

To: Montgomery College Employees and Contractors

From: Nell Feldman, Chief Information Security Officer
Suzette Spencer, Director of the Library and Information Services and Acting Dean of the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus

Date: October 27, 2025

Subject: Policy Notice on Copyright Violations

The Office of Information Technology and the Montgomery College Library provided information to students today about the appropriate use of copyright and College Information Technology resources. As a reminder, College employees and contractors are subject to the same College policies and regulations governing copyright law.

At Montgomery College, **copyright infringement is strictly prohibited**. Please use only legitimate and legal sources of online content for finding copyrighted materials. You can use Educause's current list of [licensed music, movies, TV shows, and book providers](#). The MC Library [copyright libguide](#) provides copyright basics regarding classroom use, e-resources, use of images and streaming media, and how to use licensed works.

It is our intention to strictly enforce College policy, and all College employees and contractors are required to comply with applicable laws and regulations. Please educate and protect yourself and the College by carefully reading and abiding by this information. In addition, refer to Montgomery College copyright policy (68101—[Use of Copyrighted Materials](#)), which explains MC's requirements. You also can refer to a [tutorial on plagiarism](#) created by MC librarians.

Montgomery College is required to inform students of the following, and we take this opportunity to reiterate this information to employees and contractors.

- Use of the College's technology resources for file sharing of copyrighted works including music, videos, games, images, motion pictures, and using peer-to-peer (P2P) software is illegal. Downloading these copyrighted works for personal use without permission from the copyright owner can result in criminal and civil penalties. It violates both the U.S. Copyright Act and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998 (DMCA).
- Consequences for copyright infringement may include fines, monetary damages, and imprisonment. Actual or statutory damages may apply. For more information, refer to the DMCA Civil remedies, Section 1203, and Criminal offenses and penalties, Section 1204. Violations of the Copyright Act or the DMCA, including downloading copyrighted music, videos, or games for personal use without permission from the copyright owner, may

carry heavy civil and criminal penalties. The minimum fine for copyright infringement or violations of the DMCA is \$750 for any one work. Criminal penalties even for first-time offenders, can be severe: Up to \$500,000 in fines and up to five years in prison. Willful copyright infringement can result in larger fines and longer periods of imprisonment. The music and motion picture industries take these offenses very seriously, and copyright infringement can lead to legal action.

- The Montgomery College [Acceptable Use of Information Technology Policy—66001 \(“AUP”\)](#) prohibits the use of the College’s technology resources to violate copyright law.
- As providers of your Internet service, Montgomery College is required by law to divulge your name and address to the authorities if a complaint is received about your illegal file-sharing activities. The College must honor all warrants, subpoenas, and court orders.
- Montgomery College is required to take action to discourage illegal file-sharing of copyrighted works, and as a result the College:
 - blocks the illegal sharing of files across our network,
 - employs network tools to detect this activity and to identify violators, and
 - relies on a variety of network security applications to raise overall network efficiency and to provide a safe computing environment.

Thank you for your attention and continued support. If you have any questions, please contact Nell Feldman as the IT Policy Administrator at itpa@montgomerycollege.edu or 240-567-7222.