

## **Internet Policy**

*Adopted by the Montville Township Public Library Board*

The Montville Township Public Library Board is committed to ensuring access to information through technology. Access to digital information is fundamental for supporting continuous lifelong learning. Recognizing its role to provide access to electronic information, the Montville Township Public Library offers public access to the Internet.

The Library upholds and affirms the right of every individual to have access to material on the Internet. The content of the Internet is not managed or governed by any entity; therefore users may encounter materials they consider offensive. The Library supports guided access to information. The Library also supports the right to privacy and confidentiality of Library users in accordance with New Jersey State Laws. Parents and guardians are responsible for monitoring Internet access by children.

The Library Board and its employees assume no responsibility for damages of any type arising from the use of Montville Township Public Library Internet workstations.

Illegal use of the Internet is prohibited. Patrons may not use the Library's Internet access to view, print, distribute, display, send or receive images, text or graphics of obscene material or material that violates laws relating to child pornography. Library users may not disseminate, exhibit or display to minors materials that are harmful to minors.

Library users must abide by the Internet Use Rules as approved by the Library Board.

The Montville Township Public Library provides Internet access for conducting research, retrieving information, exploring ideas, facilitating communication, and accessing the full array of resources available through the World Wide Web. These are fundamental to supporting continuous lifelong learning for people of all ages. Unlike the selection of library materials on library shelves, however, librarians do not select the offerings of the Internet. Because not all Internet sites are accurate and complete, and some sites may be offensive, library users are encouraged to exercise critical judgment in accessing these sites.

The Internet has raised new challenges for public libraries. Because of its graphical display format, we must through these guidelines work to balance the rights of individuals to access information and the need to provide a welcoming environment for people of all ages. The Library is committed to providing its employees and patrons with an environment that is free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment, and prohibiting the display of obscene material, child pornography, and

material that is harmful to minors and to make every possible effort within constitutional limits to prevent minors from viewing materials that could be deemed harmful.

All public access computer workstations with Internet access in public areas employ filtering technology. The type of filter used is a "Proxy server" meaning that a "Filter Vendor" maintains a secondary server through which all requests are filtered. Patrons may request to use an unfiltered workstation that is normally not accessible by the public. The library will maintain a description of filter criteria used and will provide the description to adults upon request. The Library will continue to monitor and evaluate technological changes related to the Internet.

### **Internet Use Rules:**

The Library provides computer workstations with Internet access in all its public areas. Decisions on the number, placement, and type of computer workstations at each site are based on considerations of demand, staff capacity, available floor space, electrical/cable access, and budgetary constraints.

#### ***The following rules and procedures govern the use of Internet workstations:***

##### **Time Limit per person:**

One half-hour per person in each six-hour period system-wide. Sign-in at the circulation desk is required.

Internet Access will be available during all operating hours. Only basic instructions for use will be available.

Catalog Only Workstations: Some workstations are designated for use of the Library catalog and its related databases. These workstations are not to be used for general Internet use.

##### **Children's Workstations:**

Workstations in the Children's are designated for primary use by children. Procedures at this location regulate use of these workstations by persons other than the intended audience.

##### **Shared Use of Workstations:**

No more than two persons may share the use of an Internet workstation at the same time. Study group accommodations may be made with staff.

Information may be saved by printing or downloading to your own diskette. Printouts cost \$.10 (ten cents) per page. The Montville Public Library is not responsible for any information downloaded from a library computer.

##### **Responsibilities of Users:**

All patrons must observe the policies, rules and procedures established by the Library, including the Internet Use Rules and, in respect to these guidelines. Users at Internet workstations should bear in mind that the workstations are located in public areas shared by people of all ages and

backgrounds, and are expected to show consideration for others when viewing web pages. All library users are expected to respect the privacy of all other library users.

Use of any workstation is for legal purposes only.

No person shall use a library workstation in a way that disturbs or interferes with users, employees or operations of the Library.

