

## Policy: Operational - Internet Services

Department: Library

Effective Date: August 2014

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### Purpose

Bruce County Public Library considers Internet resources an extension of its material collections for library users and one of the richest information resources available to the public. The Internet is also a communication tool, connecting individuals and communities, participatory community space, and an important vehicle for developing community amongst library users. At the same time, the Internet functions in an unregulated environment, and therefore provides access to a variety of resources over which Bruce County Public Library has no control.

This policy establishes the provision of public network services to access the Internet, acceptable use of these services by users, staff responsibilities, and consequences of inappropriate behaviour or illegal activity by users. It ensures that internet use conforms with all applicable laws and that the Library is maintained as a welcoming environment.

### Scope

1. This policy applies to anyone who accesses the Internet through the Bruce County Public Library public network, whether on a computer or device provided by BCPL or a personal device. Violations of this Policy and/or the Code of Conduct may result in suspension of library privileges and exclusion from the Library, as well as prosecution.

### Access

1. The Bruce County Public Library Board endorses the Canadian Library Association's Statement of Intellectual Freedom and believes that the freedom of access to information is essential to the health and development of a democratic society.
2. The Library provides members of the public with Internet access through the Library's computers, laptops, and devices, and through the library's wireless network which can be accessed with personal mobile devices.

3. Internet access is provided free of charge.
4. Users are expected to provide their library card as part of the sign-in process. Visitors are encouraged to get a library card but may be provided with a guest pass to access library computers. Visitors must provide their name, and may be asked to show ID, to library staff to receive a guest pass for computer use.
5. Users must have only one library card, use only their own library card and must not use other individuals' cards.
6. Internet workstations will not have any content limitations.
7. Library branches have at least one computer with additional accessibility features including a high visibility keyboard, trackball mouse, and height-adjustable workstations.
8. To ensure equitable access to the public network and efficient use of resources, BCPL reserves the right to set time limits or ask users to limit their time on the library's public computers.
9. The Internet is an unregulated, worldwide environment. It contains information and opinions that range in scope from reliable and authoritative to controversial or extremely offensive. Some information found on the Internet may not be accurate, complete, or current. Users must assess the validity of the information found.
- ~~10. The library will make workstations available for Internet access, word processing, and other public information needs. We will make decisions regarding the number of workstations according to space availability, branch priorities, telecommunications capability, and system-wide resources.~~
- ~~11. Customer use of Internet workstations will be limited by time per day. Branch staff may make exceptions on specific workstations as needed.~~
- ~~12. Email will only be made available through free email providers, such as Gmail, via public web browsers, like Microsoft Edge.~~
- ~~13. The library will make wireless Internet available to the public free of charge.~~

## Liability

1. The library is not responsible for customer actions resulting from content read on the Internet from a library workstation. Users should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information about users' activities. The library assumes no responsibility for the security and privacy of on-line transactions nor is the library liable for any loss or theft of personal information.
2. ~~Users should be aware that information sent to or from their laptop can be captured by anyone else with a wireless device and appropriate software.~~
3. The library does not assume any responsibility for the configuration, security or files on personal laptops resulting from connection to the library's network.
4. BCPL is not responsible for the content or quality and accuracy of information retrieved on library Internet workstations or through the use of the public wireless network.

## Use by Children

1. Children are entitled to access all information and facilities in the Library. Children's access to the Internet is compatible with Bruce County Public Library's Children and Teen Policy and Intellectual Freedom Policy.
2. ~~Monitoring of a child's use of the Library and the Internet~~ As with other library materials, **children's use of a computer or device, including internet and wireless access**, ~~access to the Internet and other electronic networks~~ is the responsibility of parents and guardians. BCPL accepts no responsibility for enforcing restrictions which a parent or guardian places on a child's use of the internet.
3. All members of the public, including children, will have access to workstations with no content limitations.

## Privacy

1. ~~Users must not violate~~ should respect the privacy of another library **patrons. ~~customer.~~ **However**, privacy at the workstations **or while on personal devices** is not guaranteed. Staff will take reasonable measures to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of a ~~persons usage of the Internet use in the library.~~**
2. The same confidentiality standards and procedures that apply to other library/public transactions will apply to the use of Internet resources. BCPL will make a best effort not to store any individual information on customer Internet use or other BCPL electronic information sources. BCPL may store cumulative, generic statistics to assure equitable access or measure service utilisation and direct information subscription purchases.
3. **The library will use booking software to track the total amount of time used at each session and throughout the day. No information is kept on the content of the session.**
4. Library workstations are configured to erase files and login information at the end of a user's session. It remains the responsibility of the user to ensure that they delete all files and properly log out of any sites while utilizing a library computer or device
5. The library cannot guarantee the security and confidentiality of any transaction, particularly ecommerce transactions.

## Acceptable Use of the Internet and Technology in the Library

2. Library workstations are located in public areas shared by library users of all ages, backgrounds, and sensibilities. **Some content is age-inappropriate for children. Some content may be offensive, objectionable, or intimidating to other library patrons and/or staff. BCPL reserves the right to redirect users whose activities on library or personal devices diminish the enjoyment of the library space by others.** ~~individuals are asked to consider other customers when accessing the Internet or electronic resources from the public workstations or personal devices.~~
3. All users of the Bruce County Public Library, including users of the Library's Internet services, are also expected to follow the Library's Code of Conduct which **is** designed to ensure a welcoming environment. Disruptive, threatening, or otherwise intrusive behaviour is not allowed and Library staff are authorized to take action, **including requiring an individual to leave.**

4. Bruce County Public Library's users 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, and may result in prosecution. **Illegal use, within the definitions of federal or provincial legislation, will be reported to the police.**
5. Users must not use any workstation or public wireless network for illegal, actionable, or criminal purpose, or seek access into any unauthorized areas, and must not harass other users locally or remotely
6. Users of the Internet must respect copyright law and licensing of programs and data.
7. Users must not install software or run any programs on BCPL computer equipment that have not been installed by BCPL staff.
- ~~8. Users should not develop or use programs that infiltrate a computer or computer system and/or damage or alter the software components of a local or remote computer or computing system. No alteration, damage or destruction of the library's computer hardware is permitted.~~
- ~~9. Users must not seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users. Users should not represent themselves as other users.~~
10. Violations of this Policy and/or the Code of Conduct may result in suspension of library privileges and exclusion from the Library, as well as prosecution.
11. The library is not responsible for any fees incurred by use of the Internet.
12. The library is not responsible for any damage to any removable media or external devices that may be connected to or inserted into a library workstation or connected to BCPL power.

## **Library Customers' Rights**

- ~~• Library customers have the right to confidentiality and privacy in the use of electronic information networks to the extent possible given certain constraints such as proximity of other customers and staff in public access settings. For legal reasons complaints from customers that a user is accessing legally prohibited or offensive material may result in a BCPL staff member intervening.~~
- ~~• Library customers have the right to equitable access to electronic information networks.~~

## **Related Documents**

Canadian Library Association, Statement on Intellectual Freedom

**Bruce County Public Library - Intellectual Freedom Policy**

Bruce County Public Library - Code of Conduct Policy