

Revision Date:	February 2024	Policy Type:	Public Service
Approval Level:	CEO	Distribution:	All Employees
Review Schedule:	5 Years (or as required)		

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to balance access to technology services by customers of the Markham Public Library (“the Library”, or “MPL”) with the need to ensure that such access conforms with all applicable laws and the Library is maintained as a welcoming, supportive and open environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.

2. SCOPE

This Policy addresses services including public access to the Internet, the Library’s wireless services, digital devices including public access terminals (PACs), Makerspaces and other technology services.

3. DEFINITIONS

Digital Devices – Electronic devices provided for use by Library customers, such as laptops, tablets, computers, PACs, printers, projectors, Makerspace equipment, musical instruments, cameras, digital media equipment, self-check units, sorters, etc.

Digital Services – Electronic services provided for use by Library customers, such as high-speed Internet, wireless access, software, printing, music-mixing, photography and video, 3D printing, computer training, etc.

Library Customers – Individuals who have or do not have an active Library card and use the Library and its services at a physical branch location or online.

Makerspaces – Collaborative self-learning spaces within Library branches in which customers can express their creativity by exploring 3D modelling and printing, laser cutting, trying virtual reality, etc.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The Library provides public access to technology services to fulfill its mission to preserve and promote universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information, and ideas. Such access is provided in keeping with the intellectual freedom statements of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) and the Ontario Library Association (OLA).

Access:

The Library provides open, secure and equitable access to technology resources to promote digital literacy and provide equitable, open access to information and online resources to everyone. Wireless access is available to customers to access resources and the Internet using their personal devices.

Digital devices, services, and worktables are located in public areas and are shared by Library customers of all ages, backgrounds, and sensibilities. Individuals are expected to consider the needs of other customers when accessing or using any public or personal resources within the Library.

Information Quality:

The Library assumes responsibility only for the information provided on its own website. It is not responsible for the content, accuracy, appropriateness or availability of external links from its website pages and assumes no responsibility for damages, howsoever caused, sought by customers or third parties arising from its provision of online services.

The Internet provides access to many resources for different age levels and reflects various viewpoints. It is unregulated and its content quality can vary significantly depending on the specific source used. Customers should be aware that online information may not be accurate, complete, age-appropriate, or current. Library staff are available to assist customers in finding and evaluating website content.

Use by Children:

Parents/adults are responsible for the child in their care and their use of digital devices and services, including the use of the Makerspace equipment, studios, the Internet and wireless access through personal devices. Parents/adults are responsible for managing the child's access privileges to materials or online content and for any damage or loss that may result from the child's use of technology resources.

Filtering:

The Library provides access to both filtered and unfiltered workstations. All customers have access to all workstations in the Library. Filtered workstations have software that attempts to block sites that contain sexually explicit or hate speech material. The Library assumes no responsibility in the event that the filter is not 100% effective. Filtering software does not supplant the need for parental guidance.

Privacy and Security:

The Internet is not a secure medium and third parties may be able to access and obtain information about users' activities. While MPL is diligent in securing network traffic and guarding customers' privacy, customers are nevertheless responsible for their security online and for protecting their information while using any of the Library's technology resources.

Customers are advised to exercise caution in sharing or providing any personal information over the Internet. They should protect their security and not share sensitive information such as

banking/credit card information with Library staff or other individuals who may be assisting them with technology resources.

Customers are reminded to lock their computer session if away, and log-out of any device when finished in order to protect their privacy and security from unauthorized access by other people.

Prohibited Uses:

Customers using Library digital devices or services, including wireless Internet access and Makerspace technology resources, are not permitted to:

- Attempt to gain unauthorized access to computer operating systems and computer files, passwords, or data belonging to others.
- Participate in any illegal activity.
- Access or transmit materials or create content that violate any Canadian federal or provincial law such as defamatory, discriminatory, or obscene materials.
- Display, record or print overt sexual images.
- Send, record or print fraudulent, harassing, hateful or obscene messages or activities.
- Take any action that would contravene copyright laws, privacy laws, licensing agreements and other intellectual property rights.
- Violate the privacy of anyone including other Library customers.
- Introduce computer viruses, malware or any similar software intended to circumvent security, cause disruption of service or infringe on the privacy of other people or organizations.
- Engage in disruptive, threatening, or otherwise intrusive behaviour.

Theft and Damage:

Library customers are responsible for any damage or loss that may result from their use of technology resources, including Makerspace studios and equipment. Customers are required to pay the repair or replacement costs for damaged digital devices or studio spaces. Failure to return borrowed digital devices will result in lost fee charges. Removal of any digital device without authorization is considered theft and may lead to legal prosecution.

Consideration of Other Users:

Customers should bear in mind that they are accessing the Internet in a public space and be considerate of those around them when accessing sites that may reasonably be considered offensive to others. All customers, including those accessing technology services in the Library, are also expected to follow all applicable Library policies, which are designed to ensure a welcoming and supportive environment, free from discrimination and harassment.

Disruptive, threatening, or otherwise intrusive behaviour is not allowed and Library staff are authorized to intervene. Violations of this Policy may result in the suspension of an individual's Library privileges and possible exclusion from the Library.

Social Media:

MPL's social media channels are used to engage and update the public on services, events and programs, and to respond to inquiries. The Library aims to respond to feedback and questions in a timely manner. However, since we cannot participate in all discussions, we use our judgement to determine which messages require a response.

Library customers may not use offensive, racist, sexist or derogatory language or images when communicating with the Library. MPL reserves the right to report or remove language or images that it deems offensive or in contradiction to legislation or the Library's values and/or policies.

5. RELATED POLICIES

- *Customers First Policy* (POL-Pub Serv)
- *Staff Intervention during Customer Internet Usage Policy* (POL-Pub Serv)
- *Unacceptable Conduct Policy* (POL-Pub Serv)

6. RESPONSIBILITIES**CEO / Directors shall:**

- Ensure that they and their employees are acquainted with, enforce and comply with this Policy and related policies.

Managers / Supervisors shall:

- Enforce this Policy.

Employees shall:

- Comply with and enforce this Policy.

Library Administration shall:

- Develop and distribute this Policy;
- Update this Policy per the Review Schedule.