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Policy Type:	<b>Operational</b>	Policy Number:	<b>OP-15</b>
Policy Title:	Technology	Initial Policy Approval Date:	<b>Feb. 25, 2016</b>
		Last Review/Revision Date:	<b>Oct. 24, 2018</b>
		Year of Next Review:	<b>2022</b>

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The Internet and social media are recognized as essential communication tools, connecting individuals and communities of interest. The Mississippi Mills Public Library endorses the use of the Internet as an essential source of information to complement traditional library collections. Social media is an extension of the Library's traditional channels. Postings, comments and all online content should reflect the mission and values of the Library.

This policy establishes the provision of public network services to access the Internet and social media and the acceptable use of these services.

### **Section 1: Reliability and Appropriateness of Information**

1. Resources will be made available to inform users about the reliability and appropriateness of information available on the Internet and social media.
2. The Library is not responsible for the accuracy of the information available on the Internet and social media. This is the responsibility of the producer/originator or publisher. Social media activities include, but are not limited to, blogs, social networks and online communities, websites and mobile applications.
3. The Board is not responsible for the quality, legality, appropriateness or availability of any Internet sources accessed through the Library's public network.

### **Section 2: Access to the Public Network**

1. The Internet functions in an unregulated, global environment and, therefore, provides access to a wide variety of resources over which the Library has no control. The Library endeavours to minimize the opportunity for unintentional exposure by people using library space to content being accessed by another library user.
2. The Board will ensure that access to, and use of, the public network is compatible with the Mississippi Mills Public Library policy on Intellectual Freedom.

3. Wired and/or wireless access to the Internet via public computers or users' personal devices is free.
4. The Library provides accessible workstations.
5. The Library reserves the right to set time limits or ask users to limit their time on the public computers. The staff reserves the right to adjust computer time and scheduling as necessary.
6. The Library does not use filtering software as it is contrary to the principle of intellectual freedom and is not effective in making the Internet safer for children or in preventing criminal activity.
7. All patrons are expected to use the public computers in a responsible manner. Staff will remind users they are in a public space and will encourage all users to respect the rights of other patrons.
8. The Library does not assume any responsibility for the configuration, security or files on personal device resulting from connection to the Library's network. Users should be aware that information sent to or from their devices can be captured by anyone else with a wireless device and appropriate software.
9. The Board assumes no responsibility for the security and privacy of online transactions, as the Internet is not a secure medium and third parties may be able to obtain information about the user's activities.
10. The Library is not responsible for any damages sustained while using a personal device.
11. The Library will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by, or the potential repercussions of a third party using, personal/banking/credit card information that has been entered via the public network.

### **Section 3: Privacy and Confidentiality**

Privacy at the workstations is not guaranteed and users must respect the privacy of others. Internet workstations are situated in public areas and content being viewed by users may be seen by other people. Staff will take reasonable measures to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

### **Section 4: Use by Children**

The Library does not restrict access to online communication for children and youth. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for monitoring and/or limiting the use of the Library's online and social media channels by their children.

1. Children may access all information and use all facilities provided by the Library.
2. The Library has not installed filtering software on any of its computers.
3. The Board will ensure that children and youth access to the Internet is compatible with the Children in the Library and YA/Teens in the Library policies and the Intellectual Freedom Policy.
4. The Board accepts no responsibility for enforcing restrictions which a parent or guardian places on a child's use of the Internet resources.
5. Staff will:
  - a) affirm and acknowledge the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their child's access to materials and resources
  - b) assist parents by providing guidelines for Internet safety
6. Parents will:
  - a) assume responsibility for deciding which resources and type of network access are appropriate for their child
  - b) be made aware that the term 'child', as used by the Library, means up to, and including, the age of 16

### **Section 5: Acceptable Use**

The Library does not accept any responsibility for any content that appears on its online and social media channels that does not originate from Mississippi Mills Public Library employees or authorized external contributors. The Library reserves the right to alter, amend or remove content that is not in accordance with the Library's policies and procedures.

To ensure equitable access to the public network and efficient use of resources, the Board sets rules for public network access and reserves the right to modify these whenever and wherever appropriate. Users who deliberately violate the rules may have their library privileges suspended.

1. The Acceptable Use rules are:
  - a) Users should view the use of the computers for Internet access in the same way as they view the use of the general collection, that is, they are shared resources.
  - b) Users should view the use of the public computers and personal devices in the library the same way as they view the use of any library space and should restrain from activities that disturb others and use designated spaces for groups and audio (e.g. Skype).
  - c) When viewing the Internet, users should be respectful of sensibilities of others.
  - d) Use of the public network for illegal, actionable or criminal purposes or to seek access to unauthorized areas is prohibited. Examples of such illegal activities

include, but are not limited to, harassment or stalking, libel, illegal commerce or solicitation, "hacking" or tampering with other computer systems, viewing, downloading and/or printing child pornography. Illegal use will be reported to the police.

- e) Users of the public network may not violate or circumvent copyright and other intellectual property rights. The Board will promote fair use copyright principles and will advise users of their legal responsibilities regarding these.
- f) Misuse or abuse of computers or software is not acceptable. Offenders may be required to leave the Library. User-created files shall not be saved on the Library's computers. Files that are saved will be removed. Users may store files on personal removable storage media.
- g) User-supplied software shall not be installed on the Library's computers, and users may not modify or reconfigure software installed on the Library's computers.
- h) Comments, posts and messages are welcome on the Mississippi Mills Public Library's social media sites, provided they do not contain:
  - obscene or racist content
  - personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
  - plagiarized material
  - private, personal information published without consent
  - commercial promotions or spam

2. The staff will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that all users comply with the Acceptable Use rules.

### **Section 6: Assistance from Staff**

1. Staff will provide assistance with:
  - a) access to the public workstations and personal devices
  - b) helping users begin their search for information
  - c) access to subscription databases and e-books

### **Section 7: The Mississippi Mills Public Library's Website**

1. The Library will maintain a website that provides:
    - a) information about services and operations
    - b) access to the catalogue
    - c) access to subscription databases and e-books
    - d) a selected, evaluated and organized collection of reliable and current information sources available on the Internet
    - e) a range of accessibility features through assistive technology conforming with WCAG\* 2.0 guidelines, and staff assistance upon request for people with disabilities
- \*Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Mississippi Mills Public Library Policies:
  - Intellectual Freedom
  - Children in the Library
  - YA/Teens in the Library
  - Accessibility in the Library
- Southern Ontario Library Service, Trillium Public Library: Sample Policies