Freeport Community Library: Acceptable Use of the Internet and Network

Freeport Community Library provides materials and services to help community residents of all ages meet their educational, recreational and professional needs. In response to advances in technology and the growing availability of information in electronic formats, Freeport Community Library provides access to all constitutionally protected materials on the Internet within the Library's means and the boundaries of its policies and the law. The library shall provide computers and mobile hotspots for use by the public to access the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act. The library staff shall set rules and restrictions on the use of these computers to ensure that the resources are shared freely and equally.

The Internet is an unregulated medium. Unlike other library resources, it is not organized, catalogued or indexed. The information of the Internet includes much that is personally, professionally and culturally enriching. It also provides access to material that may be offensive or disturbing to some individuals, as well as access to information that may be factually incorrect and/or illegal. The Internet is a powerful tool for finding information, but it is not necessarily a substitute for other library resources. Library users are encouraged to ask a Librarian for assistance in finding the best research source.

Confidentiality Disclaimer

Wireless networks by their nature cannot be fully secured and yet provided for use in a public access environment like a library. No physical link is necessary for someone with the intent to intrude and the necessary software tools to attempt to capture data packets and reassemble the traffic to and from a wirelessly connected user computer. In a very real sense, a wireless connection is like an old-fashioned multi-party phone line. Do not enter passwords, credit card numbers and other confidential data unless you know that you are dealing with a server site that does its own encryption.

Acceptable Use

This service shall not be used for any abusive or unlawful purpose, including but not limited to any use which disrupts the local area network within this library, the wide area network to which it is linked, the mobile hotspot, or other users of this wireless service. You agree to comply with all laws while using the service and you agree not to transmit any communication that would violate any laws, court order or regulation or would likely be offensive to the recipient. You are responsible for all content you transmit through this connection.

It is the policy of Freeport Community Library to:

- prevent user access over its public computer network to, or transmission of, obscene or sexually explicit material via Internet, electronic mail, chat rooms, or other forms of direct electronic communications;
- prevent unlawful online activities such as hacking, plagiarism or copyright violation (copyright violation includes but is not limited to downloading licensed materials such as music, videos, games, or software through peer-to-peer networks);

- prevent use of computers for illegal activities;
- prevent users from harassing or defaming others using Library technology and the Internet;
- prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information of minors, especially that which could be used to identify or locate an individual; and
- to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Users shall not misuse the Library's Internet resources or equipment, including wireless Internet (WiFi) connections. Misuse may lead to suspension or revocation of equipment and/or Internet privileges. Misuse includes, but is not limited to:

- using computers, mobile hotspots, or the Internet for illegal activities;
- viewing obscene or sexually explicit images or videos on public computers, mobile hotspots, or using the public WiFi;
- hacking into the Library's computer system, or any other computer system/equipment;
- downloading malicious files, applications or programs to public computers;
- sending harassing communications to other computer users;
- violating copyright and/or software licensing agreements;
- interfering with the Library's technology settings or security software;
- transmitting illegal or inappropriate materials via the Internet.

The Library shall use technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") on its public network and devices, which are provided by the Internet Service Provider (MSLN/NetworkMaine). These filters, with settings as applied by Freeport Community Library staff, are deemed to meet CIPA requirements, restricting access to materials deemed harmful to minors.

Internet filters shall be disabled (by a staff member) for computer users who wish to access constitutionally protected information. Staff may refuse to disable a filter if it is judged that doing so may place the Library at risk of legal action.

Despite this good-faith effort to provide CIPA-compliant filtering, it is universally understood that no filter is one hundred percent effective in preventing access to material deemed harmful to minors or objectionable. Conversely, no filter is one hundred percent effective in ensuring that materials which are *not* harmful or objectionable will not be blocked. For this reason, filters shall be set at the lowest-possible CIPA-compliant settings at all times.

Regarding the disabling of Internet filters, it is Freeport Community Library's policy that:

- adequate signage will be displayed, informing patrons of their right to request that filters be disabled;
- authorized staff members are trained to disable filters upon request, in a timely manner;
- procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of Library staff.

Library Liability

Under no circumstances will this library be liable to you or to any other person for any direct, indirect, incidental, special, punitive or consequential damages of any character that arise from your use, or anyone else's use of this wireless network service.

Staff Proficiency and Levels of Service

Freeport Community Library staff has developed a familiarity with electronic resources and can use this knowledge to assist library users in locating information to meet their needs. Among the staff, experience with the Internet and web-based applications varies, so please be advised that the assistance that any one person can provide may be limited.

Limited Assistance: The productivity applications and online services available through the Internet are numerous, varied and, in many cases, extremely complex. Individual library staff members cannot become expert in all of them. Therefore, the library staff members are not expected to provide in-depth assistance in the use of various productivity applications (such as OpenOffice or Microsoft Office), nor in the various online services (such as e-commerce sites, blogging sites, web-based productivity sites, etc.). Patrons needing in-depth assistance with basic computing skills will generally be referred to sources of additional information or instruction such as online tutorials, or local adult education classes.

Basic Assistance: Library staff will provide patrons with brief "tutorials" on how to navigate the Internet using web browsers; how to print materials; how to use word processing software; and how to set up a free, web-based email account.

In-depth Assistance: Library staff will provide in-depth assistance as needed and as time allows, to patrons in the use of standard sources of online information, such as the library catalogs; online databases such the Digital Maine Library; online training and tutorials such as Learning Express; and search engines.

Patrons using their own laptop or tablet computers are responsible for configuring their own access to the library's wireless internet service. Library staff are not trained and are not expected to engage in technical troubleshooting of patrons' computers, when for some reason those computers are unable to connect to the wireless internet service. Staff may troubleshoot the wireless access point or router, if connection problems are reported.

Privacy

All library records regarding a patron's use of the Internet shall be kept confidential. Those records may only be released with the express written permission of the patron involved or per order of a court. Freeport Community Library endorses the Library Bill of Rights, including the new interpretation on electronic access, as adopted by the American Library Association, and supports the democratic principle of every citizen's right to free access to information.

Revised 8/28/23

Notice for parents

The Library cannot act in place of parents or guardians ("*in loco parentis*"), in monitoring their children's access and use of the Internet and other Library resources. The responsibility of what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents or guardians.

This Internet Safety Policy was approved by the Freeport Community Library Director at a public meeting, following normal public notice, on Monday, December 16, 2019.