

# MacDonald Public Library Computer and Internet Use Policy

*Adopted: September 2023*

*Next review scheduled: September 2026*

## General Statements Regarding Internet

- A. Internet Access. The MacDonald Public Library (MPL) provides access to a broad range of information resources, including those available through the Internet. Access to the Internet enables the Library to expand its information services significantly. This policy applies to both the Library-owned computers and wireless access available at the Library.
- B. Validity of Information. The Internet offers access to a wealth of information and Internet sites including useful ideas, information, and opinions from around the world. However, not all sources on the Internet provide information that is accurate, complete, or legal. Internet users will need to evaluate for themselves the validity of the information found.
- C. Library Does Not Endorse Information on Internet. Because the Internet is a vast and unregulated information network, it also enables access to information, ideas and commentary beyond the confines of the Library's mission, selection criteria, and collection development policies. The provision of access does not mean or imply that the Library endorses or sanctions the content or point of view of any of the information or commentary that may be found on the Internet.
- D. View Internet at Own Risk. The Internet may contain information that is controversial, sexually explicit, or offensive. Users are cautioned that ideas, points of view and images can be found on the Internet that are controversial, divergent and/or inflammatory. Because of this and the fact that access points on the Internet can and do change often, rapidly and unpredictably, the Library cannot protect individuals from information and images which they might find offensive, disturbing or inaccurate. Library patrons use the Internet at their own risk. Parents or guardians of minor children are responsible for their child's use of the Internet through the Library's connection as stated more fully below.
- E. No Liability. The Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from its connections to the Internet. Patrons shall use Library computer hardware and software at their own risk. The Library is not responsible for equipment malfunction, loss of data, any damages to the user's disks, data, or electronic transactions of any type. The Library is not responsible for the loss of any portable media. The User shall be responsible for repayment of any costs to the Library for damage to the computer terminals or system.

## Nature of the Public Library Setting

- A. Respect Others. Because Library Users of all ages, backgrounds and sensibilities are using the computers, Library patrons are asked to be sensitive to others' values and beliefs when accessing potentially controversial information and images.
- B. Use with Caution of Risks. Users are cautioned that, because security in an electronic environment such as the Internet cannot be guaranteed, all transactions, files and communications are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use.

## Procedure for Use

- A. Reservation/Time Limits.
  - a. If a User wishes to use the Internet station, they must sign in at the computer with their library card number or guest pass number. A guest pass is provided at the circulation desk. Their library card must be in good standing.
  - b. The User may sign up to use the Internet station for periods of one (1) hour at a time up to 5 times per day. Use of the Internet stations is available on a first come, first served basis. If no one is waiting, the User may use the terminal for additional 30-minute increments until another User signs up to use the terminal.
  - c. Users must sign out by clicking 'End Session' on the computer they are using.
- B. Availability. The public computers are only available for use by Users if they are not being used for Library purposes, such as classes, staff training or special programs. The Library reserves the right to have first priority of use for Library uses, sponsored events or co-sponsored events. Library patrons should be aware that there are some computers that are limited to only the online public access catalog and are clearly marked. The online public access computers are available on a first come, first served basis.
- C. Closing. All computers and printers are shut down fifteen (15) minutes before the Library closes.
- D. Reimbursement for Printing. The User shall reimburse the Library 20 cents a page for black and white printing and 50 cents a page for color printing. The User shall be responsible for all printing costs, so Users are encouraged to use "print preview" so that they are aware of the number of pages.

## Internet Filtering; Children Under 18

- A. Responsibility of Parents and Legal Guardians. As with other materials in the Library's collection, it is the Library's policy that parents or legal guardians are responsible for deciding which Library resources are appropriate for their children. The Library urges parents and guardians to discuss Internet use with their children and to monitor their use of this educational tool.
- B. Access for Users Under 18 Years of Age.
  - a. Unfiltered/Unblocked Terminals. A parent or guardian must accompany and be sitting at the computer terminal with Users under 18 years of age wishing to have

access to unfiltered or unblocked Internet workstations. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to ensure that their minor child does not access inappropriate material on the internet.

- b. Filtered Terminals. A filtered terminal means the computer has a program installed that is designed to restrict minors from receiving obscene material or sexually explicit material that is harmful to minors and access to inappropriate information.
- c. Safety of Minors Regarding E-Mail and other Direct Communications. Because children often need access to email for homework and other purposes, the Library does not prohibit the use of email. To the extent that the filters do not block email, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to educate the minor on safety and security and monitor the use of these communications.

### Acceptable Use

All users of the Library's Internet connection and workstations are expected to use this resource in a responsible and courteous manner, and to follow all rules and procedures as established in this Policy.

