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Internet Acceptable Use & Safety Policy

This policy specifically addresses the use of Library computers to access the Internet and other External networks. The policy reflects the ethical principles of Lowell Public Library and indicates, in general, the privileges and responsibilities of persons using the Library's computing resources. It supplements our general computer use policies found in [50.750 – Computer Use](#)

The Library provides patrons with computer resources and access to the Internet and other networks to support its mission, to promote research and education, and to help meet the needs of patrons with limited or no home network capability.

Staff may use computer resources only for purposes related to the performance of their duties as employees and official library business.

Access to the Internet is available in two ways:

- 1.) Through the use of Library provided computers;
- 2.) Through a WI-FI (wireless) connection to the Library network.

Liability Disclaimer

Lowell Public Library makes no warranties of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, for the Internet access it is providing. The Internet is not secure or private. The library is not responsible for any damages the patron suffers, including, but not limited to, damage to equipment, loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in service; the accuracy, nature or quality of information gathered through library provided internet access; for personal property used to access the internet; and for any financial obligations resulting from library provided access to the internet.

Confidentiality

The Library treats any personally identifiable information stored on computers as confidential. Requests for disclosure of information will be honored only under one of the following conditions:

- When authorized by the owners of the information; □
- When approved by the appropriate Library administrator; □
- When required by local, state or federal law.

Patron information shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law. Note that it is the policy of this Library to report unlawful activities to the police. (See [60.000 - Patron Responsibilities](#))

Staff Assistance

Staff is available to assist patrons in using the Internet, subject to limitations of time and expertise. Patrons are encouraged to explore on their own, check out materials the library has available, and participate in scheduled training classes offered by the Library.

Responsibilities of Computer Users

The use of the Internet provided by Lowell Public Library is a privilege and is subject to the terms and conditions specified in this and our other computer policies.

(Provide links to [50.750 - Computer Use](#) 2) Terms of Use document).

Internet computer users must know basic computer use and have a preliminary knowledge of the Internet and its resources.

The use of the Library's computers and connectivity shall be guided by the following principles:

1. Respect for the rights, sensibilities and privacy of all library users.
2. Use of computer resources only for legal purposes.

3. Compliance with the state and federal laws protecting copyright and software licensing of programs and data.
4. Avoidance of sites inappropriate for public viewing.
5. Adherence to measures designed to protect the Internet safety of computer users, especially minors.
6. Parents are responsible for supervising and approving their child's use of the Internet.
7. Be aware of computer viruses and other destructive problems, and take steps to avoid being either a victim or a distributor.

Unacceptable use includes, but is not limited to:

1. Accessing, transmitting, uploading, downloading, or distributing material that is pornographic, obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, and harmful to minors, or child pornography; or use for any purpose that violates applicable federal, state, or local laws.
2. Interfering with or disrupting other computer users, services or equipment.
3. Disruptive behavior is not allowed.
4. Harassment is not allowed.
5. Unauthorized tampering with computer hardware or software, hacking,
6. Chatroom access is prohibited.
7. No food, drinks or beverage containers are allowed in the computer areas.
8. Computer accounts and passwords should not be shared with other people.
9. Viewing or displaying sexually explicit images on computers in the library where the images might be seen by library staff or other library patrons is prohibited.
10. Modifying computer security and privacy settings, or installing unauthorized software.
11. Causing degradation of system performance.
12. Other uses deemed inappropriate at the discretion of the Lowell Public Library.

The Library will be the sole arbitrator of what constitutes a violation of this policy.

Internet Safety Policy

Lowell Public Library receives federal funding for public internet access, and is required to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). More information about CIPA is available at <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act>

The Library uses Technology Protection Measure to block and filter Internet access to visual depictions that are considered by law to be obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors.

The library cannot guarantee that children and young adults will not be able to access sites that may be unsuitable for children. No blocking technology is perfect; at best it helps to protect against some access to inappropriate material at a certain time and location. But the Internet is constantly changing, and the blocking software is always trying to catch up.

It is also possible that the filtering software may block access to sites that are perfectly legal and acceptable by Library standards. The Library will disable a filter upon request by an adult patron 18 years of age or older.

The Library believes that parents are the best filters of what is appropriate or not for their children to view on the internet.

Parents should also inform their children about the safety and security issues with using electronic mail, chat rooms, disclosing personal identification on the Internet.

Rules for Internet Use by Children

Recommended by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

- I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parents' permission.
- I will tell my parents right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.

- I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.
- I will never send a person my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.
- I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. If I do, I will tell my parents right away so that they can contact the online service.
- I will talk with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission.

Parents interested in learning more about the risks of the Internet should read Keeping Kids Safer on the Internet from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

<http://www.missingkids.com/Publications/Safety>

Child Pornography

It is illegal to possess or view child pornography or the obscene visual representations of the sexual abuse of children in the Library. Library employees will report such illegal behavior to the police immediately.

Two Excerpts from Federal Law:

18 U.S. Code § 2256 - "Child Pornography" Defined.

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/2256>

"Child pornography" means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where—

- a.) the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- b.) such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image, or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or
- c.) such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

18 U.S. Code § 1466A - Obscene visual representations of the sexual abuse of children

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/1466A>

Any person who knowingly produces, distributes, receives, or possesses with intent to distribute, a visual depiction of any kind, including a drawing, cartoon, sculpture, or painting, that—

- a.) depicts a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; and is obscene; or
- b.) depicts an image that is, or appears to be, of a minor engaging in graphic bestiality, sadistic or masochistic abuse, or sexual intercourse, including genital-genital, oral-genital, anal-genital, or oral-anal, whether between persons of the same or opposite sex; and lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

Sanctions

Violators of this Internet Acceptable Use & Safety Policy may lose library privileges. Suspicion of illegal activities will result in the suspension of a user's privileges; proof of wrongdoing will result in the termination of a user's privileges.

Library computer privileges will be permanently denied for repeated violation and disregard of Library policies. Written notice will be given to a patron whose privileges have been suspended or revoked; a copy will be kept on file at the library. See policy [60.000 - Patron Responsibilities](#)

Staff will be subject to normal disciplinary procedures as well for misuse of Library provided computers.

Illegal acts involving Library computing resources may also be subject to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities.

This policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis in accordance with Indiana Code 36-12-1-12. Portions of this policy are adapted from other sources, including various libraries of Northwest Indiana, working together to better serve their patrons.