



# Town of Dover Free Public Library

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## Internet Use Policy

**Adopted by the Dover Free Public Library Board of Trustees, September 11, 2008**

### **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Dover Free Public Library is to educate, inform, enlighten, enrich, and entertain. We are committed to:

- Providing all patrons with free and equal access to information in a variety of formats;
- Fostering lifelong learning, personal enrichment, and a literate society;
- Stimulating and encouraging interest in reading and learning among youth;
- Communicating and cooperating with area schools to aid students in developing research skills;
- Supporting and defending the principles of intellectual freedom, the Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read Statement.

The Library's overall vision is to remain a living and active contributor to contemporary Dover. The Library mirrors the past and present interests and needs of the community it serves.

### **Internet Access:**

The Internet, a worldwide network of computer networks is an essential medium for obtaining and transmitting information of all types. Therefore, public access to the Internet is germane to the Library's mission.

However, the Internet is an unregulated medium. It also provides access to information that is inaccurate, illegal or that some may find offensive or disturbing. The Library will identify on its web site specific Internet sites that have potential interest for Library users. But the Library cannot control a user's access to other Internet resources.

### **Time Restrictions:**

Each patron may access the OPAC (library catalog-only) and high-speed Internet-only terminals for a combined total of two hours each day. This access will take the form of two one hour sessions, which may be used consecutively, if no other patron is waiting to use the library's computers. No additional time for Internet use will be granted or provided. Patrons using OPAC terminals may request additional time; circulation staff may provide such access in thirty-minute blocks, provided no other patron is waiting to use the OPAC terminals.

### **Responsibilities of Library Staff and Users:**

In order to facilitate complete intellectual freedom, the Dover Free Public Library does not currently filter the Internet.

The Library staff will NOT monitor a user's Internet use, except for length of use in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone. The user, or the parent of a minor, is responsible for his or her Internet session at all times. (Minors are defined in this policy as

children and young people under the age of 18 years.) As with all Library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/guardians, NOT the Library or its staff to be responsible for Internet information selected and/or accessed by their minor children. Some materials may be offensive, disturbing and /or illegal. Parents who believe that their children cannot responsibly use the Library's Internet access are requested to monitor their children's Internet use.

The Library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or that involves user behavior that violates the Library's policies.

#### **Unacceptable Uses of Computers:**

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this policy are the following:

- 1. *Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law:*** Transmitting of offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading pornographic materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, users should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them. If needed a user may check copyright law regulation at [www.copyright.gov/](http://www.copyright.gov/)
- 2. *Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property:*** Engaging in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); uploading a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.
- 3. *Uses that jeopardize the security of access of the computer network or other networks on the Internet:*** Disclosing or sharing the user's password with others; impersonating another user; using one's own software programs on the library's computers; altering the Library's computer settings; damaging or modifying computer equipment or software.
- 4. *Uses that compromise the safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications:*** Minors under age 18: Giving others private information about one's self or others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers; arranging a face-to-face meeting with someone one has "met" on the computer network or Internet without a parent's permission.
- 5. *Uses that infringe or intrude upon on the rights of others:*** This includes invading the privacy of others, harassing other users or library staff.
- 6. *Uses that Violate Confidentiality of Information:*** The New Jersey Confidentiality of Library Records Law (NJSA 18A:73-43.2) prohibits unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information regarding Library users, including minors. Personally identifiable information about users may not be disclosed or used in any way, except to law enforcement authorities as provided in the law. Users should be aware, however, that due to the technical difficulties involved in providing absolute security, transactions and files may become public.

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:

(a) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; (b) 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; (c) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

The term obscenity as defined by Title 18 of the United States Code relating to obscenity follows a three-part test:

(a) whether "the average person, applying contemporary community standards" would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest, *Kois v. Wisconsin*, supra, at 230, quoting *Roth v. United States*, supra, at 489; (b) whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law; and (c) whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

### **Response to Violations**

The user's access to the Library's computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. A user violates this policy by his or her own action or by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Further, a user violates this policy if he or she permits another to use his or her access the computer network and Internet or falsifies his or name to obtain access. Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures will result in the forfeiture of the user's right to access these computers.

### **Other:**

While the Library endeavors to provide access to information of the highest quality, the Library specifically disclaims any warrant as to the information's accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness or fitness for a particular purpose.

The Library cannot be held responsible for the availability or lack thereof of any resources specifically those impacted by technical difficulty.

The Library is not responsible for printing costs or quality, nor must it allow or aid any other form of saving material called up or composed on its terminals. It may allow some terminals to be enabled for word-processing use.

The Library cannot be responsible for loss of digital information and will not assist in its recovery.

### **Resources:**

New Jersey State Library: Library Development Bureau  
The Newark Public Library Internet Use Policy  
United States Code  
United States Copyright Law  
Children's Internet Protection Act