Internet Use Policy

In response to advances in technology and the changing needs of the community, the Hopkinton Town Library develops collections and services that meet the informational, recreational, and educational needs of our diverse community. It is within this context that the Library offers access to the Internet.

Responsibility of Users

The freedom to access information is also a responsibility. The Internet enables the Library to provide resources not available within the confines of its own collection. However the Internet is an unregulated medium. It offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, but it also enables access to some material that may be offensive and/or illegal. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information. Internet resources are not subject to the same selection criteria which the Library uses for other materials. Be a selective consumer, questioning the validity of the information you find.

Library staff will be available to provide assistance and to help identify appropriate sites for children exploring the Internet, but the Library also upholds and affirms the right and responsibility of parents to determine and monitor their children's use of all Library materials and resources. Library users, whether children or adults, are the final selectors in using the Internet and are responsible for their individual choices and decisions.

Staff Assistance

Library staff is available to assist you in your use of these resources, but may not be familiar with every application you might wish to use. In all cases, we will try to assist you in accessing the Internet, offer searching suggestions and answer questions. The staff regularly provides Internet training for individuals. Books about the Internet are available in the library's circulating collection.

Guidelines for Use

1. Patrons under the age of 18 must have a parental permission slip on file at the reference desk. Inquire at the Reference Desk for more information.

2. Library computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis with one exception. One computer is reserved for short-term use only which is defined as 15 minutes or less. Although there is no time limit placed on use of other computers, you must make any computer available to others who are waiting when asked to do so by library staff.

3. The Internet access computers are available during hours when the Library is open, subject to periodic maintenance and staff use.

4. Wireless Internet access is available in the library to individuals with laptop computers or other mobile devices. Inquire at the Reference Desk for more information.

5. To help prevent computer viruses, personal software programs may not be used at the Internet access computers.

6. Information may not be downloaded to the hard drive of library computers. Patrons may download to their own USB storage devices. Although we use anti-virus software on the Library's computers, this will not completely protect your data. Software downloaded from the Internet may contain a virus and you need to have virus-checking software on your computer. The Library is not responsible for any loss or damage to storage devices when downloading.

7. **Printing:** Each printed page (whether you intended to print it or not) is 10 cents per page. Pick up and pay for your printouts at the Circulation Desk.

8. Internet sites you wish to visit may not always be available due to heavy traffic. The database or resource may be licensed to a particular institution, the host computer may have changed its address or closed down, or the Library's Internet connection may be periodically and temporarily inoperable due to technical difficulties.

9. Please do not attempt to tamper with the computer settings. Misuse of the computer or Internet access may result in loss of your computer privileges. Your use of the computer should not infringe upon the rights of others.

10. Email: The Library does not offer electronic mail accounts. Web-based email is available through several different sites including www.google.com (gmail) www.hotmail.com and www.yahoo.com. Ask staff for details. Patrons may access their email if they know the Internet address, user name, and password of their private accounts.

11. Any items ordered via the Internet must be paid for with a personal credit card. The Library assumes no financial responsibility and does not guarantee the safety of any online transaction.

12. Ethical Use: Internet computers may only be used for legal purposes. Unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to: harassment of other users; libeling or slandering other users; destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the Library or other users; disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications; or unauthorized copying of copyright-protected material.

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