INTERNET USE AND SAFETY POLICY

The Itasca Community Library (ICL) in accordance with its mission provides resources in a wide variety of formats to meet the cultural, informational, recreational, and educational needs of the diverse, multicultural community it serves. The Internet is an integral part of the resources available to assist library users in finding the information they need.

The Internet is a global electronic network. ICL does not monitor Internet use, has no control over the information accessed through the Internet, and cannot be held responsible for its content. The Internet may contain material of a controversial nature. The library uses filtering software on all public access computers. Filtering software cannot guarantee the appropriateness of sites on the Internet for any particular age group. Filtering software cannot also guarantee that sites on the Internet having legitimate research or other value will not be blocked. Anyone age 18 or older who wishes to view a blocked site containing constitutionally protected material may request that staff disable the filtering software.

The Internet is a continually evolving resource and the information and links on the Internet change rapidly and unpredictably. The library cannot guarantee the accuracy or completeness of information on the Internet. Users should carefully evaluate the information they find when using this resource.

Library users are cautioned that the Internet is not a secure medium and all transactions, files, and communications may be vulnerable to unauthorized access and therefore should be considered public.

Guidelines for Internet Use: To achieve an atmosphere conducive to the best use of its resources, the library has developed the following rules regarding the use of public computers

> Illegal or unethical use of the Internet - including the transmission of material that is unlawful, harassing, libelous, abusive, threatening, harmful, vulgar, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate is not permitted.

> The library is not responsible for any commercial transactions conducted by patrons on library equipment.

> The library's staff will assist patrons with Internet use as time permits but cannot offer personal instruction.

> It is the responsibility of users to respect copyright laws and licensing agreements and assume responsibility for payment of fees for any fee-based service.

> The library cannot protect users from information and images they may find offensive or disturbing.

> The library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, patrons may incur from their connections to the Internet.

> Users must sign up with the time management system before using an Internet computer. There are time limits on computer use per day; the limit may vary according to location, and level of demand. No one may sign up for usage within the last 15 minutes of the library closing as computers are programmed to automatically shut down 15 minutes before the closing of the library. Patrons are requested to end their sessions in a timely manner.

Users may download to their personal storage device.   The library may provide storage devices available for purchase. The library is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal disks or storage devices when downloading. The library is not responsible for any information lost during the closing down process of the computers.

ICL prohibits the following activities:

- Use the library's workstations as a staging ground to gain unauthorized access to the library's networks or computer systems or to any other network or computer system.
- Obstruct the work of others by consuming gratuitously large amounts of system resources or by deliberately crashing any library computer system.
- Display images, sounds, or messages in a way that will negatively affect those who find them objectionable or offensive.
- Make any attempt to damage computer equipment or software.
- Make any attempt to alter software configurations in a malicious manner.
- Make any attempt to cause degradation of system performance.
- Use any library workstation for illegal or criminal purpose.
- Engage in any activity which is deliberately and maliciously offensive, libelous or slanderous.
- Represent yourself as another person for purposes of fraud or other illegal activity.

Confidentiality and Security of Electronic Information

ICL abides by Illinois Statute (75 ILCS 70/) "Library Records Confidentiality Act". The library is committed to protecting the confidentiality and privacy of its library technology users to the greatest extent possible. However, careless use of technology may compromise privacy.

It is important that library technology users do the following:

- Protect all personal passwords and PINS. This includes selecting passwords that are difficult to guess and changing them on a regular basis. In addition, personal passwords and PINS should not be written down nor should they be shared with others.
- Consider carefully before giving out personal information over the Internet. It is strongly recommended that users under the age of eighteen do not give personal information without parental consent.
- Be aware that electronic transactions and files sent over the Internet could become public.
- Log out of all accounts or lock the station before leaving a computer. Any information left on the screen is available to anyone that can access it.
- Be aware that files and e-mail messages stored on the library's computers are property of the ICL and may be reviewed by authorized staff.

The library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session at any time. Violations may result in suspension or loss of privileges and will follow procedures stated in Patron Behavior Policy. Any illegal activity involving the use of the library's computers, including the Internet, will be subject to prosecution by the appropriate authorities.

Access by Minors

ICL does not prohibit Internet use regardless of age. Parents or legal guardians, not library staff, are solely responsible for deciding which Internet resources are appropriate for their own children.

ICL takes additional protection measures to specific to the safety of minors while using the internet:

- To address the access of minors to inappropriate or harmful material on the Internet the library uses filtering software on all public access computers and its wireless network.
- To address the safety and security of minors when using electronic email, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications the library encourages parents or legal guardians to decide which internet resources are appropriate for their own children. The library also encourages parents and legal guardians to talk about safely communicating with others through internet resources.
- To address the unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by minors online, the library reminds minors that library users are not permitted to use the public computers or the wireless network to engage in illegal or unethical actions on the network or the internet.
- To address the unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors the library advises parents and legal guardians to warn their children of the inherent dangers of disclosing or disseminating personally identifiable information such as home address, phone numbers, or the location and nature of the child's school.

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