

NOTL Public Library

Policy Type: **Operational**

Policy Number: **OP - 17**

Policy Title: **Public Internet Service**

Policy Approval Date: **March 2016**

Policy Review Date: **March 2018**

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board recognizes the internet as an essential part of the library collection and an essential education, recreation, communication, business and government tool. This policy establishes the provision of public internet service and the acceptable use of this service.

Section 1: Reliability and Appropriateness of Internet Content

- i. The library is not responsible for the accuracy of the information available on the internet. This is the responsibility of the content producer/originator or publisher.
- ii. The board is not responsible for the quality, legality, appropriateness or availability of any internet sources accessed through the library's public network.

Section 2: Access to the Public Network

- i. The board will ensure that access to, and use of, the public network is compatible with the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library policy FN – 05 Intellectual Freedom.
- ii. Wired and/or wireless access to the internet via public computers or users' personal devices is free.
- iii. The internet functions in an unregulated, global environment providing access to a wide variety of resources over which the library has no control.
- iv. The library does not use filtering software. It is the position of the Board that filtering 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.
- v. The library reserves the right to set time limits or ask users to limit their time on the public computers. Staff reserves the right to adjust computer time and scheduling as necessary.
- vi. 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 encourage all users to respect the sensibilities of others. Staff reserves the right to redirect or remove users whose activities on the public computers or their personal devices diminish the enjoyment of the library space by others.

- vii. 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.
- viii. 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.
- ix. The library is not responsible for any damages sustained while using a personal device.
- x. Public computers reset at the end of each session but 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

- i. Use of the library's public network falls under the provision of the library's policy OP - 01 Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy.
- ii. 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.

Section 4: Use by Children

- i. Children may access all information and use all facilities provided by the library.
- ii. The library does not install filtering software on any of its computers.
- iii. The board will ensure that child and youth access to the internet is compatible with policy OP – 10 Child & Youth Services and policy FN – 05 Intellectual Freedom.
- iv. The board accepts no responsibility for enforcing restrictions which a parent or guardian places on a child's use of internet resources.
- v. 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.
- vi. Parents/Caregivers/Guardians will:
 - a. assume responsibility for deciding which resources and type of network access are appropriate for their children.
 - b. assume responsibility for monitoring their children's internet use.

Section 5: Acceptable Use

- i. 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.
- ii. Users who deliberately violate the rules may have their internet and/or library privileges suspended.
- iii. Acceptable Use Agreement:
Library users access the internet at their own discretion, and acknowledge this when they agree to the Acceptable Use Policy which must be read and acknowledged at each computer before starting an internet session:
 - a. Users will be respectful of others when viewing and listening to internet content and will not engage in activity which is disruptive or offensive to other library users.
 - b. Use of the public network for illegal, actionable or criminal purposes or to seek access to unauthorized areas is prohibited. Illegal use will be reported to the police.
 - c. Users of the public network may not violate or circumvent copyright and other intellectual property rights.
 - d. User-supplied software and/or files shall not be installed on the library's computers, and users may not modify or reconfigure software installed on the library's computers or network.
- iv. The staff will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that all users comply with the Acceptable Use Rules.

Section 6: Assistance from Staff

- i. Staff will provide assistance with:
 - a. access to the public workstations and the public network with personal devices
 - b. the initial stage of a user's information search
 - c. access to library e-resources
- ii. Users who require extra assistance or training are encouraged to investigate formal educational programs including the library's computer courses and technology tutoring.

Section 7: Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library's Website

- i. The library will maintain a website that provides:
 - a. information about services and operations
 - b. access to the catalogue
 - c. access to e-resources

- d. a range of accessibility features through assistive technology conforming with WCAG 2.0 guidelines and staff assistance, upon request, for people with disabilities

Related Documents

NOTL Public Library OP – 01 Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy

NOTL Public Library FN – 05 Intellectual Freedom

NOTL Public Library OP – 10 Child & Youth Services

Further interpretation of this policy is the responsibility of the CEO and the NOTL Public Library Board. The Board reserves the right to make, modify, revoke, suspend, terminate or change any policy or procedure, in whole or in part, at any time.