



**DATE ADOPTED: 27 AUGUST 2019**

**VERSION: 2.0**

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## **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this policy is to:

- Ensure fair and equitable access to the Internet as an information resource
- Establish guidelines for acceptable use of the Internet within Maitland City Library branches
- Ensure the safety and integrity of Maitland City Council's information technology network

## **POLICY SCOPE**

This policy applies to use of the Internet from public access computers in all Maitland City Library branches. Use of wireless Internet access on personal mobile devices within the libraries is subject to the same principles of appropriate use.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **1. PRINCIPLES**

Maitland City Library is committed to serving the information and recreation needs of the Maitland community. The Library provides a welcoming environment, including free public access to the internet to support lawful

- Access to information and services
- Access to recreational material
- Avenues for community engagement and participation

### **2. ACCESS**

#### **2.1 General**

Access to the Internet is free of charge to those visiting any branch of Maitland City Library.

The Library does not have control over information available on the Internet and does not accept responsibility for accuracy of information or for any consequences that arise from use of that information.

As some Internet sources may cause offence to some people, users are asked to be sensitive to the values and beliefs of others when displaying information or images on computer screens that are located in public areas.

The Library does not guarantee availability of the Internet or Internet sites at any time, nor is the Library responsible for technical difficulties or loss of data resulting from delays or service interruptions.

All public access computers have filtering software in accordance with Council policy, which limits access to inappropriate or offensive materials.

However, the Library cannot guarantee that the filtering software will block all offensive material to which users may gain access.

Nor can the Library guarantee that the filtering software will not restrict access to sites that may have legitimate research or other value. Library staff, in collaboration with Council's IT staff will endeavour to provide access to legitimate sites that are blocked.

## **2.2 Children**

Parents and guardians are responsible for their children's access to Library resources, including electronic information.

Children under the age of 16 years must have the consent of their parent or guardian before using library computers to access the Internet.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to work with their children in using the Internet. Library staff are available to assist with children's information and access needs; however the Library does not accept responsibility for monitoring their Internet access.

## **3. INAPPROPRIATE USE**

Users may not access the Library's Internet facilities to transmit materials and/or statements that are:

- Illegal, fraudulent or part of any unlawful activity
- Slanderous, libellous or defamatory
- Offensive, obscene, pornographic or in bad taste
- Abusive or threatening of violence
- Incitement to break the law
- Harassment based on age, sex, race, disability or other protected status
- Anonymous or repeated messages designed to threaten, annoy or torment

## **4. COPYRIGHT**

Users are responsible for complying with international and federal laws protecting copyrighted material.

The Library has no liability or responsibility resulting from copyright infringement by users.

When printing or downloading material from the Internet, users should refer to and comply with any copying directives given by the author of the material.

## **5. PRIVACY**

The Library respects users' rights to privacy and does not monitor information or sites accessed by clients. However, the Library may be required to provide Internet logs to officers legally empowered to investigate use of the Internet where there are reasonable grounds for that officer to suspect illegal use.

## **6. SECURITY**

Security in the online environment cannot be guaranteed and Internet users are warned that all Internet transactions and communications are vulnerable to unauthorised use. The Library does not recommend using public access computers for purchasing, banking or other financial transactions.



The Library cannot assume responsibility for the safety and security of any transactions carried out on the Internet, including loss of data, funds or identity theft that may result from use of the Internet in the library. Users are advised to log out of services and refrain from entering sensitive information, such as tax file numbers and banking details, while using library facilities.

## **7. DOWNLOADING**

Downloading files and copying them to an external storage device is permitted, as long as executable software is not opened on the hard drive of public access computers. Note that files are not retained on public access computers.

## **8. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTIVE NETWORKING**

Users are permitted to access email, web-based games, chat and social networking services, but must observe the Library's policy on inappropriate use of public access computers.

## **9. WIRELESS ACCESS**

Wireless Internet access is available from all Library branches for use by anyone with an Internet-enabled mobile device. The Library is not responsible for the security of communication over the wireless network.

Where Library customers or visitors are using their own internet-enabled device, appropriate use of the device is governed by the principles of this policy.

## **10. FEES**

The Library provides free access to the Internet, including electronic communication services, as part of its mission in meeting the information needs of the community. This complies with Section 10 of the NSW Library act (1939), which states that:

*Any person (whether or not a member of the library) is entitled free of charge access to any book of the library, and to any information forming part of the information service of the library for use on library premises.*

## **11. INFRINGEMENT OF CONDITIONS OF USE**

Users who do not comply with the Library's conditions of use may have their Internet session terminated or be denied access to the service.



## **POLICY DEFINITIONS**

Copyright	The exclusive and assignable legal right, given to the originator for a fixed number of years, to print, publish, perform, film, or record literary, artistic, or musical material.
WiFi	Wireless networking technology that allows computers and other devices to communicate over a wireless signal



## POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Business Group:	Culture Community and Recreation
Responsible Officer:	Manager Gallery and Libraries
Council Reference:	Council Meeting - 27 August 2019 - Item 11.3
Policy Review Date:	Three (3) years from date of adoption
File Number:	86/20
Relevant Legislation	
Related Policies / Procedures / Protocols	Maitland City Library <i>Conditions of Use Public Access Computers</i> Maitland City Library <i>SOP Managing Use of Public Access Computers</i> State Library of NSW <i>Internet Policy Guidelines for NSW Public Libraries</i> NSW Library Act (1939) NSW Library Regulation (2018) Copyright Act (1968) ALIA Statement on Online Content Regulation

## POLICY HISTORY

VERSION	DATE APPROVED	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES
1.0	13 Oct 09	New policy adopted
2.0	27 Aug 19	Policy revised to include updated legislation