Technology Use Policy

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Purpose

Burlington Public Library (BPL) provides open, public, and equitable access to library digital resources and services to support an informed and literate society in alignment with BPL values of Intellectual Freedom, Learning, Inclusion, Innovation, and Accountability.
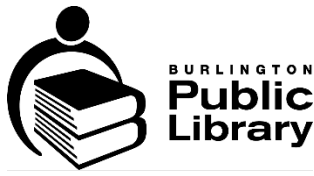
Scope

This policy applies to all users of the library who access Wi-Fi and/or use BPL digital devices and services whether they hold a library card or not.

Statement of Policy

BPL offers digital devices and services to fulfill its mission, support its values of Intellectual Freedom, Innovation, Learning and Accountability, and promote and support digital literacy across the community.

Access to the internet via computer workstations or BPL Wi-Fi through personal devices is available to all community members whether they have a library card or not.

Digital devices, computer workstations, and Wi-Fi are available in public areas throughout library branches. All community members share these spaces regardless of age, background, or beliefs. Individuals must be considerate of others when using digital devices or services in the library, recognizing that others may be able to view their screen.

Definitions

Digital devices: electronic devices provided by BPL for community member use. Devices include laptops, tablets, printers, digital games/toys, MakerSpace equipment, check-out kiosks, etc.

Digital Services: services provided by BPL to community members such as high-speed internet, Wi-Fi access, software, printing, video, 3D printing, laser cutting, computer training etc.

Digital Literacy: the skills, confidence, and knowledge required to use and experiment with technology to participate actively in society.

Intellectual Freedom and Digital Literacy

The internet provides research and information for people of various ages with varying points of view. Not all sources are accurate, current, or age appropriate. Information may be offensive or misleading. Digital literacy skills are needed to navigate internet sources and library staff are available to help navigate and evaluate the credibility of an internet source.

Security

The internet is an unregulated resource that contains information and sources which may be inaccurate, illegal, offensive, or controversial. Burlington Public Library uses software to improve security online to reduce the risk that users may encounter malicious or illegal material while on the internet. However, the Library also balances users' rights to access material and information freely and is therefore not overly restrictive in what it blocks or allows. The Library assumes no responsibility for any material accessed on the internet. Concerns about internet access can be directed to BPL's Chief Executive Officer.

Children and the Internet

Children and young adults have access to all materials in the library, including the internet. Intellectual Freedom is one of Burlington Public Library's core values and we subscribe to the fundamental principles of intellectual freedom and open exchange of information and ideas. As with other library materials, responsibility for monitoring a child's access to internet and other electronic products rests with parents and guardians.

Privacy

The internet is not a secure channel, and third parties may be able to access users' personal information. Burlington Public Library is diligent in securing network traffic and safeguarding customer privacy; however, users are responsible for their own security online and for protecting their personal information while using the BPL's digital resources and services.

Users should protect their privacy and not share banking information or passwords with library staff or anyone helping them access online resources.

Users are encouraged to lock the computer they are using if they need to step away momentarily. They must log out of all BPL devices when finished using them to protect their privacy and security from unauthorized access by others.

To successfully connect to BPL's wireless network, you must click on the I AGREE button from the Internet Access Policy page, indicating you have read and will abide by BPL's Technology Use Policy.

Prohibited Uses

The use of BPL digital devices or services, including Wi-Fi and MakerSpace technology resources may not include or involve any of the activities listed below:

- Any violation of the Criminal Code, including:
    - a) the communication of statements that incite or willfully promote hatred against an identifiable group; or,
    - b) the advocacy or promotion of genocide.

- any violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code, including:
  - a) the publication, issuing or display of any material that indicates discrimination or an intention to discriminate against a person or group, or is likely to expose a person or group to hatred or contempt, because of their race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age.
- any other unlawful activities, or activities that in any way violate applicable Library policies, rules, or regulations.
- Displaying, recording, sending, or printing overtly sexual, fraudulent, harassing, or obscene messages, content, images, or videos.
- Violation or infringement on the privacy of other people or organizations.
- Introduction of computer viruses, malware, or any similar software intended to circumvent security, or cause disruption of service.

Theft and Damage

Users are responsible for any damage or loss that may result from their use of digital devices or services including Makerspace items. Users are required to pay the repair or replacement costs for any damaged digital devices. Failure to return borrowed digital devices will result in charges. Removal of any digital device without permission is considered theft and may be subject to legal action.

Social Media

The Library uses Burlington Public Library's social media channels to raise awareness of library programs, services, and resources and to respond to inquiries and engage with the community. Library staff will attempt to respond to all inquiries but may not acknowledge or reply to all comments on its social media channels. Users may not use offensive, racist, sexist, or derogatory language, images, or videos when addressing BPL or other commenters. The Library reserves the right to report and remove any language, images, or videos deemed offensive or in contradiction of its policies.

Accountability

This policy constitutes an agreement between Burlington Public Library and any user who accesses BPL's digital devices and services. Staff will respond to complaints or observed incidents of misuse of BPL's digital devices and services.

Individuals violating these terms may have library privileges suspended and will be held legally and financially responsible.

Disclaimer

The Library assumes no responsibility for the security of online transactions and is not responsible for any internet content or damage direct or indirect from its website or from its connections to other internet sources. Messages and information about a user's activities may be subject to unauthorized interception by third parties.

Appendices

Appendix 1: References:

- Hamilton Public Library, Technology Use Policy
  https://www.hpl.ca/articles/technology-use-policy-library-members

Policy details

- Effective Date: June 1, 2023
- Projected Review Date: 2026
- Motion #/Date: May 25/23; #23-22
- Amended Dates:
- Associated Procedures: