

11. INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

11.1 Internet Access Policy Statement

In keeping with its vision, mission, and service plans, the Lethbridge Public Library provides Internet based services to the public.

The Library has embraced the Internet as a way to enhance traditional collections and services and is committed to ensuring that all members of the community have equal access to this resource.

The provision of public use Internet services allows Lethbridge Public Library patrons to connect to ideas and information on a global scale and with others in pursuit of knowledge, shared experiences and communication. Internet services also supplement the traditional recreational services provided by the Library.

The guiding principles for the provision of these services include:

- a. The right of all Library patrons to access the Internet as defined by the policies governing Internet Access and Public Behaviour in the Library
- b. Adherence to the Canadian Library Association Statements on Intellectual Freedom, Internet Access, and Information and Telecommunication Access Principle
- c. A behaviour based acceptable use monitoring system
- d. A commitment to educating the public in the safe and effective use of the Internet, including Web Awareness and Net Smart training for children and their parents, guardians or adult caregivers.

11.2 The Internet and You

The Internet is a worldwide network of computers providing a wealth of information and ideas for learning, recreation and business. Since no one group or individual is responsible for operating the Internet, it is an unregulated medium over which no one has control. Anyone with access to a computer and appropriate software can put information and ideas on the Internet.

As an unregulated, worldwide environment the Internet contains information and opinions that range in scope from reliable and authoritative to controversial or extremely offensive and, in some cases, illegal by Canadian standards. Some information found on the Internet is **NOT** accurate, complete, or current. Users must assess the validity and appropriateness of the information they find. Users should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information about user activities.

For these reasons, Lethbridge Public Library is not responsible for the content or quality of information that users may retrieve on the Internet.

11.3 Acceptable Use of Public-Use Computer Workstations

To ensure that the Library's public use Internet computer workstations are used for intended purposes and in a responsible manner, all users are required to agree to the following principles for acceptable use:

- a. Users must respect the legal protection provided by copyright and licensing of programs and data
- b. As public use computer Internet workstations are located in open areas shared by library patrons of all ages, backgrounds, and sensibilities, individual users must be respectful of other library patrons when accessing the Internet from public workstations, in accordance with Policy #6.3 Public Behaviour in the Library.
- c. Patrons must respect the privacy of others using the Library's public Internet access workstations subject to Article (b) above.
- d. Users are not allowed to install software or run any program that has not been installed by Library staff on public use computer equipment. Users may 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.
- e. Users may not utilize Library workstations for illegal, actionable or criminal purpose or seek access into any unauthorized areas. Activities such as "hacking", harassing other users, and distributing unsolicited advertising locally or remotely are not allowed.
- f. Users may not seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users. Users may not represent themselves as another person.
- g. The Library is not responsible for any fees a user may incur by use of the Internet.
- h. The Library cannot guarantee security and confidentiality of any transaction, particularly e-commerce transactions.

11.4 Internet Access and Library Patrons' Rights

Lethbridge Public Library patrons have the following rights with respect to the Internet based services the Library provides:

- a. The right to confidentiality and privacy in the use of electronic information networks to the extent possible given constraints such as proximity to other patrons and staff in public access settings. For legal and policy reasons, complaints from patrons that a user is engaging in prohibited or offensive conduct shall result in Library staff intervention. The same confidentiality standards and procedures that apply to other library/public transactions will apply to the use of Internet resources.
- b. The right to equitable access to electronic information networks.
- c. The right to access and read this policy and discuss it with appropriate staff and Library trustees.

11.5 The Internet and the Library's Responsibilities

To ensure that all users of public use Internet workstations adhere to this Internet Access Policy, the Library shall:

- a. Develop, maintain and post Internet Access Guidelines.
- b. Make reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Internet Access Policy and associated Internet Access Guidelines.
- c. Make users aware of the Library's Internet Access Policy through signage, and brochures.
- d. Take reasonable measures to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of Internet users.
- e. Restrict public use computer workstations in the children's area to use by young adults or children with their parents, guardians or adult caregivers.
- f. Provide staff assistance to library Internet users whenever time and knowledge permit.
- g. Develop and make available information tools to assist users in safely navigating the Internet.
- h. Develop and provide ongoing public training sessions on the safe use of the Internet with emphasis directed toward educating children and their parents, guardians or adult caregivers.
- i. Offer introductory and more advanced training sessions aimed at enhancing the public's information literacy skills.

- j. Take immediate measures regarding violators of the Internet Access Policy in accordance with Policy #6.3 Public Behaviour in the Library.

11.6 Children's Access and Use of the Internet in the Library

Recognizing that children's access to the Internet requires stringent monitoring by parents/guardians/adult caregivers and Library, the following acceptable use statements apply to all children seventeen (17) years old or younger, wishing to use the public access workstations in the Library:

- a) Public access computer workstations in the children's area are for use by young adults (13-17 years of age) and children (12 years or younger) only, or a parent/guardian/adult caregiver accompanied by their child.
- b) All public use computers in the children's area will provide filtered access to the Internet until such time as a permission form is signed by a parent or adult guardian indicating unfiltered access is permitted.
- c) All children twelve (12) years or younger must obtain a signed permission form from their parent/guardian/adult caregiver before they will be given access and use of the public use workstations within the Library.

11.7 Policy Related Documents

The following documents form an integral part of this policy:

- Lethbridge Public Library Vision, Mission and Plan of Service Statements
- Lethbridge Public Library Board Policy #6.3 Public Behaviour in the Library
- Canadian Library Association
 - Statement of Intellectual Freedom
 - Statement of Internet Access
 - Information and Telecommunication Access Principles

LETHBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD POLICY ADOPTED

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