

Electronic Resources Policy

General Statement

As a part of the Bennington Free Library's mission to develop resources to meet the diverse cultural, governmental, educational and recreational needs of the communities we serve, electronic information resources are available to all patrons regardless of age, educational level, financial status, physical ability or library card ownership. Access to the Internet is compatible with the library's endorsement of the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement and other such statements of policy endorsed by the Bennington Free Library, as well as the policies, goals and objectives of this library. The Internet allows users to connect to networks of resources outside the library, and it is intended that such access is being made available for research, reference and recreational use. The Bennington Free Library does not warrant the information available through its Internet connection to be accurate, authoritative, factually timely or useful, and does not endorse the content of the networked information available through its Internet connection. Library users access the Internet at their own discretion.

As with other library materials, the restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or caregiver. Children under the age of 9 must be supervised by a parent or caregiver in the library at all times (See Safe Child Policy). A parent or caregiver must remain at the computer with children ages 6 and under.

I. Public Access Computer Terminals:

A. ACCESS TO COMPUTER TERMINALS

Access to a computer will be on a first-come first-served basis, and will be available only when a staff member is present to supervise the equipment. Computer users are guaranteed 30 minutes of computer use time. If no one is waiting to use a computer, there is no time limit, but when the public computers are occupied and another person requests to use a computer, the user with the most time at a computer will be requested to complete his or her work within fifteen minutes and surrender the computer to the next person in line. The library staff may, at their discretion, vary the time schedule for computer users, and may take reasonable measures to assure that patrons are not disturbed while using the library's computers.

B. SECURITY AND DOWNLOADING

Use of computer hard drives to download files to personal devices and/or media is available. When downloading, the user is solely responsible for ensuring his or her compliance with any federal patent or copyright laws. External devices are automatically scanned by antivirus software.

C. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES:

All users are prohibited from using the electronic resources for access for the following purposes:

1. Computer hacking, or other unauthorized forms of access to other computers, networks, or information systems, and/or interfering with other users, services and equipment in a manner intended to cause harm to others or damage to their property including propagation of a computer virus, Trojan horse, worm, and/or time bomb, or other forms of harmful programming or vandalism;

2. Any use that would violate federal, state or local laws;
3. Distribution of commercial advertising;
4. Users are prohibited from engaging in activities that compromise the safety and security of minors when using any direct form of electronic communication. Users are prohibited from unauthorized disclosure or use of personal information regarding minors via the Internet, or using the Library's computers to arrange a face-to-face meeting with a minor met on the computer network or Internet without the express permission of minor's parent or guardian.
5. Accessing sexually explicit materials by users of any age. Users under the age of 18 years are further restricted to use of "age appropriate" materials on the World Wide Web and Internet.

D. SANCTIONS:

A violation of section B. or C. 1 through 4 will subject the user to a permanent suspension from library computers and may subject the user to criminal prosecution.

A violation of Section C. 5 will subject the user to a clear warning from library staff about this policy and its cumulative sanctions for the first offense, a 14-day suspension from computer use for the second offense, and an indefinite suspension from computer use for the third or subsequent offense.

Suspensions may be imposed by the Reference Librarian, and any user aggrieved by a suspension shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Director. Policy issues raised by an appeal may be addressed by the Board of Directors at the discretion of the Director.

II: Wireless Access:

This service is free of charge and subject to the terms of the Library's Internet Use Policy in addition to the following terms and conditions:

1. Wireless access is provided as a public service free of charge on an as - is basis with no guarantee and no warranty. The Library's wireless network is subject to periodic maintenance and unforeseen downtime.
2. There are risks involved with connecting to a public wireless connection, such as possible viruses, malware, loss of data, possible hacking/snooping by others connected, and possible hardware/software failure. It is the user's responsibility to protect his/her information from all risks associated with using the Internet, including any damage, loss, or theft that may occur as a result of using the Library's wireless access.
3. All Library Wi-Fi users should have up -to- date antivirus software installed on their personal devices.
4. The laptop computer /device owner is responsible for setting up his/her own equipment to access the Library's wireless network. Library staff may be restricted by local policy in handling patron laptops, devices or peripheral equipment and may be limited by local policy to provide no more than general assistance in helping patrons to connect to the wireless network. Ask a Library staff member for details.
5. The Library assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment; users must keep their equipment with them at all times.
6. In using this free Internet access, users agree and hereby release, indemnify, and hold harmless, this Library, its officers and employees, and any affiliate, from any damage that may result from a patron's

use of the Library's wireless access. While using this wireless access, users acknowledge that they are subject to, and agree to abide by all laws, and all rules and regulations of the local municipality, the State of Vermont and the federal government that is applicable to Internet use.

7. At its sole discretion, the Library may terminate this public service at any time without prior notice.

8. Printing is not available via the wireless connection. Library staff will provide information about printing options.

9. Any attempt to circumvent library procedures or any unauthorized attempt to access or manipulate library equipment will result in permanent suspension of user privileges.

III: Liability for Use of Electronic Services

The Bennington Free Library assumes no responsibility for any claims, liabilities, actions, or damages to personal property arising from use of any library owned or leased electronic services, or resulting from the use of data made available through electronic information services.

The Bennington Free Library believes this policy to be in compliance with the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Pub. L, No.106-554, Subtitle C (Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act) Sections 1731-1732.

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