

**Brown Public Library
Computer & Internet Use Policy
Approved October 16, 2008**

Mission

The Brown Public Library accepts as its mission the responsibility of providing access to books and other resources in support of education, recreation, and culture. It will create and support programs that encourage reading for children, life-long learning for adults, and access to the latest in technical communications.

The Library subscribes to and supports the Library Bill of Rights and its Interpretations, particularly Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks.

Internet Access

The Internet, a world-wide network of computer networks, is an essential medium for obtaining and transmitting information of all types. Public access to the Internet is part of the Library's mission.

However, as an unregulated medium the Internet also provides access to information that is inaccurate, illegal or that some may find offensive or disturbing. The Library will identify on its web site specific Internet sites that have potential interest for Library users, but the Library cannot control a user's access to other Internet resources.

Responsibilities of Library Staff and Users

Library staff does not and will not monitor a user's Internet use, except for length of use in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone. The user, or the parent or guardian of a minor, is responsible for his or her Internet session at all times.

The Library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts Library services or that involves user behavior that violates the Library's policies.

Because Internet filtering software has serious limitations, blocking Constitutionally-protected materials in some cases and permitting access to illegal materials in others, the Library does not employ filtering software. It is the responsibility of the individual user to select appropriate sites for his/her own use.

The Library does not act in loco parentis (in place of the parent) and does not restrict Internet access based on the age of the user. As with all Library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/guardians, NOT Library staff, to determine and monitor their minor children's use of the Internet, including the use of e-mail and chat rooms. Parents are responsible for their minor children's use of the Library's resources and facilities. Any parents who believe that their children cannot responsibly use the Library's Internet access are requested to monitor their children's Internet use. (In this policy a minor is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years.)

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Parents/guardians are encouraged to consider the following suggestions:

- Use the Internet with your children.
- Tell your children which sites are/are not appropriate for their use.
- Provide your children with guidelines about the amount of time they may spend online.
- Instruct your children NEVER to give out personal information about themselves or others (e.g., name, age, address, phone number, Social Security number, credit card number, passwords, etc.) online.
- Instruct your children NEVER to arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they have “met” online without your permission.
- Teach your children to be critical Internet users, considering the source, date and accuracy of Internet information.

Disclaimers

While the Library tries to provide access to information of the highest quality, the Library specifically denies any claim as to the information's accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness or fitness for a particular purpose.

The Library will have no liability for direct, indirect or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed through the Library's Internet service.

Since software and information downloaded from any sources, including the Internet, may contain computer viruses, users are advised to utilize virus checking software on their home computers. The Library is not responsible for damage to users' home computers or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the Library's computers.

Unacceptable Uses of Computers

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable, and which constitute a violation of this policy, are the following:

- Uses that violate the law. Transmitting 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; downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, users should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.
- Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property. Engaging in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); uploading a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks or information systems.
- Uses that jeopardize the security of access of the computer network or other networks on the Internet. Disclosing or sharing the user's password with others; impersonating another user; using one's own software programs on the Library's computers; altering the Library's computer settings; damaging or modifying computer equipment or software.

- Uses that jeopardize the safety or security of minors.
- Viewing materials that are inappropriate in a public space or attempting to view, read or censor material being used by others without their permission.

Confidentiality of Library Records

In accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 317 (c)(19), the following are exempt from public inspection and copying--records relating to the identity of Library patrons or the identity of Library patrons in regard to the circulation of Library materials.

Due to the confidentiality of Library records, the Brown Public Library does not reveal information about an individual's Internet use unless compelled to do so under due process of law.

Procedures

The Library staff will develop such rules and procedures as are necessary to ensure the fair and reasonable use of Internet access.

Response to Violations

The user's access to the Library's computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. A user violates this policy by his/her actions or by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures may result in the forfeiture of Library Internet or general Library privileges.

Wireless Internet Access

The Brown Public Library offers free wireless Internet access. The Library's wireless network is unfiltered. By choosing to use this free service, you agree to abide by the Library's Internet Policy.

Because the Library's wireless network is open and unsecured, it is strongly recommended that you do not use it to transmit personal, financial or legal data. The Library is not responsible for any compromised information and will not assume any responsibility for the safety of equipment or for harm done to a wireless device's configurations, security or data files resulting from connection to the Library's wireless service.

Adopted October 16, 2008

Brown Public Library Board of Trustees

Public Internet Access Procedures:

You must sign in and out if you wish to use a public access computer station. Please fill in the time you sign in, your name, and the time you sign out.

Signing in to use a computer station implies that the user agrees to comply with the Library's Internet Use Policy.

You may use a computer station for at least 30 minutes; longer if no one is waiting.

If patrons are waiting to use a computer station, those whose sessions have been the longest (30 minutes or more) will be asked to surrender their stations to the patrons who are waiting.

Two or more patrons may use the same computer station if their behavior does not disturb those around them.

No food or drink is permitted at the computer stations.

Printouts are \$.15 per page for black and white, \$.50 per page for color. Patrons are responsible for all printouts they generate and can ask for assistance to avoid unnecessary charges.