

# Hastings Public Library

## Public Computer and Internet Policy

### Overview

Hastings Public Library is committed to providing access to informational, educational, recreational, and cultural resources for library users of all ages and backgrounds in the Hastings area. The Library's public computers provide an opportunity to offer electronic resources from information networks around the world via the internet.

The internet offers unlimited global access to information. However, not all information on the internet is accurate, complete, current, legal, or appropriate for children. While it allows access to ideas, information, and commentary that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enables access to some materials that may be offensive, disturbing, and controversial. Hastings Public Library filters all public internet computers with additional filtering applied to computers designated for children and teens.

Hastings Public Library filters library computers as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) detailed in the Internet Safety section below, which also satisfies the requirements of Michigan law. These policies also govern the use of public internet computers at the library.

These filters are not guaranteed to be 100% effective and are not a substitute for parental supervision of Internet use by a child.

### Computer Usage

Software and other files downloaded from the Internet may contain viruses or spyware that may infect other computers. Hastings Public Library is not responsible for damage or loss that may occur from use of the Library's computers to downloaded files that are then used on personal or other computers and devices outside the Library.

Since the Internet is not secure, patrons are responsible to ensure that their personal data is not compromised. Sending any information, including credit card numbers, via the Internet is at the sole risk of the user. The Hastings Public Library has no control over the security of this data.

Each individual is allowed to use the Library's public computers up to two (2) hours per day with up to three (3) separate log-ins. No ID or library card is required for public computer access. If all computers are in use and a waiting list exists, per session usage is limited to one (1) hour so other patrons may use a computer. Once the waiting list is no longer needed, patrons who have not yet used their two (2) hours per day can log into a computer again. Extensions for additional time are at staff discretion based on the patron's needs. Additional time is not granted for web browsing, email, or games. School work, job research and applications, exams, legal research and form completion, and

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work-related tasks are examples of tasks eligible for additional time if computers are available.

All computers will be automatically shut down fifteen (15) minutes before the Library closes.

A fee will be charged for material printed from HPL computers.

### Patron Computer Assistance

Library staff will assist patrons if needed with logging into computers, accessing a web browser, or the initial steps of loading a productivity application such as Microsoft Word or Excel. Staff will also provide guidance for printing from public computers and in usage of any existing third-party printing service.

For both patron privacy and the efficiency of Library operations, staff cannot:

- Complete online forms for patrons.
- Type documents for patrons.
- Enter or view patrons' confidential data, including, but not limited to, financial information, credit card numbers, driver's licenses, and passwords.
- Spend significant time teaching computer basics to patrons, including how to use a mouse, access the internet, or use productivity software.
- Help with creating email accounts or other website accounts.
- Offer legal or financial advice.
- Handle a patron's personal mobile device(s).

### Violations

The Library's computers, network, and Internet connection may not be used for any illegal activity or in an unauthorized manner in violation of this Public Internet Policy. Illegal acts may be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Users violating this Policy will first be asked to comply. For individuals who repeatedly violate this Policy after previous warnings, the Library reserves the right to prohibit use of the Library's computers, network, Internet connection, and/or the Library for a period up to seventy-two (72) hours by action of the Library Director or the staff member in charge. An individual may appeal this decision to the Library Board.

The Library also reserves the right to prohibit use of the Library's computers, network, Internet connection, and/or the Library for a period of time exceeding seventy-two (72) hours by action of the Library Director. In such instances, an individual will be informed of the decision in writing, and may appeal this decision in writing within seven (7) days to the Library Director, or the Library Board, whose decision shall be final.

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### Internet Safety

It is the policy of The Hastings Public Library to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the CIPA.

### Definitions

Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

### Access to Inappropriate Material

In accordance with Federal and State law the [Children's Internet Protection Act](#), 47 USC §254 and 20 USC §101, and Section 6 of the [Privacy Act](#), all Library computers with Internet access are filtered. Note, however, that no filter is 100% effective. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for their minor child's reading, listening, and viewing of Library material, including the Internet.

Compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires filters that block access to visual depictions that are obscene or child pornography, as defined by 47 USC §254. CIPA also requires protection against access by patrons under age 17 to visual depictions that are harmful to minors, as defined by 47 USC §254. Subject to staff supervision, a patron who is at least 17 years of age may request the disabling of software used to filter visual depictions on a computer used by that patron, provided that he/she will use the unfiltered computer for bona fide research or other lawful purposes. Library staff will not inquire into the reasons for disabling the filter.

Patrons are responsible for complying with this Policy when accessing the Internet. In addition to other provisions of this Policy, patrons (including minors) shall not access visual depictions that are obscene or child pornography as defined by Federal law (47 USC §254(h)(7)(E), (F)) and shall not access or view obscene matter as defined in §2 of [1984 PA 343, MCL 752.362 \(PA 343\)](#). In addition, patrons who are minors for purposes of Federal law shall not access visual depictions that are harmful to minors as defined by Federal law (47 USC §254(h)(7)(G)) and patrons who are minors under State law shall not access or view sexually explicit matter that is harmful to minors as defined in PA 343.

### Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Hastings Public Library online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called

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'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

### Education, Supervision and Monitoring

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Hastings Public Library staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of staff.