

Internet Access Policy

Effective Date: 01/05

Reviewed and Revised 04/08

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Policy No: 2.4

Policy

The Ela Area Public Library provides access to the Internet (via both wired and wireless connections) in keeping with its mission to inform, educate, entertain, and culturally enrich patrons. Resources available on the Internet expand the library's information resources well beyond what is locally available and allow patrons to conduct research and communicate on a global level. The Internet is a worldwide network containing a wealth of information resources. EAPL has no control over these resources nor does the library have complete knowledge of the scope and accuracy of information available on the Internet. Library users access the Internet at their own discretion. Because technical problems related to accessing the Internet and specific sites may occur, the library cannot guarantee that the Internet or specific sites will always be accessible. The library recognizes and supports applicable laws dealing with access to information. It upholds and affirms the right of each individual to have access to constitutionally protected materials. Also, the library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/legal guardians to determine and monitor their children's use of library materials and resources.

The library offers patrons many opportunities to gain assistance accessing the Internet. The library's collection contains numerous up-to-date materials about the Internet. Links to recommended sites and search engines are provided through the library's Web site. Staff will assist patrons with Internet use as time and expertise permits, but are not permitted to configure a patron's personal equipment. Formal instruction on using the Internet is offered by the library at designated times. Also, the Library offers various resources on Internet safety issues related to accessing and using the Internet.

The library provides both filtered and unfiltered Internet desktop workstations. All desktop workstations in the Children's Department and Teen area utilize commercial filtering software configured to block sites that contain pornography and graphic sexual images. No filter is 100% effective and the library assumes no liability. It is the parent's or legal guardian's decision as to which workstation their child may use.

Access Guidelines

- Parents/legal guardians are strongly encouraged to review and discuss SafeKids.com's Rules for Online Safety with their children before accessing the Internet.
- The library's Internet connection must not be used for illegal activity, to access illegal materials, or to access materials that by local community standards would be obscene.
- Because computers and Wireless Network access are located in public areas, patrons should avoid viewing sites or entering information that may be inadvertently viewed and considered objectionable by other library users.

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- Installation of software to library computers or modification of library software is prohibited. Files may be downloaded to a compact disc, USB flash drive, a library computer's temporary (D:) drive, or a patron's computer connected to the Wireless Network.
- Users must not make any attempt to gain unauthorized access to restricted files or networks, or to damage or modify the library's or another patron's computer equipment or software.
- Users must respect copyright laws and licensing agreements.
- Users will respect the privacy of other users, and will refrain from attempting to view or read material being used by others.
- Users access their own data on library computers and their own computers connected to the Wireless Network at their own risk. The library is not responsible for the loss or corruption of a patron's files. Patrons are strongly encouraged to keep back-ups of important files and to regularly make back-ups of these files.
- Users accept responsibility for any personal information that is sent out through the library's Internet connection. Communications through the library's Internet connection should not be considered secure.
- Users must end their session and leave a library computer or discontinue use of the library's Wireless Network when asked to do so by library staff.
- Users are solely responsible for interfacing their computer with the Wireless Network.
- Violating another's right to privacy, harassing other users or library staff, and disregarding Access Guidelines are prohibited, and will result in loss of computer use and wireless network privileges as detailed in the Library's Behavior Policy.