



COUNCIL POLICY

ONLINE INFORMATION AND INTERNET USE POLICY

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Responsible Position	Manager Macquarie Regional Library
Branch	MRL Library Services
Division	Community Culture and Places
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Document Revision History	
Description	Date
The purpose of this policy is to inform users of the Macquarie Regional Library's (MRL) commitment to the provision of online information as well as related copyright, risk management, and use issues to ensure the Library operates legally, efficiently and effectively to benefit the whole community.	July 2022
Notes: Policies reviewed in accordance with NSW legislation, regulation and State Library of NSW policy guidelines. Member council consultation 2022.	

1. Introduction

The Macquarie Regional Library (MRL) is committed to serving the information and recreation needs of the community. The Library provides free public access to the Internet and online resources to support lawful access to information and services.

2. Policy purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform users of the Library's commitment to the provision of online information as well as related copyright, risk management, and use issues. Users of library computers and Wi-Fi services at MRL sites and online resources provided by MRL are expected to abide by the following policy, and the Library reserves the right to terminate relevant privileges of any person abusing this policy as per the MRL Customer Code of Conduct policy.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure library facilities are safe and welcoming spaces for customers
- Provide equitable access to online information for all in the community
- Protect the rights, safety and well-being of staff, volunteers, members and customers

This policy applies to:

- Facilities controlled and operated by MRL member Councils
- Online resources purchased by MRL for customer use
- Persons using MRL facilities and services
- MRL organised events and programs irrespective of where they are conducted

3. Background and related legislation

The Manager, Macquarie Regional Library, has delegated authority from the Chief Executive Officer of Dubbo Regional Council to authorise action to be taken to comply with Council policy, resolution or any provision of the Local Government Act, 1993 and the Regulations thereunder or any other law or rule, statutory or otherwise, affecting services and operations of MRL.

The Library Regulation 2018 (under the *Library Act 1939, No 40*) provides guidance and authority for MRL to develop and implement local standards and policies to determine an acceptable code of conduct for customers and procedures to manage non-compliance with the policy.

The regulation allows MRL staff to exclude customers who interfere with another person's library use.

The following legislation and publications are related to this policy:

- *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*
- *Library Act 1939, No 40 (NSW)*
- *Library Regulation 2018 (NSW)*
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)*
- *Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1988 (NSW)*
- *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)*
- Library Council of New South Wales *Internet Policy Guidelines for NSW Public Libraries*
- Library Council of New South Wales *Children's Policy Guidelines for NSW Public Libraries*
- Australian Library and Information Association *ALIA Library privacy guidelines for eBook lending and digital content provision*
- *Copyright Act 1968 (Commonwealth)*
- Dubbo Regional Council *Customer Experience Charter*
- Dubbo Regional Council *Code of Conduct*
- Dubbo Regional Council *Child Safe Standards Policy*

4. Related MRL policies & documents

- MRL Membership Policy
- MRL Library Services for Young People Policy
- MRL Customer Code of Conduct Policy
- MRL Privacy Statement

5. Definitions

- **Member Councils** are Dubbo Regional Council, Narromine Shire Council and Warrumbungle Shire Council.
- **Governing Body** is the relevant local authority, Dubbo Regional Council.
- **MRL sites.** MRL operates seven (7) libraries at Dubbo, Wellington, Narromine, Trangie, Coonabarabran, Coolah, and Dunedoo and three (3) service points at Baradine, Binnaway and Mendooran.
- **MMRL** refers to the Manager Macquarie Regional Library.
- **Designated staff** refers to a Library Coordinator or any MRL staff with delegated authority to represent the Library Manager.
- **Customer** means any person, whether or not a member, who visits a branch or service point of MRL to use library resources or facilities.

- **Member** means anyone who has fulfilled the membership requirements and has a valid membership card.
- **Guarantor** means a parent or guardian who has legal responsibility for a person under the age of 16.
- **Young People, Youth or Children** means any person under 16.

6. Free public access to the Internet

Free public access to the Internet in NSW public libraries is a core service. A public library's informational and recreational roles are a longstanding and essential element of a library service. Free internet access supports these roles and healthy communities by providing access to information, services, recreational material, and avenues for community engagement and participation.

