Mendon Public Library Computer Use and Safety Policies

The Mendon Public Library is committed to ensuring access to information through technology. Access to digital information supports continuous lifelong learning. The Mendon Public Library offers public access to the Internet as a gateway to ideas, information and commentary from around the world. However, acknowledging that misuse of the Internet may result when the Library provides this service, the Mendon Public Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following policies to help provide a safe, secure environment for its patrons. These policies comply with the requirements of NCIPA and may be repealed, revised, or amended by majority vote at a regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees.

Section I - Library Policies

- The Mendon Public Library upholds and affirms the right of every individual to have access to constitutionally protected material on the Internet.

- Because the Internet provides easy access to a diverse array of resources and is an unregulated medium, the Library does not endorse the viewpoints nor can it vouch for the accuracy, authority, timeliness or usefulness of the information found on it. The library is not liable nor does it take responsibility for any information found on the Internet.

- There are many potentially valuable sources of information that are located throughout the Internet. Some resources and destinations contain material that some patrons may find offensive, or sites that are inappropriate for children. Also, there are sites that are inappropriate for viewing in a public setting such as the Library.

- The Mendon Public Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/legal guardians to monitor their minor children's use of library materials and resources, including Internet access through the library-owned computers or through Wi-Fi access. These policies are intended to provide guidance to the parent/guardian when supervising minors' use of the Internet. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their children's use of the Internet and to talk about their personal values and expectations for their children's use of this resource.

- Library staff members will answer questions and, as time allows, help users locate and use resources on the Internet. The library periodically offers computer training.

- Mendon Public Library users are advised that the Mendon Public Library cannot be held responsible for what patrons, including minors, may access via the library's computers or while using the Wi-Fi connection.

  - The Mendon Public Library Board will comply with the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act (N-CIPA) to the extent practical, by blocking access to visual

images that are defined by law as "obscene", "child pornography" or "harmful to minors"[1]

- To aid parents in providing a safe and secure environment, several websites exist to provide a framework for parents and children to access the internet.

- The Library is not responsible for financial obligations of an unauthorized purchase through any online connection. All transactions, files and communications may be subject to unauthorized access by third parties.

- The library will not be held responsible for the privacy and protection of personal information given over the Internet.

- Prohibited usage of library computers and personal equipment while on library property includes (but is not limited to):
  1. Unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities.
  2. Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.
  3. Accessing illegal visual images defined as "obscene" "child pornography" or "harmful to minors."
  4. Committing fraud, spreading libel or slander.
  5. Copyright infringement or plagiarism.
  6. Installing, deleting, modifying or making any attempt to damage library hardware, software or attached equipment
  7. Downloading software from the Internet onto the library's computers.
  8. Making any attempt to cause degradation of system performance.

- If the Internet is used illegally, police will be called and library staff will cooperate fully with police and legal officials.
- Free wireless Internet access is provided as an additional public service at the Mendon Public Library. When using this connection, patrons agree to abide by all Computer Use and Safety policies and Appendix III of this document.
- To provide the opportunity for the maximum number of people to access library workstations, the library shall reserve the right to establish daily time limits for computer usage.

Section II – Responsibilities of Patrons

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[1] See Appendix 1

- Library patrons may use the library computers for as long as it is required to complete their research. However, the library staff reserves the right to limit computer time if others are waiting.
- The computer usage at the Mendon Public Library is primarily for information retrieval. E-mail, chat rooms and instant messaging may only be accessed if there is one free terminal available for patrons to access information. If all terminals are in use, direct electronic communication may not be permitted.
- Patrons are expected to pay for all prints generated during their access time on the computer.
- If using sound, use headphones so as not to disturb others.
- Wireless users are responsible for configuring the wireless equipment connecting to the wireless network. Library staff cannot provide hardware or software support.
- Wireless users are responsible for the security of their own equipment.
- Patrons may not unplug library equipment to gain access to electrical outlets. Hazardous situations will be removed, as determined by library staff.

Section IV - Supervision and Monitoring

- Parents have responsibility for monitoring their children's activity in the library including Internet usage.
- Staff will supervise usage of computers in the library.
- If a questionable incident occurs, patrons are asked to calmly and immediately report it to a staff member.
- Procedures for the disabling or modifying of any filtering in use shall be the responsibility of the Librarian or designated representatives.
- The library does not guarantee that a wireless connection can be made or maintained.

Section V– Adoption and Amendments

This Internet Safety Policy was adopted by the Board of Mendon Public Library Trustees at a public meeting, following normal public notice, on March 4, 2003.

These policies may be amended or supplemented at any time by a majority vote of the Mendon Public Library Board of Trustees. A current and up-to-date copy will be kept at the circulation desk and be available for review by users. It is the patron's responsibility to be aware of these policies and any amendments and supplements.

Appendix - I

- Filtering or the use of technology protection measures that block or filter Internet access to visual depictions deemed harmful to minors will be used as minimally as possible.

Approved March 4, 2003 by Mendon Public Library Board of Trustees
Revisions Approved February 5, 2008, November 3, 2009; Revised 8.3.2015

- Filtering, if in use, will apply to all Mendon Public Library computers that access the Internet and will be limited to visual depictions of materials defined as Obscene {Section 1040, Title 18 United States Code}, Child Pornography {Section 2256, Title 18, United States Code} and Harmful to Minors.
- Harmful to Minors means any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depictions as defined by CIPA code.