BEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Internet Use Policy

PURPOSE

The Bedford Public Library offers direct, unfiltered access to the Internet as part of its commitment to access to information and provision of electronic resources to its users, and in keeping with the American Library Association's "Access to Digital Resources and Services: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights." The Bedford Public Library provides computers with Internet access and wireless Internet access for the community.

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

The Internet is an unregulated medium. It 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.

Filtering software is not employed by the Library. Filtering software is not foolproof and does not eliminate the possibility that searchers may inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive. Furthermore, filters often block access to sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful and that could be of a legitimate reference nature.

While the Internet is a powerful tool for finding information, other library resources may be more appropriate for locating information in a timely manner. The Internet user must independently evaluate the validity, accuracy, and appropriateness of the information found on the Internet. The reference librarians can assist patrons who would like help evaluating Internet and other resources.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LIBRARY STAFF

Library staff 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 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.

As with all Library resources, the Library affirms the rights and responsibility of parents and guardians, not Library staff, to determine and monitor their children's use of the Internet. Parents are responsible for their children's use of the Library's resources and facilities. Parents who believe that their children cannot responsibly use the Library's Internet access are requested to monitor their children's Internet use.

PROCEDURES

1. Patrons with a valid library card from the Bedford Public Library or a GMILCS library may use the computers.
2. Guest passes are available at the Reference Desk for patrons who do not have a library card. Patrons are limited to one guest pass per day.
3. Patrons may use the Internet for 60 minutes per day. This time may be extended for a maximum of 60 minutes, for a total of 120 minutes per day. Time limits are not based on a user's age or the content or activity of use.
4. Patrons may print pages to the printer at cost of .10 per page for black and white printing and .50 per page for color printing.
5. Assistance will be available as staff time and experience permits.
6. Any files saved to the hard drive are temporary and may be lost when the patron logs out. After each use, the computers are rebooted and all files deleted.
7. Files may be saved to thumb drives or to the user's individual cloud account.
8. Earphones must be used when computer sound is turned on. Earphones are available for $1.00 at the Reference Desk.

ASSISTANCE

Library staff have limited availability to assist users who do not have basic computer skills. The Library offers a variety of computer instruction courses and one-on-one training sessions and we encourage library users who wish to improve their computer skills to take advantage of these sessions. Library staff are unable to process financial, governmental, and personal transactions on behalf of library patrons.

- Library staff shall make every effort to meet the service needs of a patron's access to computers and to library supported electronic materials.
- Staff cannot make changes to the configuration or software on a privately owned wireless device.
- Staff are neither responsible nor liable for any damage to the device and/or loss, damage, alteration or corruption of any software, data, operating system or files that may result from their assistance.
- The Library makes no warranty or guarantee of any kind regarding the technology assistance provided.

APPROPRIATE USE (including library and personal devices)

The user is required to obey all applicable federal, state and local laws governing copyright, licensing and content restrictions. Responsible, ethical and legal use of this resource is expected. Appropriate use includes respect for the rights and property of others.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The library prohibits the use of library equipment to access material that is illegal, obscene, child pornography, or in the case of minors, harmful to minors (See NH RSA 571-B:1 for definitions).

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

1. Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law. Cyberbullying, or other communications which violate State of Federal Law; piracy; Identity theft; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading obscene or illegal pornographic 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.
2. 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 unauthorized access, including hacking activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.
3. 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; installing software on library computers; altering the Library's computer settings; damaging or modifying computer equipment or software; bringing food or drink into the computer area.
4. Uses which negatively impact other user's enjoyment of the library. including but not limited to talking on the phone; listening to audio without headphones; any behaviors that impair the ability of other patrons to use and enjoy the library per the Library's Behavior Policy.

CONSEQUENCES OF POLICY VIOLATION

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 or her own action or by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Further, a user violates this policy if he or she permits another to use his or her account or password to access the computer network and Internet. Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures will result in the forfeiture of the user's right to access these computers.

Patrons engaging in conduct which violates this policy will be asked to cease that conduct. In general, the least restrictive means which effectively deals with the conduct shall be employed, however, Staff is authorized to consider the nature of the offense, and escalate the punishment to any of the options

identified below based on the severity of the violation up to and including permanent revocation of library privileges. Staff will take the following steps when dealing with a violation of this policy:

1st Offense: Patrons who are in violation of this policy will be verbally warned that the behavior must stop. Patron will be handed a copy of the Internet Access Policy. Staff member will document that a verbal warning was issued and a policy was received.

2nd Offense: The patron will be issued a written warning. Patron will again be handed a copy of the Internet Access Policy. Staff member will document that a written warning was issued and a policy was received.

3rd Offense: Patron will be suspended from accessing the library computers and WiFi for 3 months. A letter will be issued to the patron confirming the ban. If the patron is under the age of 18, parents or guardians will also be informed by a call from the library director.

Patrons whose privileges are revoked may appeal to the Board of Library Trustees for reinstatement of library computer and WiFi privileges. The appeal must be made in writing and will be addressed as part of the next regularly scheduled Trustee meeting.

DISCLAIMER

While the Library endeavors to provide access to information of the highest quality, the Library specifically disclaims any warrant as to the accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness or fitness for a particular purpose of information accessed on the Internet.

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 personal devices.

The Library is not responsible for damage to users' property or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the Library's computers.

Users are cautioned that, because security in an electronic environment such as the Internet cannot be guaranteed, all transactions, files and communications are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use and, therefore, should be considered public.

The library accepts no responsibility for:
• what patrons access online
• lost or misplaced items
• damages resulting from loss of connectivity
• breaches in security
• breaches of personal data
• exposure to or infection by malware

USER PRIVACY

The Library uses computer management software but does not require or keep personal information about users. Print jobs may be retained for 72 hours as a convenience for reprinting documents. Library security software deletes all computer Internet history and activity between user sessions. The Library does not keep records of patron Internet sessions.

WIFI
Access to WiFi is covered by the terms of this policy.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees
12/12/2024