

## The Putnam Public Library Internet Use and Safety Policy

The Putnam Public Library serves the needs of the community by providing free access to a diversity of ideas, information and experiences with the goal of promoting the love of reading, the joy of lifelong learning, and engagement with the arts, sciences, and humanities.

In order to be responsive to the above mission statement, the Putnam Public Library shall provide access to the Internet through computer workstations and wireless service. This policy is designed to promote access to the Internet while protecting children from exposure to inappropriate material. Since computers are located in public areas of the Library, what is displayed on the monitor or sent to a printer should not be considered confidential. Putnam Public Library is committed to providing an environment free from sexual or any other harassment. Patrons may not display any materials on computer screens and/or printers that would be inconsistent with such an environment.

### Computer Usage

Library workstations are intended for the informational, recreational and educational use of library patrons. Parents or guardians, not the library or its staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected or accessed by their children. Parents and guardians are advised to supervise their children's computer use. To assist parents, the Library will provide Internet safety resources that address privacy, security, and safety issues. Patrons must use their own library card or a guest card. It is not acceptable to use the internet for any purposes which violate U.S. or State Laws, to transmit threatening or harassing materials, or engage in any of the following:

- a. Viewing sexually explicit and/or obscene and/or potentially offensive images, graphics, and/or material harmful to minors.
- b. Accessing, viewing or disseminating child pornography.
- c. Harassing, libeling, or slandering of others.
- d. Destruction of or damage to the equipment, software, or data belonging to the library or other users. Downloading or installing software onto library computers is forbidden.
- e. Any illegal activity.

Unauthorized access to the Library's computers, databases, network, hardware or software settings is prohibited. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, inappropriate network usage includes: unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking' and other unlawful activities; and unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and dissemination and viewing of obscene visual depictions, child pornography, and/or other materials harmful to minors.

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging and other forms of direct electronic communications.

### Copyright Infringement

U.S. copyright law prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials. All responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user. The library disclaims any liability of responsibility resulting from such use. Downloading or distributing unauthorized copies of copyrighted motion pictures or music constitutes copyright infringement under U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17, U.S. Code Section 106(3).

## **Internet Filtering**

The Library's Internet connection is provided by the Connecticut Education Network which receives funding from the Universal Service Fund. In order to receive this federal funding, the network must follow the guidelines in the Children's Internet Protection Act. Therefore we have installed filtering software on all computers with Internet access. Library users 18 and over may request that a staff member disable the filtering software for bona fide research, or other lawful purposes without significant delay.

## **Implementation and Practices**

Access will be limited to one hour per day. Two additional hours may be given at the discretion of library staff.

Computer use information:

- a. All files and search history are deleted from library computers at the end of each day.
- b. Users are expected to have basic Internet knowledge, as staff cannot offer lengthy personal instruction.
- c. Users are expected to be courteous and quiet to avoid disturbing people using other library resources.
- d. Although the staff of the Putnam Public Library will enforce its Internet Policy, it does not assume a separate responsibility for monitoring or controlling access to the Internet or the content of material available or accessed through the Internet.
- e. As with most wireless hotspots, transmitting personal information, such as credit card numbers and passwords, is not recommended. Internet users who release public information do so at their own risk. Anything accessed or entered on the library's public access Internet computers is not secure and may be accessible to others. The library is not responsible for any information that is compromised, or for any damage caused to your hardware or software due to electrical surges, security issues, or consequences caused by viruses or hacking. There is no firewall for this service. Your laptop must have appropriate virus protection.
- f. Audio files should be listened to only through headphones, which are available at the circulation desk.
- g. Printing is not available through the wireless connection at this time. Patrons may forward emails to a library email address to be printed (limit 50 black and white, 25 color). Only cash is accepted as payment and documents will not be printed unless the patron is in the library.

## **Enforcement**

Use of the library's public access internet workstations in violation of the policies and practices set forth herein, or for an illegal purpose, or in a manner that is detrimental to the functioning of the library and its other services may be enforced by denial of use, suspension of library privileges, or referral to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

## **Modification of Policy**

The Putnam Public Library reserves the right to modify this policy at any time. This policy was adopted with reasonable public notice and after at least one public meeting or hearing.

Adopted by the Putnam Public Library Board of Trustees on February 26, 2024