

Westmont Public Library

Public Use of the Internet Policy

Purpose and Disclaimer

Westmont Public Library provides access to a broad range of information resources, including those available through the Internet. This service is made available as part of the Library's mission to serve people of all ages at all levels of need.

The Internet offers access to ideas, information and commentary from around the world that can be personally, professionally, and culturally enriching. However, not all sources on the Internet are accurate, complete or up-to-date, and some patrons may consider information obtained via the Internet controversial.

The Library assumes responsibility only for the information provided on its web site. Staff do not monitor, have no control over, and do not accept responsibility for material in other sources on the Internet.

The Westmont Public Library urges library patrons to be informed consumers and carefully evaluate information obtained via the Internet. Library staff may be available to assist patrons in making judgments about the reliability or currency of certain types of Internet information sources, but are unable to provide definitive analysis of particular sources due to the extremely large variety and volume of information available via the Internet.

By using the Internet services through the Westmont Public Library, users agree that the library will not be held responsible for

- any indirect, consequential, special, or punitive damages or losses which may arise in their use of the Internet, and
- the accuracy, appropriateness, or suitability of any materials or information retrieved, displayed, or printed.

Westmont Public Library tries to balance the rights of users to access different information resources with the rights of users to work in a public environment free from harassing sounds and visuals.

The library reserves the right to refuse to post or to remove any information or materials, in whole or in part, that, in its sole discretion, are unacceptable or in violation of its policies.

Copyright

U.S. copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of fair use. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including electronic mail, text, images, programs or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use. The library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through its electronic information systems, or any consequences thereof.

Library Patron Rights and Responsibilities

Library patrons have certain rights with respect to public use of the Internet. This library will work to preserve and protect these rights, subject to limitations imposed by licensing and payment agreements with database providers.

Library patrons have the right to confidentiality in the public use of the Internet to the extent possible given proximity of other patrons and staff, and multiple patron use of workstations. However, users of library Internet services should have no expectation of privacy while using the Internet in a public space.

Library patrons have the right to equitable access to library resources including computers and Internet access.

The Westmont Public Library requires that library patrons using the library computers, wireless networks and/or Internet do so within the guidelines of acceptable use. The following activities are unacceptable:

- Use of Internet in any way which violates a Federal or State law,
- Use of Internet for any purpose which results in the harassment of other users,
- Destruction of, damage to, or unauthorized alteration of the library's computer equipment software or network security procedures,
- Use of Internet in any way which violates licensing and payment agreements between Westmont Public Library and network/database providers,
- Unauthorized duplication of copy-protected software or violation of software license agreements,
- Violation of system security,
- Behaving in a manner that is disruptive to other users,
- Viewing pornography, which is considered by most to be inappropriate for a public setting where minors may be present.

Children and Public Use of the Internet

The Westmont Public Library supports the right of all library users to access information and will not deny access to the Internet based solely on age. However, this library recognizes that the Internet may contain material that is inappropriate for children. Library staff is unable to monitor children's use. Parents may disallow their child's access by informing library staff. Parents are expected to monitor and supervise their children's use of the Internet. Parents are encouraged to discuss with their children issues of appropriate use and Internet safety.

Responsibility and Authority of Staff

Library staff is responsible for implementing the Policy for Public Use of the Internet. Library staff is expected to take prompt and appropriate action to enforce the policy and are authorized to terminate an Internet session by anyone who fails to comply. Library staff may refuse to provide assistance to a patron if they believe that it will require them to view pornographic material on a computer display screen or in printed form, but then they must immediately request assistance from a supervisor, or person-in-charge.

Library staff may provide assistance to patrons in the use of library computers and/or the Internet as time and staff knowledge permits. Printed and online documentation and instructions are available at or near points of service. Formal instruction in particular aspects of the Internet and other electronic services may be available.

Library Procedures Relating to Public Use of the Internet

This library has developed procedures to assist staff and patrons in the equitable use of library computers and/or the Internet. These procedures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Time limits for access to allow use of resources by the maximum number of library patrons,
- Cost recovery for printouts and downloads using the library's computer equipment,
- Specific instructions for downloading including compliance with virus protection measures,
- Restrictions on the use of personal software on library computer equipment,
- Patron's agreement to abide by library policies and procedures,
- Parents or guardians must inform the staff if they wish to restrict the access for minors under the ages of eighteen (18) and in their care,
- No child under the age of eight (8) may be left unsupervised per the Policy on Unsupervised Children elsewhere in the Policy Manual.

Breach of Policy

Use of the Internet is a privilege and users are required to follow the Westmont Public Library's Policy for Public Use of the Internet and procedures as posted in the computer areas. Violations of the library's policy and procedures may result in the loss of access privileges and may also be subject to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities.

By using Internet services through the library, users agree to abide by the Policy for Public Use of the Internet adopted by the Westmont Public Library Board of Trustees. Copies of this policy are available upon request.

Relationship to Other Library Policies

The Policy for Public Use of the Internet is part of the library's overall policy structure and should be interpreted in conjunction with other existing policies. Copies of all library policies are available upon request from a library staff member.