



Port Colborne Public Library

Policy Type:	Operational	Policy Number:	OP-07
Policy Title:	Public Internet Services	Original Policy Approval Date:	Feb. 2000
		Most Recent Review/Revision Date:	Aug. 2019
		Year of Next Review:	2023

The Port Colborne Public Library Board endorses the use of the Internet as an essential source of information to complement traditional library collections. The Internet is also recognized as an essential communication tool, connecting individuals and communities of interest.

The Port Colborne Public Library provides public access to the Internet in keeping with its role in providing equal access to information and resources to meet the educational, informational and recreational needs of the community. This policy establishes the provision of public network services to access the Internet and the acceptable use of these services.

Due to the emerging nature of these services, this policy is subject to change without notice and at the board's discretion.

Section 1: Reliability and Appropriateness of Information on the Internet

1. In support of intellectual freedom, the Port Colborne Public Library has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Many sites carry information users may find controversial, inappropriate, or obscene. The Internet is a global entity with a highly diverse user population and library patrons use it at their own discretion.
2. Users are reminded that not all sources on the Internet provide age-appropriate, accurate, complete, or current information. Users should evaluate Internet sources as they would print publications and may need to question the validity of the information found.
3. The board is not responsible for the accuracy, quality, legality, appropriateness or availability of any Internet sources accessed through the library's public network. This is the responsibility of the producer/originator or publisher.
4. The library cannot control the availability of information links that often change rapidly and unpredictably.
5. Users are advised that because security is technically difficult to achieve, electronic files and communications could become public.
6. The Port Colborne Public Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from use of its Internet stations.

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Section 2: Access to the Public Network

The Internet functions in an unregulated, global environment and, therefore, provides access to a wide variety of resources over which the library has no control. The Library endeavours to minimize the opportunity for unintentional exposure by people using library space to content being accessed by another library user.

The board will ensure that access to, and use of, the public network is compatible with the Port Colborne Public Library policy on Intellectual Freedom FN – 04.

1. Wired and/or wireless access to the Internet via public computers or users' personal devices is free.
2. The Library provides workstations that are adapted for people with disabilities.
3. The library reserves the right to set time limits or ask users to limit their time on the public computers. The staff reserve the right to adjust computer time and scheduling as necessary.
4. The Library does not use filtering software. It is the position of the Board that the technology is contrary to the principle of intellectual freedom and that it is not effective in making the internet safer for children nor in preventing criminal activity.
5. In respect of the range of sensibilities and viewpoints of its diverse clientele, staff will remind users that they are in a public space and will encourage all users to respect the sensibilities of others. The staff reserve the right to redirect users whose activities on the public computers or their personal devices diminish the enjoyment of the library space by others.
6. The library does not assume any responsibility for the configuration, security or files on personal devices resulting from connection to the library's network. Users should be aware that information sent to or from their devices can be captured by anyone else with a wireless device and appropriate software.
7. The board assumes no responsibility for the security and privacy of on-line transactions, as the Internet is not a secure medium and third parties may be able to obtain information about the user's activities.
8. The library is not responsible for any damages sustained while using a personal device.
9. The library will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by, or the potential repercussions of a third party using, personal/banking/credit card information that has been entered via the public network.

Section 3: Privacy and Confidentiality

Use of the library's public network falls under the provision of the library's **Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy Policy**, OP-01.

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1. Privacy at the workstations is not guaranteed and users must respect the privacy of others. Internet workstations are situated in public areas, and content being viewed by users may be seen by other people. Staff will take reasonable measures to ensure privacy and confidentiality, however, library staff cannot guarantee privacy at the library workstations.

Section 4: Use by Children

As with other library materials, supervision or restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian. The Port Colborne Public Library assumes no responsibility for the use of the Internet by children.

