



Internet Access Policy & Guidelines for Use of Public Workstations

POLICY STATEMENT

The mission of Barrington Public Library (the Library) is to provide, without charge, quality services and diverse and easily accessible resources in various formats, as well as services and programs to educate, inform, enrich and entertain all the residents of Barrington and the greater community. The Library provides equal access to all users, and seeks to make available the broadest possible spectrum of information and ideas.

The Library observes American Library Association policies regarding freedom of access, including the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, Freedom to View, and related statements contained in the Intellectual Freedom Manual. It upholds the principles of intellectual freedom, the citizen's right to information, the right to confidentiality of users' records, and opposes censorship.

SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE INTERNET

The Internet offers unlimited global access to information. Providing access to the Internet can enable the Library to expand greatly its information services beyond the traditional collections and resources. However, not all sources on the Internet provide information that is accurate, complete, current or legal. The Library does not monitor and has no control over the content of the materials on the Internet, and cannot be held responsible for its content.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR USE

Use of a computer shall constitute agreement by the user to:

- Abide by the decision of library staff regarding use of all equipment.
- Make no changes to the setup or configuration of software or hardware.
- Not attempt to modify or gain access to system files, passwords, or data.
- Not seek unauthorized access to any computer system or network.
- Not load any personal software onto the computer.
- Not view child pornography or graphic material that is obscene, illegal, or harmful to minors.
- Not use the computer for activities deemed illegal under federal, state or local statutes or laws.
- Log off all personal accounts and delete all personal files.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

- All OSL library card holders are required to use their library card when using the public access Internet computers. OSL library card holders are given 2 (two) hours access to the public access computers per day.
- In-state residents who do not have a card, or out-of-state residents willing to pay the out-of-state fee for an OSL card may register for a library card that day at the Circulation Desk, providing they show proper ID. Please see OCEAN STATE LIBRARIES Library Card and Borrowing Policy.
- Temporary passes, not to exceed 1 (one) hour per day, may be given to library users who do not qualify for an OSL library card (e.g. out-of-state visitors).
- In instances where more than 2 hours is needed, library staff may extend the time limit on the public access Internet computers.
- The enforcement of these time limits is necessary to ensure that fair access to the limited resource of public Internet computers is available to all library users.
- A basic level of computer skills is expected of computer users with the understanding the library staff may not always be available to offer assistance.
- Computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Computer time may not be reserved in advance.
- The library is a public space. Be respectful of others concerning what is displayed on the screen.
- Cell phone use is discouraged in the computer area. If a call must be made or taken, please go out to the foyer area at the front entrance of the Library.
- Maximum of two people at a computer at one time.
- Misuse or abuse of the computer or internet access may result in suspension or restriction of library privileges.

INTERNET FILTERING

- Internet access on all Library computers and other devices, including laptops, is filtered. The Library's Wi-Fi network is also filtered.
- Library Internet access, including the Wi-Fi network, is filtered for images and videos containing adult content that would generally be considered obscene or pornographic in nature.
- No Internet filter is 100% effective, meaning that some sites that should be blocked may not be, while other sites that should not be blocked by filters could be blocked.
- Patrons who encounter sites that they believe should be blocked or who are unable to access sites that they believe should not be blocked may request a review of the site in question.
- Library staff may review the site in question and make a determination regarding the request as soon as possible.

ACCESS BY MINORS

To address the special concerns raised by access to the Internet by minors, the Library has established the following Children's Internet Safety policy:

The Library respects parents' and guardians' right and responsibility to guide their children by monitoring their own children's use of Library materials and resources, including the Internet, and for determining what is appropriate for their own children.

The Library's goal is for children to have safe online experiences and prevent their exposure to harmful or inappropriate material. Towards this goal, the Library has taken the following initiatives:

- Filtering Internet access for images and videos containing adult content that would generally be considered obscene or pornographic in nature.
- Encouraging parents to monitor and supervise their own children's use of the Library's computers and networks.
- Providing specially designed web pages for children and teens.
- Providing links to sites that help children learn Internet safety.
- Providing staff who are trained to help children and parents find appropriate sites.
- Enforcement of this policy.

The Library promotes the safety and security of minors who use email, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication by:

- Encouraging parents to monitor and supervise their own children's use of the Library's computers and networks.
- Encouraging parents to discuss Internet safety with their children.
- Enforcing this policy, which prohibits anyone (including minors) from engaging in unlawful activities.
- Discouraging minors from engaging in "hacking" and other unlawful access to data and networks.

The Library helps prevent unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of minors' personal identification information by:

- Encouraging parents to monitor and supervise their own children's use of Library computers and networks.
- Enforcing its own policies relating to privacy and confidentiality, which detail the types of personal information the Library collects and the conditions under which it releases that information.
- Providing information about Internet safety, including cautions against minors disclosing personal information.

Notwithstanding the Library's use of Internet filters, users, and in the case of minors, their parents or guardians, are advised not to rely solely on the presence of filters but to continue to exercise their own judgment in accessing information through the internet. A filter may not block access to all materials a particular user, or in the case of minors, their parents or guardians, might consider inappropriate.

COMPLIANCE

The Library reserves the right to take appropriate action to insure compliance with this policy. Failure to abide by this policy may result in suspension or restriction of Library computer use privileges. Suspension of the use of library computers will be enforced as follows:

1st offence: 24 hour suspension

2nd offence: 30 day suspension and letter from library director explaining the suspension.

3rd offence: 60 day suspension and letter from library director explaining the suspension.

4th offence: Full year suspension (meeting with library director after the year's suspension before user can begin using the library computers)

PUBLIC USERS SECURITY

Users should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information regarding users' activities. However, The Barrington Public Library will not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public except as required by law or necessary for the proper operation of the Library.

ADULT COMPUTER USE IN THE TEEN DEPARTMENT

Due to a limited number of public computers, adults may use computers in the children's and teen departments ONLY if no other computers are available for their use in the main library. Teens, children and their accompanying adults are considered the primary clientele in the teen and children's rooms and will be given priority for computer use in those areas.

DISCLAIMER

The Town of Barrington assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from use of the Internet or from its connection to other Internet services, or for any lost, damaged or unavailable information due to technical or other difficulties.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees:

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