

Internet and Public Computers

New Buffalo Township Library is a forum for all points of view and adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the Library Bill of Rights formulated by the American Library Association and endorsed by its Board of Directors.

New Buffalo Township Library's Internet Safety Policy is designed to promote access to the Internet while protecting children from exposure to inappropriate material, as well as the public from unlawful access to and use or disclosure of personal information, and unauthorized access to legally restricted areas.

The purpose of the Internet Safety Policy is to prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; to prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information; and to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Filtering

In compliance with CIPA, the Library filters all its computers, and all access to the Internet through its network, to protect against access to obscene visual depictions, child pornography, and/or other material harmful to minors, as required by law.

The filter may unintentionally block sites that have legitimate research value and fail to block objectionable content. Users should be aware that Internet filtering software installed for CIPA compliance should not substitute for individual judgment and/or parental involvement and oversight.

As the law requires, the Library will disable filtered Internet access to persons 18 or older who request it for bona fide research or any other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

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

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and (c) dissemination and viewing of obscene visual depictions, child pornography, and/or other materials harmful to minors.

Education, Supervision and Monitoring

The Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and caregivers to monitor and determine their children's access to library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet.

Parents or caregivers are responsible for the Internet information selected and/or accessed by their children. Children, defined as individuals under 18 years of age who use the Internet unsupervised may be exposed to inappropriate or disturbing information and images. Parents are encouraged to discuss the use of the Internet in relation to family values and boundaries with their children and teens and to monitor their children/teen's use of the Internet.

A minor who does not have written consent of a parent or legal guardian to use the Internet will only be allowed to use it in the presence of his/her parent or legal guardian.

Individual computer stations maybe designated for special use by staff or patrons at the discretion of the library director or designated staff. Special use may include homework or research and take precedence over other forms of computer usage.

Public Access

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.

Internet access in the library is available on computers that are located in open public areas and are subject to supervision. The Staff may assist computer users in getting started on the Internet. However, the Library cannot guarantee that Internet-trained Staff will be available to assist users at all times when the Library is open. The Staff is not able to offer extensive explanations about the Internet or personal computer use or provide in-depth training. Time permitting, the Staff will try to answer specific questions and offer suggestions for effective searching. The Staff can also provide information, training opportunities, books and manuals. The Library reserves the right to engage in monitoring activities, both electronic and non-electronic, at its sole discretion and without further notice unless otherwise restricted by law. Such practices may include, but are not limited to, those for the purpose of monitoring the nature and quality of our services, and the security and the conduct of people on our premises.

Disclaimer: New Buffalo Township Library makes no warranty, expressed or implied, for the timeliness, accuracy or usefulness for particular purpose of information accessed via the Internet. .

Internet procedures and computer usage

1. All patrons wishing to use a computer must sign up at the mConsole station using their full name. Computer sessions will start after the user agrees to the acceptable use policy on the sign in page. Use of computers is available to patrons on a first come, first-served basis and each computer will be assigned in order of sign-up time. To accommodate as many patrons as possible, sign up periods shall be limited to sixty (60) minutes per day. However, more time may be allowed if there are open computers. Users who must leave their computer for a short time should inform the staff to keep their time slot available. Users must log off when they are done using the patron computer.
2. All individuals under the age of 18 must use the computers stations in the teen or youth department. If a parent needs computer access and has a minor child under the age of 8 with them, they must use a computer in youth services so they can supervise their child. Any adult using public computers in the Youth Services area must be accompanied by their child, and must be mindful that children are present and view appropriate content.
3. Printing from computer stations is available. All print jobs will be processed at the circulation desk. Each page printed, good or bad will cost .10 cents each, .20 cents for double sided. For color or larger size print jobs, please refer to the copier pricing.
4. Patrons may use USB drives or CDs to store files. These devices must be free of viruses and are the sole responsibility of the owner. The library will not be responsible for any damage or loss of information on a patron's USB drive or CD.
5. Patrons do not have the authority to install programs or download programs on the library computers. Only designated library staff will be permitted to make changes or install computer software.
6. All computers, except the on-line catalog, will be turned off five (10) minutes prior to closing. Patrons signed in on computers are expected to have their tasks (printing, disk back-up) completed before closing time.