

**LINCOLN CITY LIBRARIES
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA**

POLICY TITLE: INTERNET POLICY

PURPOSE: Lincoln City Libraries fosters the power of reading and provides open access to all forms of information to enrich people's lives every day.

The Library supports the entitlement of each individual to have access to lawfully available sites on the Internet and the right of individuals to make information decisions for themselves.

The Internet is a worldwide network of information accessible via computer. Its content reflects the diversity of human thought and experience. Provision of access to information on the Internet is consistent with the Library's mission to provide open access to all forms of information.

The content of the Internet is unpredictable and fluid. It changes frequently and its sources are limitless. The Internet is an unregulated medium that may include inaccurate, unlawful, and/or disturbing or offensive material, in both graphic and text form. Just as the Library does not vouch for or endorse the content or viewpoints in its collections, it is unable to vouch for the accuracy of information or endorse the various viewpoints accessed through the Internet.

Lincoln City Libraries has a tradition of providing a safe and welcoming environment. In order to provide a positive Internet experience, the Library will provide computers with Internet access that is equipped with filtering technology. Clearly marked computers equipped with filtering technology will be available at all library branches along with clearly marked unfiltered computers.

Filtering technology is imperfect. Filtered computers may allow access to disturbing or offensive material. The filtering software will also, at times, block access to Internet sites that the vast majority of users will regard as inoffensive. Library staff has reviewed filtering software currently available and has chosen what we believe to be the software that will best serve our patrons based upon a number of considerations, including quality and dependability.

IMPLEMENTATION: RESPONSIBILITIES OF LIBRARY STAFF WITH RESPECT TO COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET ACCESS:

The Library staff provides assistance to all patrons seeking information on the Internet pursuant to this policy. The Library also helps children and their caretakers make informed decisions with regard to its wide array of materials. Together, children, their parents and the Library staff can contribute to the most beneficial use of the Internet and other resources in the Lincoln City Libraries. In addition the Library provides a guide for parents and guardians with Internet safety tips.

Library staff will monitor Internet use sessions in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for all patrons; however, the Library assumes no responsibility for supervising any particular minor's¹ Internet use. Such responsibility remains with the parents/guardians.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LIBRARY PATRONS WITH RESPECT TO COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET ACCESS

Library patrons are encouraged to use and enjoy the Library's computers and access to the Internet for lawful purposes and in a manner consistent with the rules and regulations of the Library. Failure to obey the law and abide by the rules and regulations of the Library may result in a patron's computer and Internet access being terminated, exclusion from Lincoln City Libraries, and/or referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies. The following are deemed unacceptable uses of the Library's computers and Internet access:

- 1. Usage of the computer and/or Internet so as to violate the law.** Library patrons are forbidden from using the Library's resources, including its computers and Internet access so as to violate the law, including but not limited to: transmitting messages in violation of the law such as by disturbing the peace of another person or issuing terroristic threats; offering for sale or use any substance the possession of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading obscenity, material including child pornography, or materials that encourage others to violate the law; gambling or transmitting or downloading gambling paraphernalia or devices for the purpose of gambling or encouraging or assisting others in gambling; 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 materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.
- 2. Usage of the computer and/or Internet so as to cause harm to others or damage the property of others.** Engaging in defamation; uploading or transmitting 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 computers, networks, or information systems.
- 3. Usage of the computer and/or Internet so as to jeopardize the security of access of the computer network or other networks on the Internet or elsewhere.** 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 software.
- 4. Usage of the computer and/or Internet so as to compromise the safety and security of others.** Adult patrons² are not to give others private information about a minor, including home address, telephone number, credit card numbers,

¹For purposes of this policy, "minor" shall mean an unmarried person under the age of seventeen. Please note that local, state, and federal law may define "minor" in a different way in different contexts. This policy does not supercede any law and users are expected to know and obey the law in all respects while in Lincoln City Libraries.

²For purposes of this policy, "adult patron" shall mean a married person or a person seventeen years of age or older. Please note that local, state, and federal law may define "adult" in a different way in different contexts. This policy does not supercede any law and users are expected to know and obey the law in all respects while in Lincoln City Libraries.

social security numbers and other information which may enable a stranger to trace the minor (unless the minor is the adult patron's child). Adult patrons are not to arrange a face-to-face meeting with a minor the adult patron has "met" on the computer network or Internet.

Minors are not to give others private information about one's self or others, including home address, telephone number, credit card numbers, social security numbers and other information which may enable a stranger to trace the minor. Minors are not to arrange a face-to-face Meeting with someone the minor has "met" on the computer network or Internet. Minors are to exercise discretion and caution when communicating on the computer network or Internet, including the use of chat rooms and e-mail. Parents are encouraged to review Internet safety measures with their children and to supervise their minor children during use of the Library's computers and while accessing the Internet.

5. Usage of the computer and/or Internet so as to provide access by a minor to material which is inappropriate for a minor. Pursuant to federal law, the Library Board of the City of Lincoln has determined that "matter which is inappropriate for minors" is any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that is obscene, includes child pornography, or (a) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to the 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 lewd exhibition of the genitals; and (c) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

Adult patrons are not to assist or encourage minors to access matter on the Internet which is inappropriate for minors. Minors are not to use the Library's computers to access matter which is inappropriate for minors or to provide or encourage access by other minors to matter which is inappropriate for minors. Parents and guardians are responsible for the information selected and/or accessed by their children. Some parents may have a more restrictive view of what constitutes "matter which is inappropriate for minors." It is a violation of this policy for a minor to access material meeting the above definition of "matter which is inappropriate for minors;" however, parents or guardians may forbid their child from accessing other information as well. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to educate and guide their children with respect to information accessed via the Internet. Parents are encouraged to learn more about the Internet and provide appropriate guidance and supervision.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In general the Library will treat information displayed on its computers and/or printers as confidential. Requests for disclosure of information will be honored when required by local, state, or federal law or when required by Library policy.

Users should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information about users' activities. The Lincoln City Libraries system employs various measures to protect the security of its computing resources. Users should be aware, however, that the Library cannot guarantee security or confidentiality.

All Lincoln City Libraries computer systems are subject to monitoring to assure proper functioning of the systems, to provide security for the computer system's operation and information contained, to prevent unauthorized use, and to deter and investigate violations of law. There is no reasonable expectation of privacy in the use of this public computer system.

LIABILITY OF LINCOLN CITY LIBRARIES

Lincoln City Libraries makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of its computer networks and the Internet provided under this policy. Lincoln City Libraries shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages or costs (including attorney's fees) of any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any user or his or her parents or guardians, or any other person, arising out of the user's use of the Library's computer networks or Internet under this policy. By signing this Policy, user accepts full responsibility for his or her use and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Lincoln City Libraries and the City of Lincoln, its employees and agents, from any and all loss, costs, claims or damages resulting from the user's access to its computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through the purchase of goods or services by the user.

In the event of a user under the age of 17, where such user is unmarried, such user's parent or guardian shall sign this agreement in person before the Library Director or such person as the Library Director shall designate, whereby such parent or guardian accepts full responsibility for his or her child's use and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Lincoln City Libraries and the City of Lincoln, its employees and agents, from any and all loss, costs, claims or damages resulting from the user's access to its computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through the purchase of goods or services by the user.

The indemnifications agreed to herein shall survive the termination of this policy. This policy/agreement may be terminated at any time by Lincoln City Libraries.

Approved by Library Board: August 27, 2002
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