



ELECTRONIC RESOURCE USE POLICY

The Board of Trustees of the Hamilton East Public Library (HEPL) recognizes that freedoms of speech and expression are central to the successful maintenance of a free society and acknowledges the concepts contained in the American Library Association's Freedom to View and Library Bill of Rights statements. These rights extend to minors as well as adults. Access to information is a fundamental right of citizenship and helps guarantee an informed citizenry.

ACCESS

The Library's public computer stations are intended primarily for information gathering and exchange, education, and recreation. Access to Library computer systems is a privilege and requires acceptable identification and acceptance of the Computer Use Agreement. Activities considered acceptable in the use of the Library's computers include those that are:

- In compliance with applicable local, state and federal laws;
- In compliance with the policies of Hamilton East Public Library; and
- Respectful of the privacy of others.

WIRELESS ACCESS

The Hamilton East Public Library also provides public wireless access to the Internet. Patrons must provide their own computer and wireless network cards to connect to the public wireless hotspots. Technical support will not be available to users. Users of the wireless hotspots are subject to the terms of this policy.



The Library cannot guarantee the privacy or safety of data and communications while using either wired or wireless services. Patrons need to be aware that wireless networks are inherently insecure, and it is strongly recommended that patrons secure their computers with firewall software and data encryption.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In general, the Library will treat information stored on Library computing resources as confidential, whether or not that information is protected by the computer operating system. Responses to requests for disclosure of information will be governed by the Library's Privacy Policy.

When appropriate, patrons will receive prior notice of such disclosures. Viewing of information in the course of normal system maintenance does not constitute disclosure.

Patrons who use electronic mail systems should be aware that electronic mail in its present form cannot be secured and is, therefore, extremely vulnerable to unauthorized access and modification.

Patrons should be aware that information viewable from the computer screen by passing patrons should be considered unsecure.

INTERNET SAFETY

The Library provides access to many electronic resources, including the Internet, which contains a wide variety of material and opinions from varied points of view. Many web sites contain valuable and timely information; however, other web sites may contain material that is inaccurate, defamatory, illegal or offensive to some people.



In addition to the useful and educational information available on the Internet, a great deal of content exists that is not appropriate for children. The Library enforces the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), which includes measures to block or filter Internet access for both minors and adults to certain visual depictions that may be considered obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. In accordance with CIPA, no one under the age of 18 is permitted to access computer sites, chat rooms or e-mail containing obscene or sexually-explicit material harmful to minors.

While the Hamilton East Public Library attempts through filtering software to prevent direct access to materials that generally would not be acceptable in a public Library, it is impossible technically to prevent access to all objectionable resources. Filtering software also occasionally blocks acceptable sites; therefore, while the default setting for computers will be filtered, users age 18 and above may elect to disable the filter when logging on to use Library computers for legitimate research purposes. However, Library rules and restrictions as listed below apply at all times.

This option is not available for users who are minors. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of parents, stepparents, guardians or other adults accompanying minor children to monitor and guide their own children in the use of the Library computers and the Internet.

Filtering software will not be disabled for patrons using personal computers or devices while connected to the Library’s public wireless network, because HEPL staff is unable to monitor Internet usage on patrons’ personal devices.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

The use of Library computing resources is a privilege and is conditional. HEPL staff reserves the right to check all workstations for suspicious or inappropriate activity.



The following intentional actions are considered unacceptable and may result in loss of computer use privileges, Library privileges and/or prosecution by local, state or federal authorities in the case of illegal acts:

- Accessing, transmitting, uploading, downloading, or distributing material or language that is pornographic, abusive, defamatory, sexually explicit, obscene, child pornography, harmful to minors, or any material that is intended to annoy, harass or alarm another person;
- Engaging in any illegal activities using Library computers or networks;
- Vandalizing, damaging, modifying or disabling Library computers, networks, software, electronic resources or any Library property, including installing and/or modifying any software on Library computers;
- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to any computing, information, or communication devices;
- Copying of copyrighted or other protected material without proper authorization;
- Violating another person’s privacy; and
- Disrupting others' use of computer resources in any way.

In addition, and in accordance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act, minors (any person younger than 18 years of age) shall not disclose personal identification information on the Internet.

SANCTIONS

Violations of this policy will be handled as indicated in section 1.2 of the Library’s Public Services Policy Manual, “Acceptable Behavior Guidelines.”



LEGAL AND TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Patrons may save electronic files to removable media only, i.e. flash drives. The Library has removable media available for a nominal fee. Downloaded information may contain a virus, so patrons need to have virus protection software on their own computers.

HEPL is not responsible for damage to a patron's removable media or computer, for any loss of data, or any liability that may occur as a result of using the Library's computers or wireless network.

Approved by Hamilton East Public Library Board of Trustees—October 2012; revised June 2015; reviewed June 2016; reviewed June 2017; reviewed June 2018; reviewed 2019