

Niagara Falls Public Library	Date Effected May 19, 1999 Last Revised September 16, 2015	Internet Use Policy
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Policy Statement

The Niagara Falls Public Library provides access to the internet for the public in keeping with the Library's mission to be an informational, educational, cultural, and recreational resource for the community.

Purpose

The internet is a tool for lifelong learning and contains a wealth of information and resources that supplement the Library's collections. The internet is also an essential communication tool connecting individuals and communities. All members of the public will be granted access to the internet subject to the provisions in this policy.

Reliability and Appropriateness of Information on the Internet

1. The internet provides a vast array of materials for different age groups and points of view. It is the user's responsibility to question the appropriateness and validity of any information found on the internet.
2. The Library is not responsible for the quality, legality, appropriateness or availability of any internet source.
3. The Library assumes no responsibility for any direct or indirect damages arising from the use of its internet service.

Access to the Internet

1. Access to the internet is provided by wired public computers and wireless access for personal devices.
2. The Library provides public computers that are adapted for people with disabilities meeting AODA standards.
3. The Library reserves the right to set time limits on free access to the internet.
4. At the beginning of each session internet users must agree to be bound by the *Internet Use Policy* that is displayed on the screen by clicking on the "OK" button when prompted.
5. The library strives to maintain access to the internet at all times. The library is not responsible for any monetary or other loss if internet service is interrupted or unavailable

Filtering

1. In order to allow users unfettered access to information while at the same time recognizing that many sites are inappropriate for children, and to protect other members of the public from inadvertently seeing unwanted material a mix of filtered and unfiltered workstations will be provided.

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2. Filtered workstations are aimed at blocking sites that contain sexually explicit or hate speech material. Filters help reduce the chances of involuntary exposure to sites that may be considered by some to be offensive, inappropriate, or illegal. Commercial software is installed on filtered computers. Software updates provided by the software company are also installed. The Library assumes no responsibility for the currency of the filter or the content provided through it.
3. Filters do not always work as advertised and may fail to block some sexually explicit or hate speech sites. Filters are not a substitute for parental guidance.
4. Wireless internet access is unfiltered.
5. Filters will be installed and updated on computers in the Children's area at Victoria Branch Library, on selected computers in the adult department at Victoria Branch Library, and at each of the other branches. Filters may be removed by request at the Chippawa, Community Centre, and Stamford Branch Libraries by users who qualify to have unfiltered access (see *Internet Use Policy: Type of Access*)

Type of Access

1. Access to all computers except the express computers is controlled by a booking system. This system will allow bookings to be made dependant on card type.
2. Children's cards will allow access to filtered internet stations only. Children may access unfiltered internet stations, or have filters removed at the branches, upon written permission from their parent/guardian.
3. Any patron with a valid library card may access the internet. If a card is blocked due to excessive amounts owing, a guest pass may be issued for \$2 per hour. This money will be applied to reduce the amount owing.
4. "Internet only" cards may be issued to non-members who do not qualify for a full membership card upon presentation of minimal identification (something with their name on is all that is required)
5. A guest pass may be issued for those who do not wish to register for either card or for those who wish to have extra time on the internet beyond the set time limit. Cost of the guest pass is \$2 per hour. Multiple guest passes may be purchased to extend time.

Privacy

1. The booking system log of an individual's use of library internet stations is erased daily.
2. The ip address of individual devices accessing the wireless internet is erased daily.
3. The log of internet addresses accessed by a particular internet station or ip address is erased daily.
4. The booking system and security software erases any session history and cache after each internet session and resets the computer to its original settings before the next internet session.
5. Library internet stations and wireless access are in public areas. There is no expectation or guarantee of privacy.

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Assistance From Staff

1. Staff will assist with:
 - a) Access to the internet stations and wireless internet on portable devices
 - b) Helping users begin their search
 - c) Access to Library databases, subscription databases, ebooks, audiobooks, and emagazines
 - d) Basic assistance with commonly used software and removable storage devices
 - e) Printing from commonly used software
 - f) Offering registration in a Library presented Tech Time or computer course if more in-depth assistance is needed
2. Staff will not:
 - a) Assist in lengthy searches unless required under AODA legislation
 - b) Provide in-depth instruction on the use of software or hardware
 - c) Interpret legal or medical information into layman's terms

Prohibited Activity

1. Internet users must comply with the Internet Use Policy. Any misuse or illegal use of the internet as outlined in Section 4 (below) will result in:
 - a. suspension or loss of privilege to use the internet service
 - b. being asked to leave the library; including banning from all library locations for a period of time
 - c. being subject to prosecution.
2. Should a user's internet privilege be suspended, the following suspension periods will be applied:
 - a. 1st offense – that day with a warning
 - b. 2nd offense – one week
 - c. 3rd offense – one month
 - d. Any subsequent offenses – 6 months
 - e. Police involvement – automatic one month suspension which may be increased on review by the CEO/Chief Librarian
3. If a suspension is for viewing illegal, obscene or offensive material the patron will be restricted to using filtered workstations after the second offense.
4. The following activities are prohibited:
 - a. use of workstations for illegal, actionable, or criminal purposes or to seek access to unauthorized areas
 - b. infringement of copyright or other intellectual property rights
 - c. use of FTP (file transfer protocol) for downloading
 - d. use of personal software programs
 - e. subverting or attempting to subvert any security hardware or software installed by the Library

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- f. installing or attempting to install viruses or other programs designed to damage or alter software
- g. sending unsolicited commercial material or spamming
- h. attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others
- i. vandalism or theft of library property
- j. misrepresenting oneself as another library user
- k. receiving or displaying text, images, graphics, or materials which are illegal, obscene or offensive