



Elgin County Library Policy Manual

Subject: **On-Line Services Policy & Procedure**

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ON-LINE SERVICES POLICY & PROCEDURE

The Elgin County Library (ECL) provides space within its branches for public access computers, wireless connectivity and use of personal devices to access on-line resources as part of its mission to provide “a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment that fosters lifelong learning, creative expression, community engagement and cultural vitality in harmony with a rural way of life.” An online service refers to any information or service that is provided through a data network. The library makes available these on-line services within its branches to allow users to connect to resources for educational, informational and recreational purposes. Nevertheless, there are risks associated with such usage that do require the establishment of appropriate safeguards. This policy establishes these safeguards and makes user responsibilities and obligations clear.

Scope

This policy applies to members of the public accessing on-line services using all types of devices in library spaces. This includes:

- public computer stations;
- laptops and mobile devices using the library’s wireless network; and
- personal laptops and mobile devices on other networks used in library spaces.

ECL will generally be guided by its Collection Development Policy when providing access to on-line resources. This means that the library supports the individual’s right to access ideas and information representing all points of view with reasonable expectations of privacy and confidentiality while doing so. Staff do not monitor or censor content.

Internet Filtering

Data networks offer material that is inappropriate for viewing by the general public, particularly children. The County’s Information Technology Department subscribes to a filtering service in order to block access to inappropriate sites. Such filtering encompasses on-line access provided by the library through public computer stations and wireless networks. Such filtering cannot encompass personal devices connected to a network that is not controlled by the library. Nevertheless, the terms of this policy

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shall apply to all devices. Access to inappropriate resources, including those that contain profanity, pornography, sedition, the incitement of hate or the promotion of illegal activity shall not be tolerated, regardless of the device being used and regardless of the network to which it is connected.

On-line filtering does not guarantee that all inappropriate material will be blocked. Parents or guardians are expected to monitor and supervise their children's use of on-line resources. Patrons may request that library staff unblock a site if it is deemed appropriate by staff. Patron confidentiality will be respected when such requests are made.

User Responsibilities

To maximize availability of on-line resources and to ensure fair accessibility for all, patrons must follow these rules and procedures:

1. Utilization of the Elgin County Library's on-line services through the library's public computer stations or wireless network requires a valid library card. In-branch public computer stations can be booked for a one hour session utilizing the library's reservation software (where applicable) or in-person at the library, extendable to two hours if others are not waiting. Reservations will be held for 10 minutes after the scheduled start time, either in-person or utilizing the library's booking software.
2. Visitors may register for a temporary guest user card upon presentation of suitable identification. This visitor card can be used for accessing public computer stations and the wireless network and must be returned at the end of the session.
3. Maximum usage of public computer stations shall be two hours per day per patron.
4. There are no restrictions on the length of sessions for usage of the wireless network within the library's regular hours of operation.
5. Upon arrival, a user with a booking must sign in at the circulation desk or through the library's automated software where available.
6. Users are responsible for respecting the privacy of other library patrons.
7. Due to space limitations, no more than two people are permitted at a station.
8. Personal software programs cannot be installed on any device owned by the Elgin County Library.
9. Users who wish to save files may use a personal storage device. When using public access computers, files must be saved during the scheduled session.
10. Printing and scanning services are available. Staff can inform patrons of the appropriate fees. It is up to the patron to be informed of relevant fees prior to printing or scanning.
11. Users should generally be aware of how to utilize the equipment and software provided. Staff may assist users should time and knowledge permit.
12. Misuse of on-line services and equipment supplied by the Elgin County Library, including any violation of the code of conduct for library patrons, will result in temporary or permanent suspension of library privileges.

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PROCEDURE AND CODE OF CONDUCT FOR USE OF ON-LINE RESOURCES AT ELGIN COUNTY LIBRARY BRANCHES

All users of on-line services provided at library branches, whether these services are accessed through public computer stations, wireless connections or use of personal devices and networks, are expected to use these resources in a responsible and ethical manner. Such uses include educational, informational and recreational purposes.

Unacceptable and inappropriate use of on-line resources includes, but is not limited to:

- Accessing sites or transmitting materials which violate any Canadian federal or provincial law or County by-law, such as defamatory, discriminatory or obscene material.
- Accessing sites that contain profanity, pornography, sedition, the incitement of hate or the promotion of illegal activity.
- Attempting to modify, hack or gain access to files, passwords, networks or data belonging to others.
- Sending, receiving, or displaying text/graphics which are illegal or may reasonably be construed as obscene or offensive.
- Making unauthorized copies of copyrighted material.
- Deliberately damaging or sabotaging equipment provided by the library.

Unacceptable or inappropriate use of on-line resources at Elgin County Library branches will result in the temporary or permanent suspension of library privileges.