The Library treats information available via the Internet no differently than print-based information. The Library endeavours to provide access to comprehensive and balanced collections that meet the community's needs as far as budget, space and availability of materials allow and includes a range of online services and collections.

7. Young people using the Internet and online resources

MRL is committed to the Child Safe Standards the Office of the Children's Guardian introduced. A child-safe organisation systematically reduces the likelihood of harm occurring against a child, increases the possibility of identifying and reporting harm and provides adequate support to a child when harm has occurred or is alleged to have occurred.

The Child Safe Standards are:

1. Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved.
4. Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are taken into account.
5. People working with children are suitable and supported.
6. Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child-focused.
7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.
8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur.
9. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the institution is child-safe.

The Library provides physical public spaces for young people to access monitored and child-safe resources.

The Library promotes and supports young people's access to information, including electronic information, through its internet facilities. Library staff are available to assist young people

in the use of the Internet and to recommend websites on particular subjects. Appropriate resources are selected for inclusion in the Library's collections.

Guarantors are responsible for ensuring that their child's selection and use of materials from the Library's collections accords with any restrictions the family may wish to set. Macquarie Regional Library encourages parents and guardians to consult with their children to develop clear rules regarding access to resources that align with the family's values and beliefs.

The Library provides free PC and Wi-Fi access for all visitors, including young people. Their guarantor is responsible for monitoring or supervising a youth member's use of these services. This responsibility lies with their legal guardian for youth who are not members and use these services. Library PCs and Wi-Fi login screens display conditions of use for young people.

See MRL Services for Young People Policy for more details.

8. Indigenous people

It is acknowledged that some online information may contain references to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders that are considered culturally inappropriate or offensive.

9. Universal access

The Library recognises the right of all people, including those with disabilities or special needs, to have equal access to online information. The Library will investigate and implement assistive software, hardware, equipment and facilities to ensure inclusive and equitable access is provided.

10. Pornography and illegal material

In line with recommendations from the Library Council of NSW, MRL does not support censoring software as it inhibits free access to information and does not provide adequate protection for children from all material that may be harmful on the Internet.

Library customers are expected to be sensitive to the values and beliefs of others when displaying potentially controversial information or images on computer screens in public areas. The Library takes a strong position on customers using library computers and Wi-Fi services to access pornographic, offensive material or for any unlawful purpose. Customers who breach the MRL Customer Code of Conduct Policy in these areas will be subject to the actions and penalties identified in that policy.

The Library uses firewalls, spam blockers and other filters to restrict access to some material that is illegal or could reasonably be judged as a threat to the integrity of library systems or the privacy of its members. Anyone denied access to lawful information because of a filter

may request unfiltered access from Designated Staff. See the MRL Customer Code of Conduct Policy for more details.

11. Copyright

MRL purchases the right to access a range of online resources and services for its customers' use from several resource providers. All customers are expected to abide by the Copyright Act 1968 (Commonwealth) regarding the access, use, copying and distribution of electronic information and any conditions of use specified by a provider.

12. Privacy

Dubbo Regional Council (Macquarie Regional Library) may collect your personal information to process your application for library membership and provide you with library services. The supply of this information is voluntary; however, if you do not agree to provide the information requested, it may not be possible to process your membership application or provide you with some services otherwise available to library members.

Your information may be disclosed to third parties contracted by Council to provide information management/Information Technology services to the Library, but only for the third party providing those services and only as permitted by NSW privacy laws. Your information will not otherwise be provided to a third party unless for law enforcement purposes or if otherwise required by law.

Membership information is stored on a secure electronic database. You can request access to your data held by Dubbo Regional Council (Macquarie Regional Library). You may request amendment of your personal information to ensure that it is accurate, relevant, up to date and not misleading. Any inquiries regarding access or modification to your data should be directed to the Manager of Macquarie Regional Library.

13. Risk Management

Clients are personally responsible for using library computers and Wi-Fi facilities to access online information, and the Library does not assume responsibility for any loss of data, funds, or identity theft that may result from such use. Library clients are encouraged to log out of services and to refrain from entering highly sensitive information (e.g. tax file numbers, banking details) while using library computers and Wi-Fi.

14. Responsibilities

All MRL staff are responsible for implementing this policy consistently.