

Johnson City Public Library Internet Access Policy

Mission Statement

Creatively connecting people, ideas, and community

Vision Statement

Johnson City Public Library will serve as a resource center to provide a wide range of both technical and traditional services that support the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of Johnson City and Washington County, providing open access to ideas and information for all residents.

Internet Access

The library provides access to the Internet to support the library's mission. Residents in the JCPL service area (Johnson City and Washington County) must access library computer services using a valid JCPL library card. Patrons with valid cards will not be denied access based on fines/fees amount. Patrons visiting our library from outside Washington County/Johnson City can access Internet resources upon showing appropriate identification at the service desks.

Due to high demand, users must comply with time constraints defined by the library in order to ensure equitable access to all users. Patrons are authorized to use their library card only and may not use the cards of others in addition to their own.

The Internet offers access to a wealth of information that can be personally, professionally, and culturally enriching. However, the U. S. Congress and the courts have recognized that there is no single organization to govern, control, or select information for the Internet. Along with much valuable information, the Internet also contains information which may be inaccurate, outdated, controversial, or offensive. Information access points may change rapidly and unpredictably.

Selection policies which serve to govern the library's purchase of materials are not applicable to material accessed electronically. The Johnson City Public Library cannot be held responsible for the content of the Internet as the library has no control over this vast array of informational resources. The library specifically disclaims any warrant as to the information's accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness, or fitness for a particular purpose. The library will have no liability for direct, indirect, or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed through the library's Internet service.

The library makes no guarantee of complete access to the Internet from any computer work station. Internet resources may vary according to the primary services supported in each area or department.

Library staff will apply the selection criteria outlined in the library's Collection Development Policy to provide access to a broad range of Internet resources through the library's web site. The library web site is designed to offer easy and convenient access to valuable local, national, and international sources of information. Users should recognize that the library is not responsible for changes in the content of linked sites. The library cannot prevent users from leaving the library's web site to access other Internet resources.

The library will not monitor a user's Internet session, except for length of time in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone. The library will not maintain records of patron Internet use. The library will make a good faith effort to purge all patron originated information left on library computers. Information transmitted and received on the library's public computers is by no means guaranteed to be protected from interception by other parties inside or outside the library. Users are cautioned that library computers are located in public areas where computer screens are visible to others, so they cannot be considered private. The user, or the parent/guardian of a minor user, is responsible for his or her Internet session at all times. Library staff reserves the right to ensure compliance with this Internet Policy.

Technology Protection Measures

The library will use filtering software or other technology protection measures on all library computers with Internet access in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000. Filters are required to prevent minors from accessing visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. The term "harmful to minors" is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 USC Section 254 [h] [7]) as meaning any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals;
- taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

The library makes no claim that its filtering software or any filtering software is foolproof. Filtering software diminishes the likelihood that users will inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive, but does not eliminate that possibility. Filters may block sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful. Users aged 18 and older may ask a library staff member to disable the filters for bona fide research or other lawful purpose.

The library will have no liability for damages related to the operation of, or failure of, the filtering software, or for its circumvention by users.

Internet Safety/Child Safety on the Internet

Parents/guardians, not the library or its staff are responsible for the Internet information accessed by their children under the age of 18. Parents/guardians should be aware that the only way to monitor their children's Internet use is for the adult to be present at the computer. Parents are reminded that filtering software is not foolproof. At all times, while using the library or its Internet access, children 10 and under must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or an adult caregiver.

Library Internet users, especially children, should use caution in their use of electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications, as these forms of communication can expose them to dangerous situations. Minors should never disclose personal information, such as name, address, school, and telephone number to strangers on the Internet, and they should not agree to meet people they have communicated with on the Internet without the permission of a parent or guardian.

User Responsibilities

All users of the Internet at the library are expected to use this resource in a responsible and ethical manner, consistent with the library's educational and informational purposes, and to follow all Internet related rules, regulations, and procedures established for its use including, but not limited to, those of the library.

Responsible use of the Internet at the library includes:

- Complying with the library's posted Code of Conduct
- Using the library's computers for library designated purposes only
- Not abusing or misusing library computers or any other equipment; changes are not allowed to the setup or configuration of the software or hardware
- Respecting intellectual property rights by making only authorized copies of copyrighted or licensed software or data residing on the Internet
- Respecting the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself as another user; by not attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others; and by not seeking disallowed access to any computer system via the Internet
- Not permitting someone else to use your library account or password to access the Internet
- Not altering or damaging software or data residing on the Internet
- Not deliberately creating or spreading computer worms or viruses
- Not compromising the safety and security of minors using electronic communications such as chat rooms and email
- Users are cautioned that some material is inappropriate for display in a public setting.
- Respecting the sensibilities of others when accessing potentially offensive information and images.

- Refraining from illegal or unethical use of the Internet, including the viewing of any material which depicts nudity, sexual contact, excess violence and which is harmful to minors per the Tennessee Code Annotated 39-17-911 (Appendix A)

Since software and information downloaded from any sources, including the Internet, may contain computer viruses, users are advised to utilize virus checking software on their home computers. The library is not responsible for damage to users' disks or computers or for any loss of data, damage, or liability that may occur from use of the library's computers.

Response to Violations

The user's access to the library's computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. The library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or that involves user behavior that violates this or any other library policy. Failure to comply with library policies may result in the temporary or permanent forfeiture of the user's privilege to access these computers or to use the library.

Procedures

The library staff will develop such supporting rules and procedures as are necessary to ensure the fair and reasonable use of library Internet access. This Internet Access Policy and a "Guide to Internet and Computer Use" will be available to users in the library and on the library's web site.

Review and revision of this Internet Access Policy

This Internet Access Policy including any attachments will be reviewed periodically, at least every three years, by the library staff and the library board. It may be revised only with the formal approval of the board.

**Approved by the Board of Directors
June 14, 2005**

**Revised by the Board of Directors
November 18, 2008**