- A. Lawful Use. The Library Internet connection and terminals shall be used in a lawful manner. The Library's Internet and terminals cannot be used for any fraudulent or unlawful purpose prohibited under any applicable federal, state or local law, including, but not limited to, (1) accessing materials that can be classified as obscene or child pornography; (2) gaining unauthorized access to or use of patron information or accounts; (3) engaging in identity theft; (4) engaging in civil rights violations; or (5) monitoring or capturing information regarding individuals and their use of the computers or Internet illegally, such as by using a keylogger.
- B. Intellectual Property. Users must respect intellectual property rights and obey the copyright laws of the United States and all other intellectual property rights. Responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement or violations of other laws or agreements lies with the user. The Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.
- C. Use Must Not be Harmful to Minors. Michigan law prohibits users from allowing minors' access to sexually explicit materials harmful to minors. Internet Users shall also not permit any minor to view sexually explicit material or any other material deemed harmful to minors.
- D. Compliance with Code of Conduct. The same rules apply to the use of the Internet as with the use of any other Library materials. The Library has adopted a Patron Code of Conduct. All Internet Users must comply with the Library's Code of Conduct, which shall be posted in the Library and on the Library's website.
- E. Privacy; Unauthorized Access. Users must respect the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself as another User; by not attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords or data belonging to others; and by not hacking or seeking disallowed access to any computer system via the Internet.

- F. Payment for Printing. Users must reimburse the Library for printing costs.
- G. Personal Software Prohibited. The Users shall refrain from use of personal software, the attachment of harmful equipment to the Library's computers or networks or the modification of any operating system or network configuration.
- H. System Modifications. Users are not permitted to change the security setup, operating systems, the network configuration, or any other configuration of any Library computer workstation without authorization.
- I. Damage. The User shall be responsible for repayment of any costs to the Library for damage to the computer terminals or system.
- J. Terminal Use.
  - a. For the adult Internet computers, only one (1) person may use a workstation, except for: (1) a parent or caregiver assisting a user, and (2) a person assisting another individual who lacks the knowledge to use the computer alone.
  - b. Upon request, Library staff members may approve and allow additional Users at a workstation.
- K. Personal Information; Unauthorized Release. No patron, including minors, may engage in the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information of any person, including minors.
- L. Saving Files and Documents. Patrons who wish to have a permanent record of their work need to save files and documents on their own portable media or cloud service. Library computers do not allow Users to permanently save documents or personal files to the hard drive.

### Violations of Internet Use Policy

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to Library facilities by (1) terminating or limiting computer, Internet access or Library facilities; (2) immediately dismissing the patron from Library Property; (3) suspending the patron's access to Library Property for a set period of time; or (4) by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this Policy. If necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.

- A. Incident Reports. Library Staff shall record in writing in the form of an Incident Report any violation of this Policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of Library privileges. By the end of the day on which the incident occurred, an Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions, in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension of privileges letter should be attached, if applicable.
- B. Violation of the Policy – Suspension of Privileges. Unless otherwise provided in this Policy (See Section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:
  - a. *Initial Violation:* Library patrons observed violating this Policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If the patron does not comply with the request, they will be asked to leave the Library Property for the day. If they refuse, police may be called.

- b. *Subsequent Violations*: The Director or the Director's authorized designee may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations of the same rule shall result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- C. Violations that Affect Safety and Security. Violations involving violations of law (including child pornography and allowing minors to view sexually explicit or other material deemed harmful to minors), violence, threatening behaviors, sexual or other harassment, vandalism, theft or attempted theft, sexual misconduct or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:
  - a. *Initial Violation*: The police will be called immediately by the staff member in charge. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate minimum two-week suspension of Library privileges. The Incident Report shall specify the nature of the violation.
  - b. *Subsequent Violations*: The police will be called immediately by the staff member in charge. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Director or the Director's authorized designee may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges in escalating responses, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- D. Reinstatement. The patron whose privileges have been limited or revoked shall attend a meeting with the Director or the Director's designee to review the Library Patron Code of Conduct before their privileges may be reinstated.
- E. Civil or Criminal Prosecution. Illegal acts involving the Library's Internet access service may be subject to civil or criminal prosecution.

## Right of Appeal

Patrons may appeal a decision to (1) limit or revoke privileges, or (2) attach conditions to reinstatement by sending a written appeal to the Library Board within fourteen (14) days of the date the privileges were revoked or limited or the written statement of conditions was provided, whichever is applicable. The appeal should be sent to the President of the Library Board. An appeal may also be made to the Library Board of Trustees by appearing in person during the Public Comments portion of the agenda at a special or regularly-scheduled Board meeting. The Board may choose to call a special meeting to address an appeal request. This appearance must be within sixty (60) days after the Library's notice of withholding of privileges. The Board of Trustees may extend the usual and customary time limit afforded to an individual for public comment to grant a person making an appeal sufficient time to address the Board. The Board shall hear the appeal, and respond in writing within 14 days. The decision of the Library Board is final.

## Staff Assistance

Staff may assist Library Users in getting started on the Internet. However, the Library cannot guarantee that Internet-trained staff will be available to assist Users at all times the Library is open. Because of the many different applications available on the Internet, staff may not be able to provide specialized or technical knowledge about a particular application. Users who need training on Library software or digital collections should request an appointment.

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