please connect with your municipal or regional public library to consider your local context and service development opportunities.