



POLICY NO: 300.7

SUBJECT: Computer and Internet Use

1. General Statements Regarding Internet

- A. Internet Access The Northfield Township Area 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.

2. Nature of the Public Library Setting

- A. Respect Others Because Library users of all ages, backgrounds and sensibilities are using the computers, Library patrons 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 and communications are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use.

Northfield Township Area Library

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6. Internet Filtering

A. Internet Filtering -- General

- i. *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 material or sexually explicit material 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.
- ii. *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.

B. Internet Filtering – Patrons 18 Years of Age or Older

- i. *Disable Filters.* Patrons 18 years of age or older may request to have the filters disabled for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- ii. *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 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

- i. 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 workstations or wireless access must check in with circulation desk.
3. Unfiltering Terminals Minors who are 17 years old may only have the filters (filters used to filter visual depictions obscenity, child pornography and material that is deemed harmful to minors as prohibited by CIPA) disabled on a computer used by that patron disabled 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 workstation 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 material deemed harmful to minors or other material prohibited by law. The Library Director shall make that determination.

3. Procedure for Use

- A. Reservation/Time Limits If a User wishes to use the Internet station he or she must first sign the sheet at the Circulation Desk to reserve a time. The User may sign up to use the Internet station for periods of only 120 minutes 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 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.

4. Acceptable Use

All users of the Library's Internet connection and workstations 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 workstations shall be used in a lawful manner. The Library's Internet and workstations cannot be used for any fraudulent or unlawful purpose prohibited under any applicable federal, state or local law, including, but not limited to, accessing material that can be classified as obscene or child pornography.
- 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 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 material or any other material 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 No patron may use the Library's Internet access more than once in violation of this Policy. 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 ten cents a page for black & white printing and a dollar for color copies.
- H. Personal Software Prohibited The 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. The User shall also refrain from downloading/uploading files to/from the Library's computers.
- I. System Modifications Users are not permitted to change the security setup, operating systems, the network configuration or any other configuration of any Library computer workstation without authorization.
- 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.
- 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.

5. Violations of Internet Use Policy

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to Library facilities by (1) terminating or limiting computer, internet access or Library facilities; (2) immediately dismissing the patron from the premises; (3) suspending the patron's access to library facilities for a set period of time; or (4) by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this Policy. If necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.



- A. Incident Reports Library Staff shall record in writing in the form of an Incident Report any violation of this Policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of Library privileges. By the end of the day on which the incident occurred, an Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension of privileges letter should be attached, if applicable.
- B. Violation of the Policy – Suspension of Privileges Unless otherwise provided in this Policy, (See Section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:
- i. *Initial Violation:* Library patrons observed violating this policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If the patron does not comply with the request, he or she will be asked to leave the building for the day. If he or she refuses, police may be called.
 - ii. *Subsequent Violations:* The Director or the Director's authorized designee may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations of the same rule shall result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- C. Violations that Affect Safety and Security Violations involving violations of law (including child pornography and allowing minors to view sexually explicit or other material deemed harmful to minors), violence, threatening behaviors, sexual or other harassment, vandalism, theft or attempted theft, sexual misconduct or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:
- i. *Initial Violation:* The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate minimum two-week suspension of Library privileges. The Incident Report shall specify the nature of the violation.
 - ii. *Subsequent Violations:* The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Director or the Director's authorized designee, may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges in escalating responses, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- D. Reinstatement The patron whose privileges have been limited or revoked shall attend a meeting with the Director or the Director's designee to review the Library Patron Behavior Policy before their privileges may be reinstated.
- E. Civil or Criminal Prosecution Illegal acts involving the Library's Internet access service may be subject to civil or criminal prosecution.

7. Right of Appeal



Patrons may appeal a decision to limit or revoke privileges by sending a written appeal to the Library Board within 10 working days of the date the privileges were revoked or limited. The appeal should be sent to the President of the Library Board. The decision of the Library Board is final.

8. 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.