

Frequently Asked Questions re: Ontario Library Service Funding Cuts

I have heard that funding to Ontario public libraries was cut by more than 50%, is that true?

- Not exactly. The funding cut was to the 2019-20 budget of a specific organization called **Ontario Library Services (OLS)** which is the overall name used to represent the **Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS)** and **Ontario Library Services North (OLSN)**.

What does 'Ontario Library Services' do?

- **OLS** provides these important services to 227 public libraries in Ontario:
 - **Inter-library loan (ILLO) network and database** – allows us to search many public libraries in Ontario seamlessly using one interface and place/fill requests from other systems. **Last year libraries in Ontario circulated a total of 437,687 items using this service.**
 - **Inter-library courier** – delivers material between different library systems anywhere in Ontario and, in many cases, also delivers the new books and materials purchased from vendors & wholesalers; saving individual libraries a significant amount of money.
 - **E-collections** – via the **Ontario Library Download Centre**, a consortium for libraries in Ontario serving populations of less than 100,000. These libraries pay a small platform fee annually to give their patrons access to a collection of **almost 80,000 e-books and audiobooks**. The e-books and audiobooks in the collection are selected and paid for by SOLS and OLSN.
 - **Training, Advice & Consulting** – for library staff and library board members across Ontario to ensure that all libraries, no matter their size and funding, have access to the tools they need to deliver equitable service.

Will this affect day-to-day services at my local library?

- Yes, unfortunately, it already has. **SOLS** has announced that they are suspending inter-library loan services & the courier effective Friday, April 26th, 2019. **This means we will no longer be able to offer this ILLO service to our patrons** since there will be no system that we can use to place

requests and no way for us to receive items from other libraries. **In 2018, our patrons ordered 1,400 items from other libraries.** Beyond expanding our collection, it also gives our customers important access to:

- **materials in other languages; accessible materials for people who have print disabilities; rare or out-of-print titles; and book club sets.**
- It may also have an impact on our e-collections via the Ontario Library Download Centre since **SOLS may not be able to order new & bestselling titles** at the same rate. We have not yet heard about impacts to this collection, but it is very likely. **Our library circulates more than 2,800 titles per month through this collection.**

Will this affect my local library's budget?

- The Minister of Culture, Tourism & Sport has stated that the **2019-20 Provincial Library Operating Grants for individual libraries will not be cut**, however the loss of services we receive daily through our partnership with SOLS may affect our budget in terms of increased postage and collection expenses.

What can I do to express my concern over these cuts?

- You can communicate your concerns to the provincial government:

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