

## **GARFIELD COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT INTERNET USE POLICY**

Public access to the Internet is available to all users of the Garfield County Public Library District (the Library) on selected computers and wireless throughout the Library system. The Library is making the Internet available to the public as an information, recreation and educational resource in support of our role as this community's information and lifelong learning center. The Library is guided by a commitment to access to information policies that provide appropriate protections to its users while recognizing the Library's longstanding commitment to the principles of free expression set forth in the United States Constitution.

The Library is in compliance with C.R.S. 24-90-601 et seq., of the Colorado Revised Statutes which requires installation of filtering software for the protection and safety of minors on all public access computers provided by the Library. C.R.S. Sec. 24-90-602 et seq., defines a minor as anyone under 17 years of age. Upon request, and without significant delay, an authorized library staff member will temporarily disable the filter for an adult or a supervised minor for bona fide research or other lawful purpose. However, temporary disabling of technology protection measures is not allowed in connection with library computers located in areas used primarily by minors.

The Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from its connections to the Internet. The Library makes no guarantees, either expressed or implied, with respect to the quality or content of the information available on the Internet. Not all the information available via the Internet is accurate, current or complete. Users are encouraged to be good information consumers by evaluating the validity of information accessed via the Internet.

Users are cautioned that ideas, points of view, and images can be found on the Internet which are controversial, divergent and inflammatory. The provision of access does not mean or imply that the Library endorses or sanctions the content or point of view of any of the information or commentary which may be found on the Internet.

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.

### **Child Safety on the Internet**

The public library, unlike schools, does not serve in *loco parentis* (in place of a parent). Librarians cannot act in the place of parents in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. The responsibility for what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents or guardians.

The following are recommended guidelines for parents and guardians to ensure that children have positive online experiences, whether at home or in the Library.

- Use the Internet as a family. Join your children in Internet exploration.
- Explore the wide range of available information and tell your children about sites you consider inappropriate for them.
- Encourage children to use sites recommended on the Library's homepage and counsel them to avoid sites you consider unsuitable.
- Provide guidelines for your children on the amount of time they spend online, just as for television viewing.

- Instruct children NEVER to give out personal information (name, address, password, telephone number, credit card number) online.
- Teach children to be good online consumers. As with print information, consider the source, date, and accuracy of online information.

As it does with other library resources, the Library will provide training, *as time allows*, on electronic resources. It will also make information available to help parents and guardians in their efforts to exercise their rights and responsibilities regarding their own children's use of electronic resources.

### **User Responsibilities**

All users of the Internet are expected to use this library resource in a responsible and courteous way, consistent with the purposes for which it is provided, and to follow all Internet-related rules, regulations and procedures established for its use including, but not limited to, those of the Library. Responsible, courteous use of the Internet includes:

- Recognizing that the Internet, like all of the Library's information sources, must be shared and used in a manner which respects the rights of others and refrains from activities that prevent others from using it.
- The Library's computers are located in public areas shared by Library users of all ages, backgrounds, and sensibilities. Individuals are asked to consider this when accessing the Internet. Computer users may not display, send, or receive sexually explicit images. In addition, users may not display, send or receive materials which could be construed to constitute harassment of the Library's users or staff. Such material may include profanity and threatening, harassing or obscene material in text or graphic. (See US Code, Title 18, Part I, Chapter 110, Sec. 2252 and CRS 18-7-502).
- Using the Library's Internet resources for educational, informational and recreational purposes only.
- Refraining from using the Library's Internet resources to conduct a business or commercial enterprise, or engage in commercial activity such as the distribution of advertising.
- Obey all applicable laws regarding copyright or licensing. The U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of "fair use." Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including electronic mail, text images, programs or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user. The Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.
- Respecting the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself as another user; by not attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others; and by not seeking disallowed access to any computer system via the Internet.
- Refraining from damaging or altering the setup of the equipment used to access the Internet at the Library.
- Refraining from altering or damaging software or data residing in the Internet.
- Refraining from practices that interfere with fair and public use of the Internet and its users. These practices include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - o Hacking (breaking into or out of any system)
  - o Spreading computer viruses

Actions that violate local, state or federal law will be prosecuted.

- The Library is not responsible for any loss or damage to user's data or media due to hardware, software, or electrical failure, breaches of security, theft, or any other occurrence while the user is utilizing the Library's equipment or Internet access.
- Users accessing the Internet through the Library's wireless technology are bound by the same provisions described in this policy.

### **Public Internet Computer Use Rules**

The Library provides computer workstations with full Internet access in all its community libraries. Decisions on the number, placement, and type of computer workstations at each site are based on considerations of demand, staff capacity, available floor space, electrical/cable access, and budgetary constraints.

The following rules and procedures govern the use of Internet workstations:

- a) Your Library card is required to log onto an Internet workstation. If all computers are full, users must reserve a computer at the circulation desk. Advance reservations are not available at this time.
- b) Temporary guest cards are available at the circulation desk to users who are unable to obtain a Library card. Guest cards are not available to Library card holders whose accounts are not in good standing.
- c) Sessions are limited to 30 minutes unless no one is waiting. Time may be extended until a reservation is made by another user.
- d) Users needing additional time will be assessed by Library staff on a case-by-case basis.
- e) You must accept the Library Internet policy before using the computer. Failure to accept the policy will result in loss of reservation.
- f) Shared use of workstations: No more than two persons may share the use of an Internet workstation at the same time. Study group accommodations may be made with staff.
- g) Marmot Library Catalogs (On-Line Catalog Workstations): Some workstations are designated for use of the Library catalog only. These workstations are not available for general Internet use.

### **Compliance with the Library Policy and Guidelines**

In addition to this specified policy, general guidelines for the use of all public-access computers govern the use of the Internet in the Library. Violation of the policies and regulations that govern the use of the Library's Internet resources may result in suspension or loss of the privilege to use these resources. Illegal activity involving the Library's Internet resources will be subject to prosecution by the appropriate authorities.

The Library reserves the right to end any computer session at any time, for any reason.

The Library also reserves the right to deny any use of equipment for any reason or if Library policies and procedures are not followed.

The Library reserves the right to revise its Internet use policy at any time and without written notice.

### **Staff Assistance**

Computing resources at the Library are self-serve. When time permits, staff will be available to answer specific questions about computer applications and Internet searching.

**Approved by the Board of Trustees August 7, 2008**