**Patrons may not:**

- View, print, distribute display, send, or receive images, text or graphics of obscene materials or material that violates laws relating to child pornography.
- Disseminate, exhibit, or display to minors materials that are harmful to minors.
- Enter or post information in any "chat" room."
- Use an Internet workstation to transmit threatening or harassing material.
- Engage in any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment.
- Violate copyright or software licensing agreements, including the downloading of copyrighted text or music files.
- Gain unauthorized access to any computing, information, or communications devices or resources.
- Damage, alter, or degrade computer equipment, peripherals, software, or configurations.
- Install software applications.
- Use a workstation to wager.

**Responsibility and Authority of Staff:**

Library employees are responsible for implementing the Internet Use Rules. Library employees are expected to take prompt and appropriate action to enforce the Internet Use Rules, and are authorized to terminate an Internet use session by anyone who fails to comply. Library employees may refuse to provide assistance to a patron if they believe that it may result in them viewing pornographic material on a computer display screen or in printed form, but then they must immediately request assistance from a supervisor who will take appropriate action.

**Use of the Internet by Children:**

The Montville Public Library respects the responsibility of all parents, guardians and caregivers to guide their own children's use of the library, its resources and services. Some of our workstations are reserved for use by children under the age of 13; displaying of materials harmful to minors is prohibited. Both posted signs and the staff encourage parents, guardians, teachers, and caregivers to work with their children at these workstations.

Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for their own children's use of the Internet. They are encouraged to discuss the use of the Internet with their children in relation to their own beliefs and boundaries, and to monitor their children's use of the Internet. The Library will offer tools to

assist parents, guardians, and caregivers in their work with their own children. The tools include but are not limited to skilled staff, handouts and recommended websites.

Although filtering software is utilized, it is an imperfect technology. The Montville library is not able to guarantee the effectiveness of this technology and emphasizes that parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for their own children's use of the Internet as certain uses of the Internet and/or World Wide Web might be inappropriate or harmful to minor children.

**Failure to Comply:**

Failure to comply with the Internet Use Rules will result in a request from staff to discontinue the activity. Continued violations will result in a request to leave the library facility, and may lead to revocation of library privileges, including the right to visit the buildings and grounds. Repeat offenders or persons ordered from the premises who do not comply may be subject to arrest and prosecution for trespassing.

Offenders may be subject to criminal prosecution under federal or state law, and should expect the Library to pursue such action to the fullest extent of the law. By way of illustration, but not by limitation, under New Jersey law, it is a crime of the third degree, punishable by imprisonment from 3-5 years and a fine of \$15,000, to access, alter, damage or destroy a computer system or any of its parts, purposely and without authorization (N.J.S.A. 2C:20-30); it is a crime of the third degree punishable by imprisonment from 3-5 years and a fine of \$15,000, to directly or indirectly disclose or cause to be disclosed data, data base, computer software or computer programs, purposely and without authorization (N.J.S.A. 2C:20-31); and, it is a disorderly persons offense, punishable by imprisonment up to 1 year and a fine of \$1,000, to access a computer or any of its parts, purposely and without authorization, notwithstanding that such access does not result in the altering, damaging or destruction of any property or services (N.J.S.A. 2C:20-32). Additionally, it is a crime in the fourth degree to publicly display, post, exhibit, give away, or vocalize obscene material (N.J.S.A. 2C:34-4).

The Library must be notified about any violations of computer laws and policies, as well as actual or potential breaches of security of the computer system and networks. All users of the Library's computer system and networks are expected to cooperate with the Library in its operation of the computer system and networks, as well as the investigation of misuse or abuse.

**Liabilities:**

The Montville Public Library assumes no responsibility for any damage, direct or indirect, that users or anyone else may suffer through access to the Internet. All public Internet users agree to hold the Library harmless from any claims, losses, damages, and obligations related to:

- Infringement of U.S. Copyright Law governing the reproduction, distribution, adaptation, public performance, and public display of copyrighted material.
- The use and/or accuracy of information obtained from the Library's electronic information system.

- Damage to non-library software or hardware resulting from viruses downloaded via the Library's Internet services.

The Montville Public Library, its trustees and employees bear no liability or responsibility for the display of obscene material or the misconduct associated with the use of public access workstations.