

## **INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE POLICY**

### **A. Purpose**

1. The Groton Public Library is committed to providing access to informational, educational, recreational and cultural resources for all library users. The Library provides access to the internet through library computers connected to the internet, and through wireless internet access during the hours that the library is open.
2. The internet offers access to a wealth of information that can be personally, professionally and culturally enriching. Because the internet is a vast and unregulated information network, it enables access to ideas, information, images and commentary beyond the Library's selection criteria and collection development policies.
3. Users are cautioned that ideas, points of view and images can be found on the internet which are controversial, divergent and inflammatory. The provision of access does not mean to imply that the Library endorses or sanctions the content or point of view of any of the information or commentary which may be found on the internet. Furthermore, because access points on the internet change, the Library cannot protect individuals from information and images which they might find offensive or disturbing.

### **B. Responsibilities of the Library**

1. The Library strives to maintain internet access via library computers, networks, and wireless access at all times the library is open. Short downtimes do occasionally occur, and will be announced ahead of time whenever possible. Library staff assist users with library computers, printers, library software, and general internet use. Library staff may be able to assist users with laptops, phones, e-readers or other wireless devices or answer software questions. Library staff also may direct users to library resources, internet resources, or training classes that can help users explore software or wireless devices.
2. Computer use information, as well as library cardholder information, is confidential. All files are removed and internet search history is deleted from library computers at the end of each day.

### **C. Responsibilities of Users**

1. Users should be aware that they are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages and sensibilities. Since staff cannot consistently and effectively monitor the public's use of the internet, individuals are asked to be sensitive of other's values and beliefs when displaying potentially controversial information or images on public computer screens.
2. All users of the internet are expected to use this library resource in a responsible and courteous way, consistent with the purposes for which it is provided, and follow all

internet-related rules, regulations and procedures established for its use including, but not limited to, those of the Library. Responsible, courteous use of the internet includes:

- a. Recognizing that the internet, like all Library information sources, must be shared and used in a manner which respects the rights of others and avoids activities that prevent others from using it. Time limits may be enforced during peak demand.
  - b. Refraining from the use of internet sounds and visuals which might disrupt the ability of other library patrons to use the Library and its resources.
  - c. Respecting the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself as another user.
  - d. Exercising caution in sharing personal information (name, address, password, telephone number, school or work, credit card number, etc.) on the internet. This includes but is not limited to email, instant messaging, online purchasing, social media sites, and commercial sites. The Library's internet networks are unsecure; the security of personal information shared on or with non-library sites cannot be guaranteed.
  - e. Evaluating internet sources for accuracy and completeness of information. Users must use the internet at their own risk, realizing that they may encounter material they find offensive.
3. People may only use the Library's computers and networks for legal purposes. Violations listed below may result in suspension or loss of the privilege to use these resources. Illegal uses of the library's computers or wireless networks may also be subject to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities. Illegal and unacceptable uses include:
- a. Harassment of other users or violation of their privacy.
  - b. Libeling, slandering or maliciously offending other users.
  - c. Violation of software licensing agreements. Patrons may not use their own software on library computers.
  - d. Overuse of system resources such as bandwidth.
  - e. Attempting to crash, degrade performance of or gain unauthorized access to the Library's or other computer systems and networks.
  - f. Damaging equipment, software or data belonging to the Library or other users.
  - g. Accessing, viewing or disseminating child pornography.

#### **D. Copyright Infringement**

1. Copyright law of the United States ([\*Title 17, U.S. Code\*](#)) protects created works (including email, text, music, videos, web sites, images, programs or data), and describes permissible and prohibited uses of protected works. The U.S. Copyright Office notes that

while “use of works may be permissible for criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research...the distinction between fair use and infringement may be unclear and not easily defined.” Except as permitted by fair use or other copyright exemptions, Groton Public Library internet users may not reproduce, display, or distribute copyrighted materials.

2. Downloading or distributing unauthorized copies of copyrighted motion pictures or songs constitutes copyright infringement under the [Copyright Act, Title 17 United States Code Section 106\(3\)](#). This conduct may also violate the laws of other countries, international law, and/or treaty obligations.
3. Any individual who engages in unlawful copyright infringement while utilizing internet services at the Groton Public Library will be personally liable for any such infringement and may be permanently barred from using the network.

#### **E. Filtering**

1. 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 our computers with internet access. Library users age 17 and over may request that a staff member disable the filtering software for bona fide research, or other lawful purposes.

#### **F. Child Safety on the Internet**

1. The Library supports the right of each family to determine appropriate internet use for their children and teens. Use of the internet presents an opportunity for each family to discuss sites and content they feel is appropriate or inappropriate. Responsibility for, and any restrictions of, a child’s use of the internet rests solely with his or her parents or legal guardians.
2. Computers in the children's area are for use by children through sixth grade, as well as their parents and caregivers. Computers in the teen area are for the use of teens in grades six through twelve.

#### **G. Obscene Images on the Internet and Child Pornography**

1. Library patrons shall not use the internet to view, print, distribute, display, send or receive images, text or graphics of obscene materials or materials that are harmful to minors. Library personnel may monitor patrons’ use of the internet to assure that library policies and procedures are being upheld. Failure to comply with this section will result in patrons being asked to leave the premises. Repeat offenders may be suspended and/or barred from the Library.
2. It is illegal for library patrons to use the Library’s internet access to view, print, distribute, display, or send or receive images, text or graphics that violate laws relating to child pornography; any such action will be reported to the proper authorities.

## **H. Print Management**

1. The Library employs a print management system that allows patrons to print on demand for a fee. Wireless printing is supported by the print management system.
2. The copyright law of the United States (*[Title 17, U.S. Code](#)*) governs the making of photocopies and other reproductions of copyrighted material. Patrons are responsible for any infringement.
3. *See Appendix A for the current fee schedule.*