

NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

COMPUTER USE & INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

The intent of this policy is to meet the provisions of the [Children's Internet Protection Act](#) (CIPA) [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)] and the Connecticut Data Privacy Act, as well as provide guidelines for community members and staff regarding library computers and wireless internet at all branches of the New Britain Public Library (hereinafter referred to as the Library).

The Library seeks to protect the First Amendment rights of its community members and their individual right to privacy. The Library avoids collecting or maintaining records that could compromise patron privacy.

The Library aims to provide free and open access to information for educational, recreational and cultural uses by library patrons of all ages and backgrounds. The Library will provide access to the Internet as an integral part of fulfilling this purpose. The same standards of intellectual freedom, privacy and confidentiality endorsed by the Library for traditional resources and services also apply to electronic media, including usage of the Internet.

It is the policy of the Library to: (a) prevent computer network user access to, or transmission of, illegal material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with CIPA.

Library employees are authorized to take prompt and appropriate action to enforce this policy and other provisions of the Library's Code of Conduct.

ACCEPTANCE STATEMENT

Use of a library computer or library wireless network at any facility owned or operated by the Library is considered acceptance of this policy. Patrons will reaffirm the agreement each time they use a library computer or access wireless internet provided by the Library.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

It is the individual user's responsibility to abide by all laws and to follow the Library Code of Conduct while using library computers or their own devices to connect to the Library's public wireless network.

Internet users must be aware that workstations are in public areas, especially when accessing information that may be offensive to someone else, and that images on the screen may be subject to view by a wide audience. Not all content on the Internet is appropriate for viewing by all library patrons.

Prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Circumventing or attempting to circumvent library time management software on library computers
- Changing the settings and configurations of library computers, including disconnecting

- power or Ethernet cables
- Using library computers or WiFi for unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking,” or other unlawful activities
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors

USE BY MINORS

The Library does not serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent). Library staff do not supervise children as they explore the Internet. The responsibility for what minors read, view and share on the Internet rests with the parents or legal guardians who grant permission for its use.

- Children under the age of 13 shall use computers in the Main Library’s Children’s Room or at the Jefferson Branch Library. The Children’s computers may also be used by parents or caregivers assisting their children.
- Young adults (13-18) shall use the computers in the Main Library’s Teen Room or at the Jefferson Branch Library.
- Adults shall use the computers in the Main Library’s Computer Center or at the Jefferson Branch Library.

INDEMNIFICATION

The availability of information does not constitute endorsement of the content by the Library. Patrons who choose to use the Internet as an information resource do so at their own risk.

The Library does not monitor, and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and is not responsible for its content. The Library has no means or statutory authority to assure that only constitutionally protected material is available on the Internet.

All library computers, WiFi and hotspots are filtered to comply with CIPA guidelines. Although content filtering mechanisms are in place, no known filtering solution is 100% effective. Words, images or sounds that could be considered inappropriate or offensive by a library patron may not be blocked. The same filter could block other constitutionally protected information that a patron may wish to access. In those cases, patrons may bring the issue to library administration in order to resolve the matter.

The Library shall not be liable for any direct or indirect loss or damages caused by patron use of Library computers or wireless internet.

RESPONSE TO PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS AND CONTENT

The First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution does not protect all content. No Library computer may be used to view or display child pornography, or other illegal content, as described by CIPA and CODE. The legal status of any particular content can be determined only by a court of law with proper jurisdiction.

Misuse of a library computer or wireless network will result in the loss of computer privileges, potential loss of library privileges and possible prosecution.

An individual whose behavior violates Library policy will be warned about the specific behavior that is prohibited. If the violation continues after a warning, or if other inappropriate behavior is demonstrated, he or she may be asked to leave the Library. An incident report will be prepared and filed with the library director (see the Library's Code of Conduct for details regarding enforcement.)

If a patron or staff member observes behavior or content that may be illegal, either the patron or the staff may report it to a supervisor or the director. The Library will not judge the legality of content, but will help refer a concern about illegal conduct or content to the appropriate department of law enforcement.

This Policy document will be reviewed by the New Britain Public Library Board at least every two years.