

**WESTHAMPTON PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**Public Use of Library Technology Policy**  
**Internet Use and Safety Policy**

The Westhampton Library's access to the Internet is provided to any patron in good standing. Individual instruction or assistance depends on the availability of staff. Patrons may use the Library's computers whenever the library is open and may reserve the computer in person or by phone only on the day of use. When the computer is not reserved, use will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

**UNACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET**

(applies to laptop users and users of library computers)

Access to and use of the Internet in the Library is a privilege. Unacceptable use of the Library's electronic information resources, including the Internet, is prohibited and will result in loss of computer privileges. The following examples of inappropriate or illegal activities constitute unacceptable use:

- Using the Internet for illegal purposes
- Using the Internet in violation of Massachusetts General Law 272, Section 31, The Harmful to Minors Statute, which prohibits dissemination of material which is harmful to minors or which is obscene; or dissemination or possession of child pornography
- Deliberately displaying obscene images
- Disclosing, using or disseminating, personal identity information about minors
- Compromising the privacy of users
- Transmitting threatening, harassing or defamatory materials or messages
- Engaging in communications which are libelous or slanderous
- Committing fraud
- Violating copyright law or software licenses
- Developing computer programs which infiltrate a computer or computer system and/or damage or alter the software components of a local or remote computer or computer system
- Transmitting chain mail, broadcast letters, or junk mail of any type
- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to the resources of the Library computers
- Disrupting the intended use of the Library's computers
- Destroying the integrity of computer-based information in the Library's computers
- Copying or downloading files onto a Library's computer from the Internet, disk or flashdrive
- Shutting down equipment without the permission of the librarian

**EMAIL**

The Westhampton Library does not provide email accounts to users; however, users with existing email accounts may access their accounts through the Library's Internet terminals. The Library does not accept responsibility for the privacy of possible cached (temporarily stored) messages left after such use.

## **FILTERING OR BLOCKING SOFTWARE**

The Westhampton Library provides free, open, and unfiltered access to the Internet. The Library adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the Library Bill of Rights adopted by the American Library Association and, further, finds that filters often do not function as intended.

## **USE OF THE INTERNET BY MINOR CHILDREN**

The Westhampton Library provides people of all ages with materials to meet their informational, educational and recreational needs. The Library affirms the right of parents to monitor their own minor children's use of the Library's electronic resources, including the Internet. Parents and guardians are responsible for monitoring their own minor children's use of the Internet and for deciding whether matter accessed by their minor children is appropriate or inappropriate. Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring their own minor children's safety and security when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

## **PRIVACY**

The Library will protect the privacy of patrons in their use of the Internet to the fullest extent possible under the law. The Library keeps no permanent record of the Internet sites visited, the electronic databases used or the searches performed by individuals. Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78, Section 7, names and addresses of public library patrons as well as the materials borrowed or information accessed electronically are considered not to be part of the public record. The library cannot be responsible for any confidential or financial information patrons may send over the Internet. A person's use of the Internet leaves electronic information in the public domain. Internet communications are not private, nor are they confidential. Unless there is a clear violation of this policy or the law, each user is requested to respect the privacy of other computer users.

## **MISUSE PENALTIES**

Violators of the Library's policies, including the Internet Use and Safety Policy and the Guidelines for Library Internet Use, may lose library privileges. Anyone discovered attempting to damage the Library's equipment or software, attempting to change files or reset configurations, or otherwise violating this Internet Use and Safety Policy, will immediately lose the right to use those resources. Violations of policies regarding acceptable use of computing resources will be dealt with in a serious and appropriate manner. Illegal acts involving the Library's computing resources may also be subject to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities. Users are responsible for any damage to hardware, software or furniture.

## **OFFENSIVE AND DISRUPTIVE MATERIALS**

The Library strives to balance the rights of patrons to access all types of information resources with the rights of patrons and staff to work in a public setting free from disruptive sounds and visual materials. The Library's computers are located in public areas, which are shared with library users and staff of all ages, backgrounds and sensibilities. Users are expected to consider this diversity and respect the sensibilities of others when accessing potentially offensive information or images.

## **WAIVER OF RESPONSIBILITY**

The Library does not control or monitor material available on the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content, authority reliability, validity, currency or use. The Library does not accept responsibility for the retaining possibly cached (temporarily stored) information about sites visited on the Internet or World Wide Web. The Board of Trustees of the Westhampton Library, the Library staff, and the Town of Westhampton are not liable for any negative consequences that may occur as a result of using the Library's Internet connection. It is the responsibility of each user to determine that information accessed electronically is appropriate for that user.

## **GUIDELINES FOR LIBRARY INTERNET USE COSTS**

The user is responsible for any costs connected with Internet use.

## **POLICY**

Users are responsible for understanding and adhering to the Internet Use and Safety Policy.

## **PRINTING**

Printouts are available from Internet access computers at a cost of \$0.10 per page. This is a printing charge and not a paper charge; this means that double-sided printing (using two sides of a single sheet of paper) will be charged as two copies.

## **RESERVATIONS FOR INTERNET COMPUTER USE**

Users may reserve computer time, either in person or by phone. Users arriving more than five minutes late for their reserved time may forfeit their reservation if another person wishes to use the computer.

## **TIME ALLOWED**

Internet computers are available for one hour at a time with longer use allowed if no one else is waiting to use them.

## **VIRUSES**

Users must notify library staff when any virus alert occurs on a Library Internet computer.