

UXBRIDGE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY POLICY ON COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET ACCESS

--Voted unanimously by the Board of Trustees February 2004

In accordance with its mission, the Uxbridge Free Public Library endeavors to develop collections, resources, and services that meet the needs of all in the community. It is within this context that the Library offers access to the Internet.

The Library upholds and affirms that every individual is entitled to access to constitutionally protected material on the Internet. Because not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information, the Library encourages users to evaluate the validity of information found.

The Library supports the right to privacy and confidentiality of users in accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 180, Acts of 1988. The Library may ask users to refrain from displaying computer images that are inappropriate for public viewing. The Library will not tolerate use of its computers in a way that violates local, state, or federal law.

As with all materials available at the Uxbridge Free Public Library, parents and guardians are responsible for guiding their children's use of the Internet.

Internet users must abide by the Internet Use Guidelines.

The Uxbridge Free Public Library adheres to the principles expressed in the following documents of the American Library Association:

- Library Bill of Rights
- Free Access to Libraries for Minors
- Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: an interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

The Uxbridge Free Public Library's Board of Trustees and staff will evaluate the Library's Internet policies and procedures and make modifications as needed to insure equitable and safe access for all.

Uxbridge Free Public Library Internet Safety Policy and Procedures

- ◆ Protected free speech is different for adults and children. Certain categories are protected for adults but are deemed harmful to minors. Uxbridge Free Public Library allows open access to information only to the extent allowed by law. The Library strongly discourages all computer users from disclosing personal information.

- ◆ Adults 18 years of age and older are prohibited from using the computers in the Children's Library, except when assisting a child.
- ◆ Parents are encouraged to come to the library and use the Internet with their children. The Uxbridge Free Public Library supports the right of each family to decide what appropriate Internet use is for their children. A parent or guardian must accompany any child of age 7 or under who wishes to use an Internet computer.
- ◆ Children's Room Internet computers are sited so the librarians can assist children promptly and can easily monitor children's Internet activity.
- ◆ While the library protects children's rights to access all legal materials, Children's Room Internet computers are located in an area where other children can view the monitors. Staff reserves the right to determine what is acceptable for children to view in a public setting, in compliance with all applicable laws and library procedures.
- ◆ The Children's Room does not promote, endorse or provide links to any sites that include email accounts, chat or other direct communication.
- ◆ The Uxbridge Free Public Library prohibits all illegal activities on library computers. In the case of illegal activities taking place on Children's Library computers, parents will be contacted and the police will be involved.
- ◆ Since the introduction of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, websites are required to verify that children under 13 have parental permission when collecting personal information. Children using library Internet computers may not proceed with any activity online that requires parental consent, unless the child's parent is present and registers with his/her child.
- ◆ Children's Library staff encourages all children using Internet computers to develop a "screen name" and password to use for all sites that require log-in.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

All library users must observe the policies, rules, and procedures established by the Uxbridge Free Public Library.

Internet users must follow these guidelines:

- Recognize that the Internet, like all of the Library's information sources, must be used in a manner that respects the rights of others and must refrain from activities that prevent others from using it.
- Comply with intellectual property rights by making only authorized copies of copyrighted, licensed or otherwise-controlled software or data transmitted via the Internet.
- Respect the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself.
- Refrain from modifying or gaining access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others; and from "hacking" into any computer system.

- Adhere to posted time limits and sign-in procedures.

RESPONSIBILITY OF USERS

All Internet users are expected to use this resource responsibly and courteously. Users should be aware that they are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages and sensibilities. Users should refrain from the use of Internet sounds and visuals that might be disruptive to others.

No person shall use a library workstation in a way that disrupts or interferes with users, employees, or the operations of the Library. Maximum of two people allowed per computer at one time.

Library computers may NOT be used for:

- Any illegal activities including forgery, fraud, violation of copyright, or violation of the rights of third parties.
- Display of material from sites that may be deemed obscene and/or unlawful under federal or state statutes. (Massachusetts General Laws 27:28 et seq.)

Users may NOT:

- Damage equipment or alter the setup of computers, or degrade system performance.
- Use disks brought into the library.
- Alter or damage software, software settings, or data stored on computers.
- Install or run personal software.
- Set any bookmarks, links, or shortcuts.
- Make unauthorized copies of copyright protected materials
- Harass staff or other patrons, or engage in deliberately or maliciously offensive or defamatory activity
- Infringe on other patrons privacy or computer use
- Transmit threatening, harassing, or abusive language or images
- Deliberately propagate computer worms and/or viruses.
- Obstruct the work of others by consuming large amounts of system resources, by deliberately crashing any library computer system or by making any attempt to degrade system performance.
- Represent oneself as another person for purposes of fraud or other illegal activity.

Violations may result in loss of access.

ILLEGAL ACTS INVOLVING LIBRARY RESOURCES MAY BE SUBJECT TO PROSECUTION BY LOCAL, STATE, OR FEDERAL OFFICIALS.

The Uxbridge Free Public Library does NOT:

- Guarantee privacy or confidentiality.
- Guarantee access if connections fail or computer "freezes".
- Guarantee Internet information to be accurate, complete or current.
- Reserve specific time slots for computers; however, users can use signup stations and should monitor their places in the queue.
- Provide one-on-one patron assistance beyond a basic introduction.
- Take responsibility for damage to personal disks or other computers.

Computer users may:

- Print to a printer (10 cents for black and white, 25 cents for color).
- Use public access to the Internet for 30 minutes, up to 60 minutes a day.
- Purchase disks for a nominal fee at the desk for saving work.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Transaction logs, electronic mail, and other information that could link users with specific materials or subject matter are considered by the Library to be confidential and will not be divulged to anyone other than the user.

(Massachusetts General Laws 78:7) All users are advised that such records shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal or local government except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state, or local law relating to criminal, civil, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigatory power.

The Library resists the issuance or enforcement of any such process, order or subpoena until such time as a proper showing of good cause has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction.

The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 (P.L. 107- 56) supercedes state law and expands the federal government's authority for access to library records and documents to protect against international terrorism and clandestine intelligence activities. It also expands federal law enforcements' authorization to track telephone and electronic communication, including any dialing, routing, addressing, or signaling information and the actual content of the communication. This law prohibits library workers from informing you if federal agents have obtained records about you.

Uxbridge Free Public Library users may check their records and reserve materials online using their personal identification numbers. The Library may electronically transmit notices about materials and library announcements of a general nature. The Uxbridge Free Public Library does not collect information for commercial marketing.

SAFETY TIPS FOR USERS

Users should evaluate Internet resources just as they do print materials, questioning the accuracy and completeness of the information. Users may find that beyond the Library's web site and supporting documents they may encounter material they find offensive.

The Uxbridge Free Public Library supports the right of each family to decide what appropriate Internet use is for their children.

For a good Internet experience, be aware of the following:

1. Don't give out personal information like phone number, address, etc.
2. Be careful about meeting someone you have met online in person. Meet in a public place and let someone know where you're going.
3. Report harassing behavior to library staff and use good "netiquette" yourself.
4. Be wary of the information and advice you get online. Not all of the information on the Internet is accurate, appropriate, or unbiased.
5. Beware of moneymaking scams like pyramid schemes and chain letters.