

LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY POLICY

Title : Public Computer Use and Internet Access

Policy Category: Services and Operations

Policy No.:

Issuing Date: November 21st 2007

Revision Date:

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the public is aware of risks and responsibilities in the use of computers, the Internet and Wi-fi Access at the Library; to describe expected appropriate conduct in regards to computer use and Internet access; and to indicate the Library's accountabilities.

DEFINITIONS:

Internet is a worldwide interconnected network of computers that allows the "sharing" or "networking" of information at remote sites from other academic institutions, research institutes, private companies, government agencies, and individuals.

Wi-fi Access refers to wireless Internet services that utilize dual band networks. This offers the obvious advantage of two-way traffic.

Underblocking is when filtering software fails to block sites because the software cannot properly analyze it

Overblocking is when filtering software accidentally blocks legitimate sites that do not fit the filtering category.

SCOPE: The London Public Library endorses as policy the *Statement on Intellectual Freedom* of the Canadian Library Association. At the same time, the London Public Library supports and is supported by the *Canadian Copyright Act, the Criminal Code of Canada* and other legislation governing access to expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity.

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the London Public Library that customers abide by the following statements regarding the use of computers and Internet access in the Library:

1. Computer Use

1.1 Customers must act with respect and consideration for one another and staff. All customers are required to respect the privacy of others.

1.2 Customers must obey the laws of Canada when using Library computers. Use of workstations for illegal, actionable or criminal purposes or to seek access to unauthorized areas is prohibited. Infringement of copyright and other intellectual

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property rights is prohibited.

- 1.3 Customers are expected to treat Library computers and equipment with respect and take care to ensure that all persons enjoy equitable access. Customers are not permitted to alter, tamper with or damage the Library's computer equipment or software configuration. This includes, but is not limited to: attempting unauthorized entry to the Library's network or external networks; intentional propagation of computer viruses; violation of vendor software license agreements.

2. Internet & Wi-Fi Access: Due Diligence

- 2.1 The Library is not responsible for the site content, accuracy, appropriateness or availability of any external sites linked to its website. The Library cannot control information obtained through links to websites which often change rapidly. Links to information resources do not imply endorsement by the Library.
- 2.2 The London Public Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from its provision of access to Internet services. The Library disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through the Internet. Users are responsible for any commercial transactions made while using the Library's Internet connection.
- 2.3 The Library supports the right and responsibility of parents or legal guardians to determine and monitor their children's use of Library materials and resources. The Library does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent. As with other Library materials, children's access to the Internet and other electronic networks is the right and responsibility of parents or guardians.
- 2.4 To help users effectively seek content on the Internet, London Public Library staff has made every effort to choose Web site links that provide quality information sources.

3. Internet Access: Customer's Responsibilities

- 3.1 Customers must be mindful of the fact that they are using the Internet in a public space designed for people of all ages, including children. Internet workstations are situated in public areas. Accordingly, content being viewed by customers may be seen by other people, and customers are expected to use the Internet in accordance with the sensitivities of what would be deemed appropriate in a public environment. Customers

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of the Library Internet service should also be aware that some content, images or, sounds could be offensive or intimidating to other Library customers or staff.

- 3.2 All customers of London Public Library, including those using the Library's Internet services, are expected to follow the Library's Rules of Conduct which are designed to ensure a welcoming environment.
- 3.3 Customers access the Internet at their own discretion and are responsible for any access points they reach and appropriate use of the resource.
- 3.4 Customers are responsible for determining the reliability and accuracy of sites accessed and information found using the Internet.
- 3.5 Customers are responsible for determining the legality of any sites they access. Customers are subject to federal, provincial and municipal legislation regulating Internet use, including the provisions of the Criminal Code regarding obscenity, child pornography, sedition and the incitement of hate. The use of the Library's Internet services for illegal purposes is prohibited.
- 3.6 Customers must be aware that certain copying or distribution of material found on the Internet may infringe on copyright or other intellectual property rights. The Library is not responsible for such infringements.
- 3.7 Customers must be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information about their activities or themselves.
- 3.8 Customers must be aware that no filtering product can block all such sites. The Library assumes no liability in the event that a customer may reach such a site or be unintentionally exposed to sexually explicit images that are not appropriate in a general public setting.

4. Internet Access: Filtering

The London Public Library will:

- 4.1 Maintain a balance of filtered to unfiltered computers in all locations in order to enable unrestricted access to information and resources on the Internet and to mitigate the unintentional exposure of its customers to sexually explicit images that are not appropriate in a general public setting in order to provide a welcoming environment for all people.**

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- 4.2 Filter selected public workstations, including Wi-Fi access, solely to mitigate the unintentional exposure of its customers to sexually explicit images that are not appropriate in a general public setting.
- 4.3 Provide a minimum of one unfiltered public workstations in each library location
- 4.4 Provide a minimum of six unfiltered public workstations in the Central Branch.
- 4.5 Filter function-specific public workstations to enhance their use by the public e.g. Employment Research Centres, Homework Centre, etc.
- 4.6 Filter all public workstations primarily designated for use by children **and teens**.
- 4.7 The Library cannot and does not guarantee that the filtering software will block all sexually explicit images. Nor can the Library guarantee that the filtering software will not mistakenly overblock a website.

5. Internet Access: Staff Responsibilities

- 5.1 Library staff is entrusted with the obligation to ensure that all rules of computer use and Internet access are followed. Staff will advise patrons of appropriate conduct as required and state consequences of not following the rules of conduct should unacceptable behaviour continue or be repeated.

6. Sanctions

- 6.1 Any person violating Library rules of computer use and Internet Access risks suspension of Library privileges, exclusion from the Library for a period of time, and prosecution.
- 6.2 In a situation where there is a contravention or perceived contravention of the law of the Province of Ontario and Canada, London Public Library administration, staff or security will contact the police.

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BACKGROUND:

While the Internet offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enables access to some material that may be objectionable or disturbing to some users and/or illegal. It may contain material of a controversial nature, as well as information that is inaccurate, out-of-date and/or inappropriate.

INQUIRIES:

Director, Services and Operations
Manager, Services and Operations
Chief Executive Officer

KEYWORDS:

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Rules of Conduct