Internet Safety & Network Policy

Adopted: 6/16
Revised: 10/26
Approved by: Library Board of Trustees

1. GENERAL INTERNET SAFETY

1. The Fenton Free Library (FFL) provides free public access to the Internet through Library computers and a wireless (Wi-Fi) network. The Library's goal is to expand access to information beyond its physical collection and, as a public access agency, to give anyone who wishes to use the Internet the chance to do so.
2. Library computers are available on site to library card holders. Visitors without a library card may use the computers after showing a driver's license or other form of identification. The Library Director, or staff acting on the Director's behalf, may set time limits and other rules for computer use.
3. The FFL does not select, monitor, or control the information available on the Internet. Some information may be inaccurate, outdated, misleading, or offensive to some individuals. This includes content created or altered with artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as AI-generated text, images, audio, and video. As with all library resources, patrons are encouraged to use their own critical judgment when evaluating information found online. Staff are happy to help patrons find and evaluate reliable sources.
4. The FFL assumes no responsibility for any loss, damage, or injury, direct or indirect, arising from use of the Library's computers, Internet access, or Wi-Fi, including loss of data, identity theft, invasion of privacy, and damage to personal devices.
5. Patrons may save documents and other non-program files to their own storage device, such as a USB drive, or to an online account. Files saved to Library computers are not backed up and may be deleted at any time. The Library is not responsible for viruses, malware, or loss of data on a patron's storage device.
6. Library staff supervise the public use of Library computers as part of their regular duties but do not routinely monitor what individual patrons view.

2. INTERNET FILTERING (CIPA)

1. To comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the FFL uses technology protection measures (Internet filters), provided through the Four County Library System (4CLS), on all Internet access provided by the Library, including Library computers and the Library's Wi-Fi network. The filters are designed to block visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors.
2. Filters are not foolproof. Due to technological limitations, they cannot block all potentially harmful or offensive content. Filters may also block access to legitimate or constitutionally protected information.
3. For the purposes of this policy and CIPA, a "minor" is any individual who has not reached the age of 17.
4. Adults (age 17 and older) may ask Library staff to disable or relax the filter, or to unblock a specific site, for bona fide research or any other lawful purpose. Patrons will not be asked to explain the reason for their request.
5. Any patron, including a minor, who believes a site has been blocked in error may ask staff to have the site reviewed. Staff will review the request and, if appropriate, ask 4CLS to unblock the site.

3. PRIVACY AND SECURITY

1. Records of patrons' use of Library computers and Internet services are confidential under New York State law (CPLR 4509) and the Library's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.
2. Library computers are shared, and information from one user's session may remain on the computer for the next user. Before leaving a Library computer, users are responsible for logging out of all accounts (such as email and social media), closing the browser, and deleting any personal files they saved or downloaded. The Library is not responsible for personal information left on a Library computer, or for

any loss of privacy resulting from use of Library computers or Wi-Fi.

3. Library computers are in public areas, and others may be able to see what is on the screen. To protect their privacy, patrons should not share passwords or financial information with staff when asking for help.

