

The Farmington Libraries

Internet Safety and Computer Use Policy

Policy statement

Approved by vote of the Library Board of Trustees on November 20, 2019.

It is the policy of the Farmington Libraries to uphold the rights of individual users to access Constitutionally-protected speech and information in a wide range of formats, including that which is available over the Internet. However, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA") and in order to receive certain federal funds, the Farmington Libraries will implement technology protection measures (Internet filtering) for all Internet-accessible computers and other electronic devices using the Internet service provided by or through the Farmington Libraries.

The technology protection measure/filtering software will, to the extent practicable, (a) protect against access by staff and patrons, both minors and adults, to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors as defined by federal law; (b) promote the safety and security of all Internet users, including minors, when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication; (c) guard against unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding all Internet users, including minors; and (d) prevent unauthorized online access to the computer networks of the Libraries and others, including so-called "hacking," and any other unlawful activities by all Internet users, including minors.

Practice and procedure

Access to Inappropriate Material

The technology protection measure/filtering software installed on the Libraries' Internet-accessible computers is intended to protect against access to visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography, and, in the case of persons under the age of **18** years, materials that are "harmful to minors," as defined by federal law. Users should be aware, however, that all currently available technology protection measure/filtering software results in some degree of both "underblocking" (permitting access to certain material that falls within the foregoing categories) and "overblocking" (denying access to certain constitutionally protected material that does not fall within the foregoing categories). The Libraries cannot and do not guarantee that the technology protection measure/filtering software will block all obscenity, child pornography, or materials that are harmful to minors. Nor can the Libraries guarantee that the technology protection measure/filtering software will not restrict access to sites that may have legitimate research or other value. In order to help address the problem of over- and under-blocking and to enhance users' access to constitutionally protected speech and information, users, both adults and minors, may speak to an information services librarian concerning any incorrectly blocked site

Use by Minors

The Libraries affirm and acknowledge the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their children's access to Library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet. Use of the internet presents an opportunity for each family to discuss sites and content they feel is appropriate or inappropriate. Responsibility for, and any restrictions of, a child's use of the internet rests solely with their parents or legal guardians.

Internet Safety

The Farmington Libraries will take steps to promote the safety and security of all users of the Libraries' online computer network. At the time library cards are issued, Library staff will provide all users with information designed to promote safe and secure computer use. This includes using caution when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, and steps users can take to prevent unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information. Library staff will oversee use of the Libraries' online computer network and access to the Internet by all patrons in accordance with this policy. However, the Libraries are not and cannot be responsible for maintaining the privacy or confidentiality of personal or personally identifiable information provided by a user to a third party via the Internet.

Inappropriate Network Usage

Unauthorized access to the Libraries' computers, databases, network, hardware or software settings is prohibited. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors. Damage to the Libraries' computer resources also is prohibited. Users must comply with applicable copyright laws and licensing agreements. *Patrons may not access visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors as defined by federal law, on private or public computers within the libraries, regardless of the origination of the content (ie flash drive, internet etc...)* Violation of these rules, or any inappropriate usage of library computers or networks that violates library policies may result in the loss of Library privileges.

All users must accept the "Usage Policy" displayed at each public internet access computer station at the Libraries. The policy reads:

"By selecting "Accept" below, you agree to the following terms of usage: You agree to use the Farmington Libraries' public computers for lawful purposes in a responsible manner, consistent with the educational and informational purposes for which they are provided; and to not alter the computer's hardware or software, or make copies of copyrighted or licensed software or data unless authorized. Additionally, you agree to refrain from the following: harassment of others or violation of their privacy, libeling, slandering or maliciously offending others. Violations of any of the above terms, or any use of this computer that is inconsistent with library policies may result in a temporary or permanent loss of library privileges.

Disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection

Any user who is **18** years of age or older may ask reference staff to disable the technology protection measure/filtering software in order to obtain unfiltered Internet access for bona fide research or any other lawful purpose. Library staff may request technology protection measure/filtering software to be disabled if necessary to perform their work duties. Procedures for disabling the measures shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director or their designated representatives.

[<https://www.fdlp.gov/requirements-guidance-2/guidance/18-free-public-access>. Updated April 14, 2015.]

Definitions of terms: [47 USC 254 (h)(6) and 47 USC 254 (h)(7)]

TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE. The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. **OBSCENE**, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
3. Harmful to minors.

HARMFUL TO MINORS. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT. The terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

MINOR. The term "minor" means a person under the age of eighteen years (Connecticut General Statutes sec. 1-1d).

References

Connecticut State Library. "CT State Library, Internet Safety and Computer Use Policy". Approved, January 23, 2017. https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content_id=29088459. Accessed October 1, 2019.