

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY

I. General Statements Regarding Internet

- A. Internet Access. The Cass District Library provides access to a broad range of information resources, including those available through the Internet. Access to the Internet enables the Library to expand its information services significantly. This Policy applies to both the Library-owned computers and wireless access available at the Library.
- B. Validity of Information. The Internet offers access to a wealth of information and Internet sites including useful ideas, information and opinions from around the world. However, not all sources on the Internet provide information that is accurate, complete or legal. Internet Users will need to evaluate for themselves the validity of the information found.
- C. Library Does Not Endorse Information on Internet. The Library provides a home site on its public computers pointing to a variety of quality Internet sites. However, because the Internet is a vast and unregulated information network, it also enables access to information, ideas and commentary beyond the confines of the Library's mission, selection criteria and collection development policies. The provision of access does not mean or imply that the Library endorses or sanctions the content or point of view of any of the information or commentary that may be found on the Internet.
- D. View Internet at Own Risk. The Internet may contain information that is controversial, sexually explicit or offensive. Users are cautioned that ideas, points of view and images can be found on the Internet that are controversial, divergent and/or inflammatory. Because of this and the fact that access points on the Internet can and do change often, rapidly and unpredictably, the Library cannot protect individuals from information and images which they might find offensive, disturbing or inaccurate. Library patrons use the Internet at their own risk. Parents or guardians of minor children are responsible for their child's use of the Internet through the Library's connection as stated more fully below.
- E. No Liability. The Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from its connections to the Internet. Users shall use Library computer hardware and software at their own risk. The Library is not responsible for equipment malfunction, loss of data, any damages to the User's disks, data or electronic transactions of any type. The Library is not responsible for the loss of any portable media.

II. Nature of the Public Library Setting

- A. Respect Others. Because Library patrons of all ages, backgrounds and sensibilities are using the computers, Library Internet Users are asked to be sensitive to other's values and beliefs when accessing potentially controversial information and images.
- B. Use with Caution of Risks. Users are cautioned that, because security in an electronic environment such as the Internet cannot be guaranteed, all transactions, files, accounts and communications are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use. Users should be cautious about using the public computers or public Internet Access for sensitive, private or valuable information or transactions because safety from unauthorized access and use cannot be guaranteed. The Library is not responsible for any damages or loss that results from unauthorized access or use of User's files, accounts, communications or similar documents.

III. Internet Filtering; Children Under 18

- A. Internet Filtering – General
 - 1. *Filtered Access.* In order to comply with the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA") and Michigan's Public Act 212 of 2000 ("PA 212"), all computer terminals are filtered. Further, the Library's wireless access is also filtered. Filtered access means the computer or wireless system has a program installed that is designed to restrict minors from receiving obscene materials or sexually explicit materials that is harmful to minors as defined by PA 212 and visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors as defined by CIPA. This filtering method is designed to prevent access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet. Children under the age of 18 shall only use the Library computers designated and posted for use by minors.
 - 2. *Safety of Minors Regarding E-Mail.* The Library does not filter e-mail or other direct electronic communications. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to educate the minor on safety and security and monitor the use of these communications.
 - 3. *Internet Access.* Patrons wishing to access the Library's Internet must read and accept the Library's Internet Use Policy by initialing the current policy before use. All patrons should be able to show proof of identification if requested by a staff member.
- B. Internet Filtering – Patrons 18 Years of Age or Older
 - 1. *Disable Filters.* Patrons 18 years of age or older may request to have the filters disabled for bona fide research or other lawful purposes. The Library's wireless access cannot be disabled, so any patron who desires to have the filters disabled must use the Library's computers.

2. *Unblock Sites.* Individuals 18 years of age or older who believe an Internet site has been improperly blocked can request that the site be “unblocked.” A request to unblock may be made to a Library staff member. The staff member shall review the site within a reasonable time and make a determination. If the patron desires to appeal the staff member’s determination, an appeal request to unblock should be in writing to the Library Director and signed by the person making the request. A decision on the site’s status will be made by the Director, who will prepare a written reply to the individual submitting the form.

C. Internet Filtering – Patrons Under 18 years of Age

1. *Responsibility of Parents and Legal Guardians.* As with other materials in the Library’s collection, it is the Library’s Policy that parents or legal guardians are responsible for deciding which library resources are appropriate for their children. The Library urges parents and guardians to discuss Internet use with their children and to monitor their use of this educational tool. Parents and youth patrons are encouraged to participate in the Library’s training offered on Internet use that explains both the benefits and pitfalls inherent in its use.
2. *Library Card.* Patrons under 18 years of age wishing to access the Library’s terminals or wireless access must check in with the circulation desk.
3. *Unfiltering Terminals.* Minors who are 17 years old may only have the filters (filters used to filter visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography and materials that are deemed harmful to minors as prohibited by CIPA) disabled on a computer used by that patron for (1) bona fide research or other lawful purposes and (2) only if a parent or legal guardian has accompanied them to the Library and is sitting at the computer station or terminal at all times. Patrons under the age of 17 may not ask for the terminal to be unfiltered pursuant to the requirements of CIPA.
4. *Unblocking Websites.* Patrons under the age of 18 may request in writing that a particular site be unblocked, but only if the site does not include obscene or sexually explicit materials deemed harmful to minors or other materials prohibited by law. The Library Director shall make that determination.

