Phillips Free Library Internet Use Policy

Phillips Free Library provides access to the Internet as a means to enhance the information and learning opportunities for the citizens of the library's service area. The Board of Trustees has established the Internet use policy to ensure appropriate and effective use of this resource.

Access to the Internet is available to all patrons; however, this service may be restricted at any time for use not consistent with the guidelines. Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of the library's Internet service; prior to accessing the Internet, anyone under 18 years of age, along with a parent or guardian, must sign the Internet Use Agreement.

General Statement:

The Internet offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enables access to some material that may be offensive, disturbing and/or illegal. The library does not monitor and has no control over the information on the Internet and does not warrant or guarantee the reliability or truthfulness of information obtained from the Internet. As with all Library resources, patrons are advised to exercise their own critical judgment when evaluating the validity and appropriateness of information found on the Internet. Certain information may be inaccurate, misleading or offensive to some individuals.

The library assumes no responsibility for any loss or damages, direct or indirect, or consequential, arising from its connections to the Internet or from any other use of its personal computing resources.

The use of the Internet and e-mail is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities are not permitted.

As a limited public forum under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, the Library provides reasonable “time, place and manner” restrictions on the public display of content to both ensure access to constitutionally protected information, including images, to the user while limiting unwanted exposure of that information to others.

To comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act and restrict access to online content that may be considered harmful to minors or offensive to adults, the library employs technology protection measures (filters) on all library Internet access. As required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed as obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. Users are cautioned that filters are not foolproof and due to technological limitations cannot obstruct access to all potentially harmful or offensive content. In addition, filters may block access to some legitimate or constitutionally protected material found on the Internet. By law, individuals who have attained the age of 17 have the right to unfiltered Internet access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Unauthorized access including hacking or any unlawful computer activity is strictly prohibited.

Users should be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources can be a violation of local, state, and federal laws and can lead to prosecution. The user will be held responsible for his/her actions using the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the policies below which include generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Unacceptable uses of the service will result in the suspension or revocation of Internet use privileges.

Policy Guidelines:

- Users may use the Internet for research and the acquisition of information to address their educational, vocational, cultural, and recreational needs.
- Users may use the Internet for the receipt and transmission of electronic mail (e-mail) as long as they use a free e-mail service which will establish and maintain an account for them; the library is unable to manage e-mail accounts for any organizations or individuals.
- Internet use via library public access computer is offered in thirty (30) minute sessions on a first-come, first- served basis; each user is allowed one session--if there is no patron waiting for the service at the end of a session, the user may sign up for another session.
- Users will respect and uphold copyright laws and all other applicable laws and regulations; they will not use it for illegal purposes.
- Users will respect the rights and privacy of others by not accessing private files.
- Users agree not to incur any costs for the library through their use of the Internet service.
- Users shall not create and/or distribute computer viruses over the Internet
- Users shall not willfully damage, alter, or edit computer equipment, wifi, internet, programs, or parameters.
- Two users will be permitted at a terminal at one time. Both must have "Internet permission" forms on file if they are under 18 years of age.
- You may not make unauthorized disclosure of, use of, or dissemination of a minor's personal information by means of the Internet, e-mail or any electronic technology.
- You must respect the privacy and sensibilities of others. Accessing, displaying or printing of images of child pornography, or those which are sexually explicit, obscene, or harmful to minors is expressly prohibited according to the N.Y. U.C.C. Penal § 235.00-235.24 (Consol. 2004).
- Internet computers and network services may not be used for illegal activities, including the harassment of others. You may not misrepresent yourself when using the Internet.
- If the computer you are using is equipped with sound and you are utilizing this option, you must provide and use your own headphones.
- Rude, abusive behavior or language toward staff or security will not be tolerated.
- If you violate these rules, you will be asked for identification and you may be denied library privileges. Criminal or civil charges may result.

CHILDREN, PARENTS AND THE INTERNET

1. Parents/guardians have the sole right and responsibility to decide what is appropriate for their child. The library does not act in loco parentis (i.e., in the place or role of the parent). Parents/guardians are responsible for the supervision of their child's Internet activity. Children who use the Internet unsupervised may be exposed to inappropriate or disturbing information and images.
2. The library has taken the following measures designed to assist in the safe and effective use of these resources by all minors with parent/guardian permission to use PFL computers and internet. PFL:
    a. Employs technology protection measures (filters) on all computers offering Internet access, as well as library wifi;
    b. Provides educational material on safe and appropriate uses of the Internet.
3. To address the issue of the safety and security of minors (individuals who have not attained the age of 18) when using electronic mail, social networking sites, or other forms of direct electronic communications, the Phillips Free Library advises parents and guardians to encourage minors to:
    a. Never give out identifying information such as their full name, address, telephone number, or school name;
    b. Let parents/guardians decide if personal information such as first name or age should be revealed;
    c. Always tell their parents or another adult they trust if they see something online that is frightening or that they do not understand;
    d. Never respond to messages that make them feel uncomfortable or uneasy;
    e. Never arrange to meet in person someone they have met online unless they discuss it with their parents and an adult accompanies them;
    f. Remember that people online may not be who they say they are;
    g. Remember some things you read may not be true.

Library-Supplied Internet Computers

1. If you are 18 years of age or under, you are required to have a parental or guardian permission form on file with the Library to access the Internet.
2. Parental permission forms are waived if students are part of a supervised class. Teachers and tutors who bring students are responsible for and must supervise their students when they use the Internet computers.
3. You may not install software on Library Internet computers.
4. The Library reserves the right to limit the number of people at individual Internet computers.

Internet Access Services via Wireless Access Point

1. This Internet access option is open to patrons of all ages; parents or guardians of children 18 years or under are responsible for supervising and guaranteeing their child's proper and safe use of the Internet.
2. Your use of the Library's Internet access (both wired and wireless) constitutes your acceptance of this Internet Access Services Policy.

3. You are responsible for configuring your equipment to access the Library's Internet Access Service.
4. The library’s wireless access is available 24 hours a day.

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