4. CHILDREN, PARENTS AND THE INTERNET

1. Parents and guardians have the sole right and responsibility to decide what is appropriate for their child. The FFL does not act in loco parentis (in the place or role of the parent). Parents and guardians are responsible for supervising their child's Internet use, whether on Library computers, Library Wi-Fi, or personal devices. Children who use the Internet unsupervised may be exposed to inappropriate or disturbing information and images. As stated in the FFL Code of Conduct Policy, children under the age of 11 must be supervised during Library visits, including while using Library computers.
2. The Library provides children's computers in the Children's Area. This computer offers educational learning activities only and does not allow Internet browsing. The Library's regular public computers are intended primarily for adults, or for children under adult supervision, and staff may direct unsupervised children to the children's computers. Library staff are also happy to help children, teens, and families find age-appropriate websites and information about staying safe online.
3. To address the safety and security of minors when using email, social media, messaging apps, online games, chat features, and other forms of direct electronic communication, the Library recommends that minors:
   - Ask a parent or guardian before sharing personal information online, such as their full name, address, phone number, school, photos, or location;
   - Keep passwords private and log out of all accounts when finished using a public computer;
   - Tell a parent, guardian, or other trusted adult if they see something online that is frightening, confusing, or makes them uncomfortable, or if someone online asks for photos or personal information or asks them to keep a secret;
   - Not respond to messages that make them feel uncomfortable, threatened, or pressured, and use blocking and reporting tools when available;
   - Be cautious of suspicious links, scams, and offers that seem too good to be true, and never share payment information or make purchases without a parent's or guardian's approval;
   - Remember that people online are not always who they say they are, and that not everything online is true. Photos, videos, and messages can be faked, including with AI tools; and
   - Never arrange to meet in person someone they have met online unless a parent or guardian approves and an adult goes with them.
4. Unauthorized disclosure of minors' personal information: The FFL will not disclose, use, or share personal identifying information about minors except as permitted by the Library's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and New York State law.

5. USER RESPONSIBILITIES

All users, including minors, must follow the FFL Code of Conduct Policy and are expected to use the Library's computers, Internet access, and Wi-Fi in a responsible and orderly manner. The following are prohibited:

a. Damaging equipment, software, or data;
b. Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to Library or other computer systems, including hacking;
c. Attempting to bypass the Library's filters or security settings, or changing the configuration of Library computers;
d. Downloading, installing, or running programs or personal software on Library computers;
e. Violating any legal agreement, such as software licenses;
f. Violating any federal, state, or local law, including laws on copyright, child sexual abuse material,

obscenity, fraud, and illegal downloading;

g. Harassing, threatening, bullying, or defrauding others, or sending spam or unsolicited advertising;
h. Intentionally displaying sexually explicit images in public areas of the Library, including on personal devices, where they may be seen by others, especially children;
i. Playing audio without headphones, or at a volume that others can hear; and
j. Engaging in activities that Library staff determine are disruptive to other patrons or to Library operations.

User responsibilities are not limited to the above and may be subject to change.

Violations of this policy will be handled following the Library Staff Procedure for Handling Code of Conduct Violations in the FFL Code of Conduct Policy. Patrons will be informed of the violation and asked to stop. Continued or serious violations may result in the loss of computer, Internet, or Wi-Fi privileges, or the withdrawal or suspension of library privileges by the Library Director or designee. Patrons may appeal a suspension as described in the Code of Conduct Policy. Illegal activity may be reported to law enforcement and may result in civil liability or criminal prosecution.

6. WIRELESS NETWORK ACCESS & USAGE

1. Free Wi-Fi is available to anyone using a laptop, tablet, smartphone, or other personal device, inside the Library and on Library grounds, at any time, including outside of open hours. The Wi-Fi password is available from Library staff. Visitors do not need a library card to use the Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi users on Library grounds, including the parking lot, must follow the FFL Code of Conduct Policy, including its rules on loitering and parking.
2. By using the Library's Wi-Fi, users agree to follow this policy and the FFL Code of Conduct Policy. All sections of this policy apply to Wi-Fi users.
3. The Library's Wi-Fi is a public network and is not secure. Information sent over it may be visible to others. Users should use caution when sending passwords, financial information, or other sensitive information.
4. Users are responsible for the security of their own devices, including antivirus protection and software updates. The Library is not responsible for any loss, theft, or damage to personal devices, or for any loss of data or information, while using the Library's Wi-Fi.
5. Staff may offer general help connecting to the Wi-Fi but cannot change device settings, troubleshoot, or repair personal devices.
6. Wi-Fi service is not guaranteed and may be interrupted, limited, or discontinued at any time. Signal strength varies in different areas of the building and grounds.

By adopting this policy, the FFL Board of Trustees authorizes the Library Director to acquire appropriate hardware and software to provide Internet access and other approved computer-based services, and to develop rules and procedures to carry out this policy.