IV. Procedure for Use

- A. Reservation/Time Limits. If a User wishes to use the Internet station, he/she may find an available computer. Computer use is on a first come, first served basis. The User may sign up to use the Internet station for periods of only two (2) hours at a time. Use of the Internet stations is available on a first-come-first-served basis, as shown on the sign-up sheets at the Circulation Desk. If no one is waiting, the User may use the

terminal for additional 15 minute increments until another User signs up to use the terminal.

- B. Staff Assistance. Library staff provides limited assistance for basic start-up procedures. Several circulating books on Web searching are available.

V. Acceptable Use

All Users of the Library's Internet connection and terminals are expected to use this resource in a responsible and courteous manner, and to follow all rules and procedures as established in this Policy.

- A. Lawful Use. The Library Internet connection and terminals shall be used in a lawful manner. The Library's Internet and terminals cannot be used for any fraudulent or unlawful purpose prohibited under any applicable federal, state or local law, including, but not limited to, (1) accessing materials that can be classified as obscene or child pornography; (2) gaining unauthorized access to or use of patron information or accounts; (3) engaging in identity theft; (4) engaging in civil rights violations; or (5) monitoring or capturing information regarding individuals and their use of the computers or Internet illegally, such as by using a keylogger.
- B. Intellectual Property. Users must respect intellectual property rights and obey the copyright laws of the United States and all other intellectual property rights. Responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement or violations of other laws or agreements lies with the User. The Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.
- C. Use Must Not be Harmful to Minors. Michigan law prohibits Users from allowing minors access to sexually explicit materials harmful to minors. Internet Users shall also not permit any minor to view sexually explicit materials or any other materials deemed harmful to minors.
- D. Compliance with Code of Behavior. The same rules apply to the use of the Internet as with the use of any other Library materials. The Library has adopted a Patron Behavior Policy. All Internet Users must comply with the Library's Patron Behavior Policy, which shall be posted in the Library.
- E. Privacy; Unauthorized Access. Users must respect the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself as another User; by not attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords or data belonging to others; and by not hacking or seeking disallowed access to any computer system via the Internet.
- F. Time Limit. Failure to leave a computer terminal upon the expiration of the allotted time is a violation of this Policy.
- G. Reimbursement. The User shall reimburse the Library fifteen cents (\$.15)

a page for black and white printing, and thirty (\$.30) a page for color printing.

- H. Personal Software Prohibited. Users shall refrain from use of personal software, the attachment of equipment to the Library's computers or networks or the modification of any operating system or network configuration. Users shall also refrain from downloading/uploading files to/from the Library's computers.
- I. System Modifications; Hardware Modifications. Users are not permitted to change the security setup, operating systems, the network configuration or any other configuration of any Library computer terminal without authorization. Users are also not permitted to add any hardware or devices to the computer terminal.
- J. Purpose; Prohibited Uses. The Library's Internet resources should be used for educational, informational and recreational purposes only. The Library's Internet Access shall not be used for personal profit or commercial activities, including the sale of goods and services or fund raising. The Library Internet is intended for information gathering only.
- K. Damage. The User shall be responsible for repayment of any costs to the Library for damage to the computer terminals or system.
- L. Terminal Use. No more than two (2) Users may sit at a terminal. No person may stand behind another person while using a terminal. Upon request, a Library staff member may approve or allow additional Users at a terminal.
- M. Chat Rooms; Instant Messaging. The use of chat rooms and instant messaging is prohibited.
- N. Personal Information; Unauthorized Release. No patron, including minors, may engage in the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information of any person, including minors.
- O. Saving Files and Documents. Patrons who wish to have a permanent record of their work need to save files and documents on their own portable media or may purchase a flash drive from the Library. Library computers do not allow Users to permanently save documents or personal files to the hard drive.
- P. Purposes; Prohibited Uses. The Library's Internet resources should be used for educational, informational and recreational purposes only. The Library Internet is intended for information gathering only.

VI. Violations and Appeals of Internet Use Policy

Violations and appeals of this Policy shall be processed according to the Violations Policy.

VII. Staff Assistance

Staff may assist Library Users in getting started on the Internet. However, the Library cannot guarantee that Internet-trained staff will be available to assist Users at all times the Library is open. Because of the many different applications available on the Internet, staff may not be able to provide specialized or technical knowledge about a particular application. Users who need training on Library software or digital collections should request an appointment.

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