



NEWS RELEASE

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VICTORIA LIBRARY REFUSES TO CORRECT UNFAIRNESS

In a special report tabled today, BC Ombudsman, Howard Kushner discloses that the Greater Victoria Public Library Board has refused to implement his recommendation that the Library clarify its meeting room policy.

“The Library does not have a written policy to clearly address the situation of its meeting rooms being used for purposes that might conflict with federal, provincial or municipal legislation,” Kushner said

The Ombudsman’s report follows an investigation into a complaint made by the Jewish Federation of Victoria and Vancouver Island concerning the Library’s meeting room policy. The library indicated it expects those who use its meeting rooms to comply with all relevant legislation. Kushner recommended this expectation be clearly stated in the rental agreement.

“A fundamental principle of fairness is that policies established by public bodies should be clearly written and well publicized,” Kushner said. “Members of the public cannot be expected to comply with policies unless they know what those policies are.

“I am disappointed with the library’s response to my investigation and my recommendation. I hope that this report will encourage the board to reconsider its response.”

Copies of Special Report No. 23, The Right to Know: A Complaint About the Greater Victoria Public Library Meeting Room Policy, are available from the Office of the Ombudsman or at www.ombudsman.bc.ca online.

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