

## **POLICY ON INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE**

**Policy Statement:** The Rahway Public Library provides public access to computers that are connected to the Internet through a local area network and a wireless network. Library computers provide a variety of software and Internet options which meet the needs of the community in keeping with the mission of the Library. The Library uses a commercial filtering service for Internet access. The Trustees of the Library mediate Internet and other library service challenges. The Library cannot guarantee the integrity of web sites visited on library computers. The privacy of library computer users is of concern to the Rahway Public Library. Library computer users are urged to safeguard their personal information when using library computers in general and in particular on social networking sites. Print jobs with personal information cannot be guaranteed privacy in a public printing environment. Library computer users are subject to the privacy policies of web sites that they might visit using library computers. Information given to the Rahway Public Library and staff is retained only to assist with library operations, is treated confidentially, and shared only with appropriate authorities by court order. Criminal activity on library computers is prohibited and the Library will cooperate fully with authorities to apprehend those who do it.

### **1. Procedures for Use of Library Computers**

The following policies and procedures set forth the requirements for patrons' usage of library computers:

- a. All computer use is strictly anonymous. No ID or personal information is required to use a public computer.
- b. A parent/guardian must be present for children under 8 yrs. old. Library staff can advise children on computers, but parents are responsible for children's Internet use.
- c. Extensions may be granted if no one is waiting for a computer.
- d. Library computer users are reminded that computers and printers are in a shared space and they are asked to be courteous, considerate and respect the rights of others. Audio is permissible only at designated computers with headphones, which are available at the Reference desk. Ear buds are also available at the circulation desk for \$1.00.
- e. Library computer users may ask for assistance but are subject to the discretion of the staff in terms of time available to help them at a computer. Staff will be helpful and accommodating but may also be very busy.
- f. Prints can be retrieved at the print release station. There is a charge of \$0.20 cents per black and white print, \$0.50 per color print. Advertising and non-text pages will be counted as part of a print job. Fax service is available at the Circulation Counter for \$2.00 first page, \$1.00 for each additional page. Originals will be returned to the customer for safekeeping as the library does not shred originals. Scanning services are also available at no charge. Patrons may scan their files and send them via email. In the interest of library security, they are not to use

their own, personal flash drives. The library cannot guarantee the arrival of any scanned or faxed document. It is up to each patron to ensure that their documents arrive at their intended destination.

- g. Computer sessions end 15 minutes before the library closes.
- h. The library is not responsible for documents lost due to technical problems.
- i. Library users may not hack, install or delete software. Computer users must save information on flash drives or online. All content saved on library computers will be automatically deleted at the end of each computer session.
- j. Laptops may be used anywhere in the library. Wireless internet service is available.
- k. Talking on cell phones is not permitted in the library. Using a cell phone's non-talking functions is permitted if the audio is muted.
- l. All users, but particularly children are urged to keep personal information private and not engage in Internet activities or dialogue which requires them to reveal personal information.

## 2. Unacceptable Uses of Computers

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this policy are the following:

- a. **Illegal Activities.** Use of the library's internet or computer systems for any illegal purpose is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - i. Transmitting, displaying, or downloading content that violates federal or state laws, such as obscenity or child pornography;
  - ii. Accessing websites that, while legal, display sexually explicit material in a manner that may be disruptive to the library environment or violate community standards.
  - iii. Engaging in the sale or promotion of illegal substances.
  - iv. Copyright infringement, including downloading or distributing copyrighted materials without proper authorization.
- b. **Harm to Others or Property.** Engaging in defamation, uploading 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 other computers, networks, or information systems.
- c. **Access by Minors.** The library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their children's access to library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet.
- d. **Violating Confidentiality of Information.** In accordance with the New Jersey Confidentiality of Library Records Law (N.J.S.A. 18A:73-43.2), the library, library contractors, the City of Rahway, and other library users may not access, disclose, or misuse personally identifiable information of library patrons.

Exceptions include when those records are necessary for library operations or are requested by the user. Library records and user activity are also confidential and may only be disclosed to law enforcement as permitted by law (i.e. via subpoena, court order, or warrant). Users should be aware that due to technical limitations, absolute privacy cannot be guaranteed.

To address the issue of access by minors (defined in this policy as persons under the age of 17) to inappropriate material on the Internet, including material that is harmful to minors, the library:

- has installed filters on all Internet stations
- prohibits minors' access to unfiltered Internet stations
- includes instruction on safe practices in computer classes for young people

### **3. Technology Protection Measures**

In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Library will employ filtering software on all public internet-accessible computers to block or restrict access to visual depictions that are:

- a. Obscene;
- b. Child pornography;
- c. Harmful to minors, as defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. § 254(h)(7))

While filtering software helps reduce the chance of inadvertent exposure to inappropriate content, it is not foolproof. Occasionally, legitimate content may be inadvertently blocked, and inappropriate material may not always be successfully filtered. The library is committed unrestricted access to information. Patrons are encouraged to speak to library staff regarding appropriate sites that may be inadvertently blocked by the library's filtering software.