

Waterford Township Public Library Internet Use Policy

Amended February 28, 2007; Revised August 22, 2012

INTRODUCTION

Waterford Township Public Library (WTPL) provides public access to the resources available on the Internet and on subscription databases through computer workstations. This service is intended to enhance the traditional print and audiovisual collections that have been established to meet the informational, educational and recreational needs of our community. Library users are strongly cautioned, however, that WTPL does not control and therefore cannot be held responsible for the accuracy, currency or content of information accessed through the Internet, which is an unregulated medium. Users are urged to consult with library staff members who can recommend reliable sources of information and Internet search strategies. Library users are also encouraged to educate themselves as consumers of this technology and to exercise a healthy skepticism when encountering unsubstantiated information. Personally identifying information (PII) should not be shared online.

STATEMENT ON FILTERING

In order to maximize federal and state funding that is vital to operating our libraries, WTPL complies with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Filtering software is used to block access to sites with adult, sexually explicit content. Users 18 years of age and older may request the library staff to disable the filter provided that their subsequent Internet use complies with the conditions of this Internet Use Policy. The library staff may also unblock a particular site (but not disable the filter), for users under the age of 18 if the site has been blocked in error. Wireless access is also filtered. Library laptops and non-library owned equipment cannot be unblocked. If users require unfiltered access to the Internet, they should use library-owned equipment that does not access the Internet through the wireless network.

All users should note that filtering software is imperfect and inappropriate and/or offensive sites may not be blocked. Similarly, the software may block appropriate and/or legitimate sites. In addition, all computer software and equipment is subject to malfunction. While every effort will be made to accommodate legitimate requests to disable the filter or unblock a site, our ability to do so is determined by conditions outside our control.

CHILDREN AND THE INTERNET

WTPL supports the principles of intellectual freedom and the right of each individual to have access to constitutionally protected material. WTPL also affirms the right and responsibility of parents, NOT LIBRARY STAFF MEMBERS, to determine and monitor their own children's use of library facilities and resources, including the Internet. Some sites may contain material that is offensive or inappropriate for minors as defined by law or as determined by their parents or guardians. While WTPL employs filtering software on all computer workstations, the technology is not 100% effective. Library personnel can assist parents and children to find age-appropriate resources. If parents or guardians are concerned about their child's responsible use of the Internet or the potential for exposure to offensive material, they should monitor or restrict that use.

Educational materials are available in all our libraries to promote Internet safety. All users, regardless of age, should exercise caution in sharing personal or private information online. Parents and guardians should insure that their minor children are instructed to not reveal personal information in chat rooms, e-mails or other forms of direct electronic communication.

Children should never arrange a meeting with someone they have met on the Internet without parental permission. Minors are prohibited from using library computers for unlawful activities such as 'hacking'.

DISCLAIMER

While every effort has been made to ensure uninterrupted access to the Internet, no warranty is provided and WTPL is not responsible for any loss, financial or otherwise, associated with the use of this service. Software and information downloaded from any source may contain viruses, worms, etc. WTPL is not responsible for damage to users' disks or computers or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the library's computers.

GUIDELINES FOR USE

Internet access is a privilege. Use of any library computer constitutes an agreement to abide by this policy. Inappropriate use, as determined by the library staff, may result in the loss of all computer access and/or prosecution under applicable state and federal laws.

The following guidelines apply to all Internet users and may be revised at any time:

1. All users must sign-in to use library computers. Users are responsible for bringing in their own headphones. Workstations cannot be reserved in advance, however library owned laptops can be reserved. In the event that others are waiting to use a terminal, a 30 minute time restriction will be enforced. The library reserves the right to terminate any computer session that disrupts library services or that involves user behavior that violates library policies.
2. Children under the age of twelve are required to have a parent or guardian signed written consent to use the public computers. The written consent will keep on file until the parent or guardian notified the library otherwise. Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate in their children's library activities regardless of age.
3. The number of users at any one workstation may be limited at the direction of the library staff.
4. Information may be saved by printing at a reasonable cost or by downloading to a disk or other storage device provided by the user or purchased from the library. Printing costs as of 1/1/12 are \$0.20 per page for black and white and for color.
5. Files cannot be saved to the hard drive. Users are urged to exercise caution in saving private and/or personal information that may be retrieved by others.
6. Users are not permitted to change the configuration of library hardware or software or to attempt to breach computer security systems. This includes, but is not limited to, downloading software, placing icons on the desktop, installing Instant Messenger or similar products, installing plug-ins or changing computer properties.
7. Illegal activities or encouraging others to commit illegal activities is not permitted on library workstations. These activities include, but are not limited to, the transmission of offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading illegal materials or confidential, trade secret information or copyrighted materials; engaging in defamation, uploading a worm, virus, Trojan horse or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; spamming; hacking activities.
8. Users are reminded that Internet access occurs in a public setting and are prohibited from the display and/or distribution of any material that is obscene, contains or makes reference to explicit sexual materials as defined in NJ.J.S.A 2C:34-3, contains child pornography or is harmful to minors.
9. Users are required to abide by copyright laws and licensing agreements.

10. Users may not load their own software on library computers. Users are encouraged, however, to inform library staff of any future features they would like to see on library workstations.
11. Users will be held responsible for willful damage to equipment.
12. Inappropriate use of e-mail, chat rooms or gaming sites, as defined within the context of this policy, is not permitted.
13. Harassing behavior of any kind is not permitted from library terminals.
14. Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors is prohibited.
15. Users should not disclose or share passwords with others.