



Northport-East Northport Public Library

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COMPUTER USE POLICY

The Board of Trustees of the Northport-East Northport Public Library recognizes that computers are essential research and educational tools in carrying out the library's mission to facilitate and encourage the unrestrained pursuit and exchange of knowledge, experience and opinion. The Internet offers access to many valuable local, national and international sources of information. However, it is a fluid environment with the content and format of information constantly changing. Some information on the Internet may be inaccurate, incomplete, dated or offensive to some individuals.

A knowledgeable information consumer must evaluate the validity and appropriateness of information found. Every library user benefits from expanded access to information beyond the walls of a library.

CHOOSING AND EVALUATING SOURCES

The library user is responsible at all times for the appropriate use of library computers and the Internet. Library computers and the Internet are an extension of the reference and research function of the Northport-East Northport Public Library. The professional role of librarians is in selecting resources in accordance with community standards. The Internet is a series of communication linkages leading to a highly diverse array of information content. The library user is cautioned to use the Internet at their own risk. Beyond this, the Northport-East Northport Public Library is not responsible for the content of the Internet, changes in content of the sources to which the home pages link or for the content of the sources accessed through secondary links. As with any reference source, the library user must ultimately determine the accuracy and appropriate use of the information obtained.

ACCESS BY MINORS

Parents or legal guardians, not the Library or its staff, are responsible for library computer use and the information selected and/or accessed by their child. Library users under eighteen years of age require a parent's or legal guardian's signature on the Library Card Application for general Internet access on library computers and library devices. Parents or legal guardians may select Access Level 3 for general Internet Access, Access Level 2 for restricted Internet access, or Access Level 1 for restricted Internet access with adult supervision. Guest library users who are minors are limited to restricted Internet access. Computers for use by children are located in the Children's Room. Computers for use by patrons having completed fifth grade and who are not yet eighteen are available in the Teen Area. Despite these filters, the Library is still not responsible for the webpages accessed by any patrons, minors or otherwise.

Parents and legal guardians are strongly encouraged to discuss safe online behavior with their children and set safety guidelines. Minors should be made aware of the various safety concerns including the dangers of interacting with strangers on the Internet, disclosing personal information online, conduct that is inappropriate or illegal, and the types of content the parent or legal guardian feels is inappropriate.

RULES GOVERNING USE

- Use of the library's Internet access, both wired and wireless, indicates agreement with the Northport-East Northport Public Library's Computer Use Policy.
- The New York State Legislature, in enacting New York's obscenity laws and numerous courts when interpreting such laws, recognizes the existence of community standards when defining what material is obscene or of a sexually-offensive nature. The Library Board of Trustees seeks to place reasonable restraints on the public display or distribution of certain materials, which, in their opinion, lack literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.
- The Northport-East Northport Public Library has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Not all sources provide accurate, complete, or current information. Library users may find some material controversial or inappropriate.
- Library users may not display, print, transmit or distribute threatening material; expressions of bigotry, racism, or hate; obscene or sexually explicit material; or material protected by trade secret.
- The Northport-East Northport Public Library is guided by the following American Library Association and their Intellectual Freedom Committee's statements on access to information: *The Library Bill of Rights*, *The Freedom to Read*, Interpretations of the *Library Bill of Rights*.
- Library users may not attempt to modify or gain access to files, passwords or private data belonging to the Library or others.
- Library users must respect the privacy of other patrons using public access workstations and not interfere with their use.
- Refer to the Library's Policy on *Confidentiality of Library Records* for additional points on each user's right to privacy with respect to information sought or received and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired.
- Library users must safeguard their own passwords at all times, and Patrons should log off to a point that requires a new logon or, when available, lock their desktop before leaving a computer unattended. Passwords should not be shared with anyone.
- The Library's wireless network provides general Internet access. The parent or legal guardian of a minor, not the Library or its staff, is responsible for the sites and resources the minor can access using the Library's wireless network.
- The Library assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment or for wireless device configurations, security, or data loss resulting from connection to the library's network.
- The library's wireless network is not secure. Information sent from or to your wireless device can be captured by anyone else with a wireless device and the appropriate software.
- The Library does not guarantee that library users will be able access the Internet through the Library's wireless network using their own device. Library staff may provide basic assistance, based on staff availability.
- Any use of the Library's computers and network resources for unlawful purposes is prohibited.
- Library users shall not copy or illegally download copyrighted materials including, but not limited to, music, movies, tv shows, and software and must agree to abide by copyright law.

- Creation or installation of any virus or destructive program is prohibited.
- Library users are not permitted to change, add, or remove hardware or software from Library computers. Tampering or altering library equipment or software is prohibited. Attempting to circumvent security or gain unauthorized access to any host, network, or computer located in the library or elsewhere is prohibited. Patrons shall not interfere with normal service of any host, network, or computer by intentionally crashing, disrupting, or overloading its operation.
- Library staff may provide basic computer instruction to individual patrons, based on staff availability. The Library does not assume any responsibility for any damage to a library user's hardware, software, or data.
- Library computers are intended to be used by one person at a time. If necessary, two people may sit together and work on the same computer as long as they do not disturb others.

The Board of Trustees of the Northport-East Northport Public Library reserves the right to change this policy at any time and you are advised to check with the library periodically for any changes. Your continued use of the library's computers and network resources will constitute your acceptance of such changes. The Library also reserves the right to terminate a patron's use if that individual is in violation of this policy.