

# Copyright Infringement Policy

## What is copyright infringement?

The Copyright Act provides copyright owners, or the person who created the work, exclusive rights to the reproduction and distribution of his or her work under section 106 of the Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). Copying or distributing works for which you do not have permission may be a violation of copyright law.

## When is Peer-to-Peer File Sharing a violation of the law?

Using peer-to-peer (P2P) technology (such as Bit Torrent, Limewire, etc.) to download music, movies or any copyrighted material without the permission of the copyright owner is illegal. The sharing of copyrighted works with others without the permission of the owner is also an infringement.

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## What are the penalties?

Any person violating copyright law can be punished by civil and/or criminal penalties. Civil damages may be up to \$30,000 for each work infringed. If the violation proves to be willful, you could be penalized up to \$150,000 for each work infringed. In addition, you may be charged with criminal penalties of up to \$250,000 per offense and imprisonment for up to five years. The court can also assess attorney fees and court costs.

## How will I know if I am in violation?

Bethel University's Information Technology department regularly manages network traffic using various technologies. All P2P traffic is logged. When the IT department is notified of a copyright infringement, we investigate the incident. IT staff can identify the computer and person associated with it. We will stop the user's access to the infringing material, remove the copyrighted work and educate the violator. Once the offence has been corrected, IT notifies the original party that we have corrected the incident.

Repeat offenses are sent to the office of Student Development.

## What are some legal alternatives?

EDUCAUSE (a nonprofit IT organization for higher education) maintains a good list of legal sources for online content at <http://www.educause.edu/legalcontent>.

