

Carver Public Library Internet Access Policy and Guidelines

Internet Access Policy

The Carver Public Library welcomes the public to its Internet access. By providing access to the Internet, the library is making available a broader range of information than had been previously found in traditional library resources. Furthermore, the library, by offering this service, is acting as a neutral provider of information from all points of view. The Carver Public Library supports free and open access to the Internet for adults and believes that this is consistent with the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read*, and the *Freedom to View* as stated by the American Library Association and sanctioned by the Carver Public Library.

Information found on the Internet is not organized centrally by any one agency or author. Librarians do not select or restrict the information on the Internet. The information may be current or dated, accurate or inaccurate, and sometimes completely unavailable. Some material accessed electronically on the Internet may not meet the standards set by the Carver Public Library Materials Selection Policy. In some cases, the information sought will be more readily found in a book, magazine, or a CD ROM product. A librarian will be glad to direct the patron to the best source for his or her inquiry.

Using computers in the Library for illegal purposes is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, using the Internet in violation of the Massachusetts General Law 272 Section 31, the Harmful to Minors statute or for the transmission of threatening, harassing, defamatory or obscene materials. Failure to comply with a request from a Library staff member to abide by these rules will result in suspension from the Library or criminal sanctions. Viewing child pornography or attempting to use sexually explicit images to entice a child will be reported immediately to the Police.

Public Users' Security

Users should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information regarding users' activities. However, the library will not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public except as required by law or necessary for the proper operation of the Library.

Internet Policy for Children

Parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding which library resources are appropriate for their own children. Parents or legal guardians should guide their children in use of the Internet and inform them about materials they should not use. While the Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their children's access to Library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet, the Library has taken certain measures designed to assist in the safe and effective use of these resources by all minors.

To address the issue of access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet, including material that is harmful to minors, the Library:

- Develops and maintains special web sites for children and teens;
- Develops and provides training programs on safe and effective Internet use;
- Encourages staff to guide minors away from materials that may be inappropriate; and,

To address the issue of the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, as well as the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors, the library provides training programs and also urges minors to keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

- Instant Messaging software may not be used by minors.
- Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name, or telephone number.
- Let parents or guardians decide whether personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information should be revealed.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone via the computer without parents' or guardians' approval.
- Never respond to messages that are suggestive, obscene, threatening, or make one uncomfortable.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are.

To address the issue of unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online, minors and all other Library users are hereby advised that use of the Library's computers for hacking or any other unlawful activity is strictly prohibited.

Staff Assistance

Librarians will help the patron get started in accessing the Internet, but cannot provide in-depth training. They may be able to offer searching tips and answer some questions, however, staff assistance may be limited to five minutes. For patrons seeking more in-depth training, the Reference Librarian will offer regular classes in Internet instruction.

Rules for Using the Internet

1. The Internet is available to all Carver Public Library patrons who present a library card with a clear record.
2. Only two people may use an Internet workstation at one time.
3. Instant Messaging software may not be used by patrons under the age of 21.
4. Patrons will be allowed to use the Internet on a first-come-first-served basis for one-hour blocks.
5. Patrons may only use the Internet at workstations designated for Internet use; the Internet workstations will not be used for word processing.
6. Printing costs will be 10 cents per page, to be paid at the circulation desk.
7. Users of the Internet should recognize that the information gained through the Internet is not confidential. Patrons are advised that using an Internet workstation is done at their own risk.
8. Internet resources are for legal and legitimate uses only. Specific unacceptable uses are, but are not limited to:
 - tampering with icons, bookmarks, computer hardware or software
 - degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance
 - vandalizing the data of another user
 - gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities
 - invading the privacy of individuals
 - violating software license agreements and copyright laws
 - violating Federal, State or local laws
 - harassment of other users
 - libeling of other users
9. Violation of the above rules may result in the cancellation of the individual's computer privileges and may also be subject to prosecution by local, state and federal authorities.

Approved, Board of Library Trustees, October 14, 1999

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