

ADOPTED
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COLCHESTER DISTRICT LIBRARY

INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE POLICY

The Colchester District Library makes electronic information available to meet the needs of its public. However, it does not imply endorsement or responsibility for the accuracy of any content by the staff and/or the Board of Trustees.

Colchester District Library is not responsible for damages, indirect or direct, arising from a library patron's use of internet information resources. Furthermore, Colchester District Library will not be responsible for communication sent by library patrons over the internet.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC INFORMATION NETWORKS

Most resources available via the internet are global rather than local. The Colchester District Library does not and cannot control the information content available through global resources. The patron must keep in mind the following points when evaluating information obtained via the internet:

- information may or may not be reliable and may or may not come from a trustworthy source.
- information may not be accurate, current, or unbiased.
- links to information on the internet may not always be available, and particular information sites on the internet may sometimes be unavailable; that unavailability is unpredictable.
- certain information obtained via the internet may be considered controversial by some library patrons.
- internet access is a privilege extended to patrons, not an automatic right or obligation of the Library to provide.

The Colchester District Library urges library patrons to be informed consumers and carefully evaluate information obtained via the internet. Patrons must be responsible for verifying the accuracy of any material.

PATRON RIGHTS

Library patrons have certain rights with respect to the use of electronic information networks such as the internet. The Colchester District Library will work with other libraries to preserve and protect these rights.

- library patrons have the right to confidentiality and privacy in the use of electronic information networks to the extent possible given certain constraints such as proximity of other patrons and staff in public access settings.
- library patrons have the right to equitable access to electronic information networks.
- library patrons have the right to access and read all library service policies and discuss questions with appropriate library staff.

USE OF EQUIPMENT AND NETWORKS

The Colchester District Library requires that library patrons using electronic information networks do so within the guidelines of acceptable use. The following activities are unacceptable:

- use of electronic information networks for any purpose which results in the harassment of others
- destruction of, damage to, or unauthorized alteration of the library's computer equipment or network security procedures
- use of electronic information networks in any way that violates a federal or state law
- unauthorized duplication of copy-protected software or violation of software license agreements
- violation of system security or the computer system's integrity
- behaving in a manner that is disruptive, offensive or annoying to other users, including overuse of computer equipment which serves to deny access to others, sounds, music, or visuals
- storage of data to anything other than a personal storage device
- violation of another user's privacy—unauthorized access, including "hacking" or other activities, are strictly prohibited
- use of computers to view or send material considered inappropriate for a public environment or which might create a hostile environment, or sexually explicit or suggestive images.

CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC INFORMATION NETWORKS

This library recognizes that the electronic information networks such as the internet may contain material that is inappropriate for children. Parents are expected to monitor and supervise their children's use of the internet. Library staff are unable to continually monitor children's computer use. Parents are encouraged to discuss appropriate internet use and safety with their children.

It is recommended that a parent or responsible adult assist anyone under the age of 10 during the time s/he is using library computers. Without such supervision, the child will be monitored by library staff, and the child's computer use could be limited or stopped.

INTERNET FILTERS

Recognizing that access to inappropriate material on the internet by minors is a concern, and in compliance with the Child Internet Protection Act, the Colchester District Library has installed internet filters on all its public use computers. This filter seeks to restrict minors' access to harmful or inappropriate material or websites, either unintentionally or on purpose.

These filters may be inadequate when considering the safety and security of minors when using email, social media and other forms of direct electronic communication. Parents must guard against the unsafe disclosure or dissemination of personal information by minors.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

It is the policy of the Colchester District Library to provide internet access to the public for educational and informational use. All users of the public access computer stations will adhere to the following guidelines:

ABSOLUTELY NO FOOD OR DRINK WHILE SEATED AT A COMPUTER STATION

--anyone may use the computers and the internet. A Colchester District Library card is not required, nor will patrons be asked to sign an agreement of any kind.

--library staff may assist patrons in how to start the internet browsing program, and other basic procedures. The stations are designed and intended for patrons with prior knowledge and some experience in using a computer. Library staff cannot be expected to spend extended amounts of time teaching computer skills to patrons.

--the library does not guarantee that its filtering software can limit access to materials based on content. In addition, library staff will not monitor an individual's use of any sites except when material displayed on the screen is not appropriate in a public environment. Monitoring internet use by minors is the responsibility of their parent/guardian.

--downloading or file transfer of any data over the internet to a station's hard drive is prohibited.

--stations are intended for education, communication and entertainment. Stations may not be used for commercial or for-profit ventures.

--the patron is liable for any damage done to an internet stations hardware or software and for any illegal or unethical acts performed through our system. This includes physical damage, vandalism, tampering with files or committing legal or ethical violations of acceptable internet use.

--users with small children must maintain visual contact with those children while using the computers.

--Patrons use the computer stations on a first come, first served basis

--a computer session is 30 minutes. If, at the end of that time, another patron wants the computer that a patron is using, they must let them have it. If no one is waiting for that particular computer, the first patron may stay on it as long as they wish. The patron who gives up their computer may move to another one and begin another 30 minute session.

--users of library computers should have no expectations of privacy, as all computers are in view of other patrons and staff. Likewise, however, library patrons are asked to respect the privacy of computer users by not gawking at or commenting on what others are viewing or accessing.

--cost for printing will be \$.25/page for black and white and \$.50/page for color.

Misuse or abuse of any of the policies and guidelines listed here may lead to suspension or termination of library privileges. The first violation will result in a warning; the second violation will result in a loss of privileges for a week. Succeeding violations will be dealt with more severely. The Colchester District Library reserves the right to limit, refuse, and/or ban any patron from using the library equipment and computers.