1. Children **12 and under** must have permission from a parent/guardian before using the Internet. Accordingly, parents/guardians must come to the Library to sign an Internet Agreement form for children **12 and under**.
2. Children may access all information and use all facilities provided by the library.
3. The library has not installed filtering software on any of its computers.
4. The board will ensure that children's and youths' access to the Internet is compatible with the policy on **Children's Services** OP - 10 and the policy on **Intellectual Freedom** FN - 04.
5. The board accepts no responsibility for enforcing restrictions which a parent or guardian places on a child's use of the Internet resources.
6. Staff will:
 - a. affirm and acknowledge the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their children's access to materials and resources
 - b. assist parents by providing guidelines for Internet safety.
7. Parents will assume responsibility for deciding which resources and type of network access are appropriate for their children.

Section 5: Conditions and Terms of Acceptable Use in the Library

1. To ensure equitable access to the public network and efficient use of resources, the board sets rules for public network access and reserves the right to modify these whenever and wherever appropriate.
2. Violation of the library's *Internet Access Policy* may result in the loss of Internet privileges and/or may removal from the library.
3. Any library users involved in illegal activities will be subject to criminal prosecution.

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4. Users who deliberately violate the rules may have their library privileges suspended.
5. There are information resources which are inappropriate to a library setting. Because the library is a public place, library staff has the authority to end an Internet session when such material displays on the screen.
6. The Acceptable Use Rules are:
 - a. Users should view the use of the computers for Internet access in the same way as they view the use of the general collection, that is, they are shared resources.
 - b. Users should view the use of the public computers and personal devices in the library the same way as they view the use of any library space and should restrain from activities that disturb others and use designated spaces for groups and audio (e.g. Skype).
 - c. When viewing the Internet, users should be respectful of sensibilities of others. Users may not send, receive, or display text or graphics which may reasonably be construed as obscene.
 - d. Use of the public network for illegal, actionable or criminal purposes or to seek access to unauthorized areas is prohibited. Examples of such illegal activities include, but are not limited to, harassment or stalking, slander, libel, illegal commerce or solicitation, "hacking" or tampering with other computer systems, viewing, downloading and/or printing child pornography. Illegal use will be reported to the police.
 - e. Users of the public network may not violate or circumvent copyright and other intellectual property rights. The board will promote fair use copyright principles and will advise users of their legal responsibilities regarding these.
 - f. Users of the public network may not attempt to gain unauthorized access to files, data, or passwords belonging to others or seek unauthorized access to any computer system.
 - g. Misuse or abuse of computers or software is not acceptable. Offenders may be required to leave the library. User-created files shall not be saved on the library's computers. Files that are saved will be removed. Users may store files on personal removable storage media.
 - h. User-supplied software shall not be installed on the library's computers, and users may not modify or reconfigure software installed on the library's computers.
7. Library staff will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that all users comply with the Acceptable Use Rules.

Section 6: Assistance from Staff

Library staff will assist patrons with Internet use as time permits but cannot offer in-depth training. Users who require extra help or training are encouraged to take advantage of training if scheduled in the library and to investigate formal education programs available elsewhere in the region.

1. Staff will provide assistance with:
 - a. access to the public workstations

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- b. helping users begin their search for information
- c. access to subscription databases and e-books

Section 7: Printing

1. Printouts are available for a fee.

Section 8: Wireless Access

1. The Library offers no guarantee or warranty with respect to wireless access. The Library assumes no responsibility or liability for personal equipment, configuration, security measures and/or data connected to, or travelling through the library's network.
2. Library staff is not permitted to provide technical assistance with the configuration of personal equipment.
3. No guarantee can be provided that users will be able to make a wireless connection or connect at a particular speed.

Section 9: The Port Colborne Public Library's Website

1. The library will maintain a website that provides:
 - a. information about services and operations
 - b. access to the catalogue
 - c. access to subscription databases and e-books
 - d. a selected, evaluated and organized collection of reliable and current information sources available on the Internet
 - e. a range of accessibility features through assistive technology conforming with WCAG 2.0 guidelines

Related Documents:

Port Colborne Public Library. *OP 01: Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy Policy*
Port Colborne Public Library. *FN 04: Intellectual Freedom Policy*
Port Colborne Public Library. *OP 15. Accessibility in the Library*