



Policy Type: **Operational**

Policy Number: **OP - 07**

Policy Title: **Public Internet Access Policy**

Policy Approval Date: December 1998

Policy Review Date: March 2025

I. Purpose

Milton Public Library (MPL) provides public access to computers and the Internet in keeping with its mission to "empower the community to: Read. Learn. Innovate. Connect." This policy governs the use of MPL's computing resources and internet services to ensure a safe, equitable, and legally compliant digital environment. The purpose of this Policy is to set out the terms and conditions for public computing at the Library, and to ensure that internet use conforms with all applicable laws and the Library is maintained as a welcoming and supportive environment free from discrimination and harassment.

For the purposes of this policy, "Internet Services" refers to access via MPL's public computers and publicly available wireless connections.

2. Scope

For the purpose of this Policy, public computing is defined as the in-branch hardware, applications, software, and peripherals such as keyboards, mice, and USB devices used by customers to effectively make use of the Library's public computers and/or wired or wireless networks. Internet services are defined as the Library's wired and wireless networks.

The Policy applies to all library users with or without a library card using technology resources and internet services at all Library locations, online, or at an external outreach location.

Internet access provided through the Library's lendable technology equipment (e.g., Wi-Fi Hotspots) is out of scope of this Policy and is covered by the corresponding loan policy and agreement form.

3. General

- 3.1 Computer hardware, software and internet access enables the Library to connect customers to ideas, information, and commentary from around the globe and to offer access to many valuable local, national, and international resources.

- 3.2 Specific software, hardware, and technology resources may vary from branch to branch.
- 3.3 MPL provides equitable access to computing resources, which are available on a first-come, first-served basis and may be subject to time limits.
- 3.4 MPL reserves the right to manage internet use to ensure fair access, including limiting session duration or network bandwidth and terminating an internet and/or computer session at any time.
- 3.5 The Library does not guarantee consistent quality and speed of hardware, software, and internet services across locations.
- 3.6 While every effort is made to have technology resources available for customer use, the Library may, at times, reserve technology resources for specific programs, services, or upgrades and repairs.

4. Internet Content & User Responsibility

- 4.1 The internet is an unregulated environment. It contains information and opinions that range in scope from reliable and authoritative to controversial or extremely offensive.
- 4.2 Some information found on the internet may not be accurate, complete, or current. Users must assess the validity of the information found.
- 4.3 Users should be aware that others might be able to view the information displayed on computer monitors, and that the internet is not secure and third parties may be able to obtain information about users' activities.
- 4.4 Users are responsible for their own information security and should avoid entering sensitive data on public computers. The Library is not responsible for the privacy or security of confidential or sensitive information transmitted over the Internet.

5. Internet Security Controls

- 5.1 While the library employs software tools to reduce exposure to malicious or illegal material, these tools may not always be effective.
- 5.2 The Library assumes no responsibility for loss of data, damage to personal devices, or security and privacy breaches resulting from the use of Library internet services.

6. Children's Access to the Internet

- 6.1 As with other library materials, children's access to the internet is the responsibility of parents or guardians.
- 6.2 The Library does not filter internet access but supports parental supervision and guidance regarding children's online activities.

6.3 Parents and guardians are encouraged to discuss safe internet use with their children.

7. Use & Prohibited Activities

7.1 Use of the Library's computer hardware, software, or internet services for a purpose or action that is, or the Library reasonably believes to be, contrary to the law or any of the Library's Code of Conduct or policies is prohibited.

7.2 Use of MPL's public computing and internet services must comply with all applicable laws and MPL policies, including the Code of Conduct Policy.

7.3 The following activities are prohibited:

7.3.1 **Illegal Activities:** Any use that violates local, provincial, or federal laws, including the Criminal Code of Canada.

7.3.2 **Copyright Infringement:** Downloading, copying, or sharing copyrighted material without permission.

7.3.3 **Unauthorized Access:** Attempting to gain unauthorized access to networks, databases, or accounts.

7.3.4 **Disruptive or Harmful Activities:** Engaging in hacking, spreading malware, or interfering with other users' access to MPL services.

7.3.5 **Inappropriate Use in a Public Space:** Viewing or displaying offensive or disruptive material that may be considered harassment under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

7.4 MPL reserves the right to terminate an internet or computer session if a patron engages in any prohibited activity. Repeated violations may result in suspension of library privileges.

8. Privacy & Security

8.1 MPL does not monitor users' internet activities; however, the Library may be required to cooperate with law enforcement agencies if illegal activities are suspected.

8.2 Public computers are configured to clear browsing history and temporary files after each session.

8.3 Personal devices cannot be physically connected to MPL's network, ensuring the integrity and security of library infrastructure.

8.4 MPL does not provide technical support for personal devices using its wireless network.

9. Legal Compliance

- 9.1 The Library's users are subject to federal, provincial and municipal legislation regulating computer and internet use, including the provisions of the Criminal Code.
- 9.2 Users must comply with copyright laws, privacy laws, licensing agreements, and other intellectual property rights. The Library is not responsible for infringements of these laws.

10. Liability Disclaimer

- 10.1 Users are responsible for any direct or indirect damages resulting from using MPL's public computing or internet services.
- 10.2 MPL is not responsible for financial transactions or personal data breaches while using the Library's internet services.

11. Policy Enforcement & Compliance

- 11.1 Failure to comply with this policy may result in the suspension of internet privileges, banning from library premises, or legal action where applicable.

This policy is subject to review and may be updated as necessary to reflect technological changes, legal requirements, or community needs.

Related Documents:

Milton Public Library. **OP – 01 Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy Policy**
Milton Public Library. **FN – 04 Intellectual Freedom Policy**