

# Policies

## INTERNET USE

**Approved: 6/19/1997; reviewed and revised 7/17/2002, 1/16/2008, 6/19/2013, 4/17/2019, 4/19/23 .**

**Review Date: 2028**

T. B. Scott Library endeavors to develop collections, resources, and services responsive to advances in technology-evolving community needs, and supporting life-long learning.

The Internet offers worldwide access to ideas, information, and commentary that can be personally, professionally, and culturally enriching. Providing access through workstations and wireless capabilities to the global network enables the library to greatly expand the information services we offer.

### **General Internet Usage**

1. Library staff may impose restrictions such as time limits on the use of Library equipment.
2. Adult users should be cautious when giving personal information. Children are advised to practice safe digital citizenship and not share personal information with any person on the Internet without a parent's permission. Extreme caution by the user is advised when using email, chat rooms, social networking sites, instant mail, and other forms of electronic communication.
3. There is no privacy guarantee for Internet or email.
4. Users are financially responsible for printing requested by them.

### **Legal and Acceptable Uses**

The Library expects that all use of electronic information resources such as the Internet will be responsible and ethical, consistent with the purpose for which these resources are provided. Examples of unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Harassment of other users or violation of their privacy
2. Libeling, slandering or maliciously offending other users
3. Violation of copyright laws or software licensing agreements
4. Misrepresenting oneself as another user or attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others
5. Making changes to the setup or configurations of the software or hardware on library computers; using software not installed by the library
6. Attempting to crash, degrade performance of or gain unauthorized access to the Library's or other computer systems and networks
7. Damaging equipment, software or data belonging to the Library or other users
8. Sending, receiving, or displaying text or graphics which may reasonably be construed by Library staff as offensive to the public. Offensive material may include material that is sexual, hateful or violent in nature; that encourages activities that are dangerous or illegal; or harassing, demeaning, or belligerent messages.

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Violations may result in restrictions on or loss of Internet and/or Library use. Illegal uses of computers may also be subject to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities.

## **Responsibilities of Users**

The Internet is a global entity with a highly diverse user population. It is not possible for library staff to control specific information people locate on the Internet. Internet users need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of information they find.

Users access Library computer hardware, software and documentation at their own risk. The Library is not responsible for equipment malfunction, loss of data, damage to user-owned equipment, or electronic transactions of any type related to the public use of library computer resources. Saving work on a USB drive, as an email attachment, or through cloud computing resources is advised. Saving to the hard drive is not recommended.

The Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through its electronic information systems, or any consequences thereof, such as debts incurred from for-pay services.

## **Policy Enforcement**

While respecting the individual user's right to privacy, Library staff reserves the right to monitor use of Internet workstations to ensure compliance with this policy. Staff may terminate computer workstation sessions or request wireless network users to cease use of the wireless network if any behavior which they judge to be in conflict with this policy is observed. Misuse or abuse of Library computers or Internet access may result in loss of Internet usage and/or suspension of Library privileges.

## **Copyright**

U.S. copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of fair use. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including email, text, images, programs or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

## **Children's Use of the Internet**

1. Children (under age 17) must have an Internet Use Permission Form signed by a parent/guardian. The parent/guardian must specify whether or not the minor must use a filtered computer. Internet computers in the Youth Services Department are filtered for content suitable for children. Parents must realize that no filter is 100% effective and that filtering provided by a private company may or may not agree with what the parent would filter. Some material suitable for children will also be inadvertently filtered.

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2. Major responsibility for what children read or see on the Internet rests with the child's parent or caregiver. Helpful resources can be found at the Common Sense Media website ([www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)).
3. Library staff may monitor minors' use of Internet sites for inappropriate/harmful materials (see definition above) by watching what children access. Staff may also check the history files of computers. Minors who deliberately access inappropriate/harmful sites may lose Internet privileges. It is not possible for library staff to control all information children locate on the Internet.
4. Chat room use is prohibited on filtered computers in the Youth Services Department.
5. Any unauthorized access (hacking and other unlawful activities) by a minor will result in the minor's loss of Internet privileges. The Library will also contact law enforcement agencies if appropriate.
6. Any person found to be disclosing, disseminating, or using personal identification information of a minor in an unauthorized manner will be reported to appropriate law enforcement agencies and also be prohibited from further Library computer use.

## Notice to Minors:

Children under the age of 17:

1. Must follow all the rules in this policy, including all rules listed above under "Legal and Acceptable Uses".
2. Must not disclose personal identification information about themselves or any other person.
3. Must use the Internet computers in the Youth Services Department, which are filtered for content, if parent/guardian has directed.