

POLICY MANUAL	Section No. : OP-05
	Effective Date : November 16, 1998
	Review Date(s):
	Revision Date(s): June 18, 2001; Apr 26, 2004; Oct 19, 2015; May 16, 2016, March 22, 2021, September 15, 2025
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Purpose

To establish guidelines and procedures for public internet access as deemed necessary by the CEO or designates.

Policy Statement & Limitations

The Welland Public Library is a learning, reference and information support facility serving all residents in the community. The Library acts as an information facilitator and consequently provides Internet services to the public both in-house and through the lending of wi-fi hotspots.

The Welland Public Library supports the individual's right to intellectual freedom as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and endorses the Statement of Intellectual Freedom adopted by the Canadian Library Association and the Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual adopted by the Ontario Library Association.

The Library's Internet access is intended primarily as an information resource, permitting users to connect to electronic resources outside the library. The Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed and cannot be held liable for its content.

Parents or legal guardians of children assume complete responsibility for the child's use of the Internet. The library does not provide filtered Internet workstations. While recognizing that the Internet provides access to a vast array of tools and resources for different age levels and points of view, the Welland Public Library does not act in place of or in absence of a parent and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of information available on the Internet.

As with any information source, users are advised to evaluate the validity of the information found on the Internet. Use of workstations for illegal, actionable or criminal purposes or to seek access to unauthorized areas is prohibited. Infringement of copyright or other intellectual property rights is prohibited. Welland Public Library assumes no responsibility for any direct or indirect damages arising from the use of its connection to Internet services.

Scope

This policy applies to all Staff, Contractors, and members of the Public.

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Accountability

Under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer, the Manager of Information Technology and Systems ensures compliance with this policy.

All Staff are required to enforce the policy by applying the guidelines consistently.

Policy Guidelines

1. All users are expected to abide by the conditions and terms of the this policy. Use of the Library workstations and wi-fi hotspots are conditional on the user's acceptance of this Policy.
2. A valid Welland Public Library card or a guest pass is required to log on to an Internet workstation or to borrow a wi-fi hotspot. Visitors to the community who do not hold a valid library card may be permitted access to the Internet with a guest pass. Patrons without a library card may obtain and use one guest pass per day. Time extensions or additional guest passes may be issued at the discretion of Library staff.
3. A valid library card allows access to the Internet for up to 90 minutes each day. A guest pass grants a 30 minute session. Shorter time limits may be imposed at the discretion of staff to maintain health and safety protocols or maximize access for the public.
4. As space is limited, only one person is permitted at an Internet station at any given time.
5. Library staff reserves the right to terminate a session if the user displays controversial information or images or engages in behaviour that disturbs other library users.
6. Black and White printing is available at a charge of twenty (0.20) cents per page and colour printing is available at a charge of fifty (\$0.50) cents per page.

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7. Staff are available to assist users in getting started, and as time permits, to offer suggestions for effective searching or for accessing online instructions, but they do not provide in-depth Internet training. Users requiring extra assistance are encouraged to take advantage of the formal and informal educational opportunities available at the Library and in the community.
8. The workstations are situated in public access areas and as such the Library does not guarantee privacy. It is the user's responsibility to ensure that they comply with Library guidelines
9. External storage devices may be used to save files or to upload personal documents (i.e. resumes). Headphones may be used to listen to music or other audio files. Both memory sticks and earbuds may be purchased from the Library.
10. The Library reserves the right to develop service use guidelines that will be revised as necessary.
11. The Library assumes no responsibility for any direct or indirect damages or security breaches arising from the use of its computers or Internet service.

Unacceptable use includes:

- Use of personal software programs.
- Use of workstations for illegal, actionable, or criminal purposes or to seek access to unauthorized areas.
- Attempting to modify or gain unauthorized access to files, data, or passwords belonging to others or seeking unauthorized access to any computer system.
- Violating copyright laws or software licensing agreements.
- Subverting or attempting to subvert any security devices in either software or hardware format which the library has installed on its Internet workstations.

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- Installing or attempting to install viruses or other programs designed to damage or alter software on the workstations, the LAN or the Internet, or seeking unauthorized access to any computer system.
- Sending any unsolicited commercial material or spamming.
- Misrepresenting oneself as another user.
- Attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords or data belonging to others.
- Vandalism or theft of library property.

Consequences of Violating Internet Use Guidelines

Users in violation of the library's Internet use policies and guidelines will have their Internet privileges revoked and are subject to the HR-03 Progressive Disciplinary Policy for Library Visitors.

Customers using the library's Internet workstations for illegal purposes may be subject to criminal prosecution. Vandalism or theft of library property is illegal and will be reported to the police.