Internet Services
Operational

Purpose

The Brantford Public Library endorses the use of the Internet as a source of information to complement traditional library collections and as a communication tool, connecting individuals and communities. At the same time, the Internet functions in an unregulated environment, and therefore provides access to a wide variety of resources over which the Brantford Public Library has no control. This policy establishes: the provision of public network services to access the Internet; acceptable use of these services by customers; responsibilities, and consequences of inappropriate behaviour or illegal activity by customers.

Policy

Section 1: Access to the Public Network

1. The library provides members of the public with Internet access through the library's networked desktop computers and laptops as well as through the library's wireless network which can be used with personal mobile devices. Customers are responsible for configuring their electronic devices to connect to the library's wireless network. While library staff will make every effort to assist customers, please note the Library cannot guarantee that a successful connection will be made to the Library's wireless network from a patron's device.

2. Internet access, whether through wired public computers or wireless connectivity for customers' personal devices, is provided free of charge.

3. Customers are expected to provide their library card number and PIN as part of the sign-in process when using public computers. Options are available to facilitate Internet access for customers who are not eligible for full library membership.

4. Customers are required to agree to this policy and the acceptable use agreement when accessing Internet services and technologies. Any use of the provided Internet services indicates agreement to all requirements of this policy by the customer.

5. The library is committed to accessibility, offering adaptive technologies including screen readers and specialized computers and devices to accommodate customers

with disabilities. These resources ensure that individuals with diverse needs can utilize the library's services and technologies.

6. To ensure equitable access to the public network and efficient use of resources, the Library reserves the right to set time limits or ask customers to limit their time on the library's public computers.

7. Details about workstation access, including time limits, can be found on the Library's website.

Section 2: Use by Children

1. Children may access all information and use all facilities provided by the library. Children's access to the Internet is compatible with the Brantford Public Library's *Safe Child Policy* and *Intellectual Freedom Policy.*

2. Parents and guardians are reminded that the restriction of a child's use of a library computer, including Internet and wireless access, is their responsibility. The library board accepts no responsibility for monitoring and guiding minors' Internet usage or enforcing restrictions which a parent or guardian places on a child's use of the Internet.

Section 3: Acceptable Use of Technology in the Library

1. Customers must be aware that computers and other devices, regardless of whether on the library's Internet service or not, are being used in public areas which is shared by people of all ages, backgrounds, and sensibilities. Some content is age-inappropriate for children. Some content may be offensive, objectionable and/or intimidating to other library customers and/or staff. Staff reserve the right to redirect customers whose activities on the public computers or their personal devices disturb enjoyment of the library space by others. Customers are encouraged to report any instances of inappropriate content encountered during their library visit.

2. Customers should respect the privacy of other library customers. The library is committed to data privacy and security, however, library staff cannot guarantee privacy at the library workstations or when using personal mobile devices.

3. Customers must respect the laws of Canada when using the public network. Use of the public network for illegal, actionable, or criminal purposes is prohibited. Examples of such illegal activities include, but are not limited to, harassment or stalking, libel, illegal commerce or solicitation, "hacking" or tampering with other computer systems, viewing, downloading and/or printing child pornography. Customers who violate the rules may have their library privileges suspended or be required to leave the library. Illegal use, within the definitions of federal or provincial legislation, will be reported to the police. Library customers are reminded that ignorance of the law or policies is not an excuse.

4. Customer use of the public network may not violate or circumvent copyright and other intellectual property rights and liability for infringement rests with the customer. The library board shall follow fair dealing copyright principles and shall advise customers of their legal responsibilities.

5. Customers should use caution before providing personal information over the Internet. As the Internet is not a secure medium, third parties may be able to obtain information about customers' activities. The library assumes no responsibility for Internet content or damages, directly or indirectly, arising from its website, online services, or from its connections through to other Internet services.

6. Customers may not modify, disassemble, or otherwise willfully damage, the library's computer equipment, software, or network. Library staff are available for assistance with technical issues or concerns.

7. The Library reserves the right to restrict workstation and Internet usage that deviates from its intended purposes.

8. The Library will post an "Acceptable Use Agreement' as a landing page for reviewing before using the library's Internet. Consequently, anyone not adhering to the 'Acceptable Use Agreement' will have their library privileges suspended and will be legally and financially responsible for damages.

Section 4: Responsibilities

1. To ensure consistency and accountability, the Brantford Public Library CEO/Chief Librarian and management team are responsible for developing, implementing, and administering procedures to enforce this Policy. These procedures may be created or revised at anytime to adapt to evolving needs and circumstances, ensuring the effective implementation of the policy.

2. Staff are available for computer and Internet assistance, as outlined in the Library's *Information Services Policy.* Staff will not enter personal information or conduct transactions on behalf of customers.

3. The accuracy of Internet content and information obtained lies with its producer/originator. The Library cannot guarantee the quality or accuracy of the information obtained through the Internet.

4. The Internet contains diverse and unregulated content, including illegal, offensive, or controversial material. The Library employs measures to mitigate risks that library customers may encounter malicious or illegal material. The Library works to balance open access with security, by ensuring access controls are not overly restrictive. The Library cannot guarantee that these measures are always effective in blocking malicious activity, or that legitimate content may not be unintentionally

restricted. Library customers are ultimately accountable for their browsing and internet usage activities.

5. The library respects the right of customers to privacy and confidentiality with regards to information sought or received and resources consulted, acquired, or transmitted. Any data collected is used solely for the purpose of providing library services and is never shared with third parties without explicit consent.

6. The Library aims to uphold privacy, minimize disruption, improve concentration, and foster respectful conduct among all customers. Customers are encouraged to use headphones when accessing websites with sound or video components.

7. The Library uses software that protects public workstations from unauthorized changes and resets to the original workstation configuration after each session sign-out and reboot. This facilitates customer privacy by wiping data related to Internet activity and documents saved locally after each session. The Library is not responsible for content lost if activities are unsaved. The Library is not responsible for privacy breaches if a customer does not complete the sign-out process before leaving a workstation unattended.

8. Library computers are equipped with endpoint cybersecurity protection software. However, the library does not take responsibility for the configuration, security or files on personal devices resulting from connection to the library's network. The board assumes no responsibility for the security and privacy of online transactions, as the Internet is not a secure medium and third parties may be able to obtain information about the user's activities. The library is not responsible for any damages sustained while using a personal device. Customers are strongly encouraged to prioritize cybersecurity by implementing their own protection measures on their personal devices.

9. Customers are required to ensure that devices connected to the network (such as USB sticks, cameras, phones, etc.) are virus-free and comply with copyright laws and library policies.

History

Supersedes: Not applicable
Background documents, related policies: *Brantford Public Library Safe Child Policy; Brantford Public Library Intellectual Freedom Policy; Brantford Public Library Rules of Conduct; Brantford Public Library Information Services Policy; Brantford Public Library Customer Privacy and Access to Information Policy*
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