

## **Dighton Public Library's Internet & Computer Use Policy**

### **Statement of Principles**

The Dighton Public Library offers free Internet access to be used for educational, informational and recreational purposes. The Internet is an unregulated global entity which is highly diverse and ever-changing. By providing access to it, the library is opening a gateway to information that exists beyond the physical collection and is broader than its traditional practice of selecting materials and specific services. Users are encouraged to take advantage of the Internet and exercise good judgment and discretion in their use of it.

In accessing the Internet, library patrons should understand:

- Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. Patrons should question and validate the information found there. As the Internet is global in nature and unregulated, some individuals may find content that is unreliable, personally offensive, distasteful, controversial or inappropriate.
- The Dighton Public Library upholds the right of confidentiality and privacy for all library users. Users are urged to respect the sensibilities of others when they access information that may be reasonably offensive to someone else. However, absolute privacy for patrons using electronic resources cannot be guaranteed
- Unlike printed sources, graphics on the computer screen can be viewed by anyone in the surrounding area, and displaying of indecent objects or pictures could be in violation of State<sup>1</sup> and Federal<sup>2</sup> obscenity laws. While staff cannot monitor, control or restrict anyone's access to the range of information available, the library has the authority to ask users to refrain from viewing these images or end an Internet session when such material is displayed. (Violations of local, state and federal laws will not be tolerated.)

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 272, Massachusetts General Law

<sup>2</sup> Title 18, Part I, Chapter 71 of the U.S. Code

- The Dighton Public Library endorses the American Library Association's Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software in which "...the use of filtering software by libraries to block access to constitutionally protected speech violates the Library Bill of Rights."

### **Internet Use for Children**

- It is recommended that Children use the Internet on the computer in the Children's Room. Children under the age of 8 must be accompanied by an adult.
- In order to facilitate a child's use of the Internet, the Dighton Public Library has put together web resources for children that are balanced, age appropriate, with a clearly stated authority and mission, reliably updated and consistently available.
- The Library does not have the authority or responsibility to act in the place of the parent. Parents or legal guardians, not the library or its staff, are responsible for deciding what library resources are appropriate for their own children and in accordance with their family's beliefs. Parents and guardians are responsible for advising their children on the dangers of providing personal information to strangers through chat rooms, instant messaging and email.

## **Internet & Computer Acceptable Use Policy**

In order to maintain a safe and comfortable library environment, the Dighton Public Library highlights the following User Responsibilities:

1. To limit computer use to two hours per day.
2. To respect the privacy of people around them.
3. To use personal accounts and information on public computer workstations at their own risk and with caution.
4. To use the Internet in a legal and responsible manner. Unauthorized, illegal or unethical usage is not tolerated. It includes:
  - a.) Accessing materials that are obscene, pornographic, child pornography, "harmful to minors" or is otherwise inappropriate.
  - b.) Tampering with, compromising, "hacking" or bypassing library security software or programs installed on the computers.
  - c.) Sending spam, cyber-bullying or harassment of others.
  - d.) Breaking copyright laws and licensing agreements.

Upon entering the pin for Internet and Computer access, distributed by library staff, the user acknowledges receipt and understanding of the Dighton Public Library's Acceptable Use policy.

Any patron who misuses or damages equipment may result in loss of computer privileges at the discretion of the Library Director, and may be required to assume the cost of repairing and/or replacing damaged equipment.

Displays of the above behaviors will be addressed in the following manner:

- First violation: Initial warning will be given, along with copy of Internet Use Policy Statement and Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Second violation: Library privileges suspended for a month.
- Third violation: Library privileges suspended for a year.

Illegal acts involving Library computing resources may also be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

The Dighton Public Library Board of Trustees will review the Internet Policy Statement and Acceptable Use Policy annually to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the community in a fast growing technological environment.

Approved by Dighton Public Library Board of Trustees, May 12, 2011

Revised by the Dighton Public Library Board of Trustees, June 12, 2014