Putnam Valley Library Computer and Internet Use Policy

The Putnam Valley Free Library provides educational, informational and recreational resources to patrons of all ages, cultures, abilities and interests. It offers access to information of all types in a wide range of formats, including electronic.

The Internet is viewed as yet another tool or resource tool used to provide information beyond the confines of the Library's own collection. This technology allows access to ideas, information and commentary from around the world, and is compatible with the Library's endorsement of the Library Bill of Rights; the Freedom to Read Statement; and with the policies, goals and objectives of the Library.

Choosing and Evaluating Sources

In choosing sources to link to from its home page, the Library follows its materials selection guidelines. Beyond this, the Library is not responsible for any changes in the content of the sources to which the Library home page links, or for the content of sources accessed through secondary links.

Patrons should be aware that the Internet is an unregulated entity with a highly diverse user population and information content. Therefore, the library patron uses the Internet at his own risk and needs to be a good information consumer and evaluate the validity and appropriateness of information just as they would any other resource.

Disclaimer

Since the Internet is a global electronic network not governed by any entity, its available resources may contain material of a controversial or mature nature. The Putnam Valley Library does not censor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet, and cannot be held responsible for its content. The Library assumes no liability or responsibility for what is viewed by patrons or left on the screen to be viewed by a subsequent patron. Library users are responsible for the address points they reach and should be aware that not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information.

The Putnam Valley Library cannot guarantee computer viewing privacy, nor can the library guarantee the privacy of information sent or received over the Internet.

Guidelines

1. Patrons wishing to use a computer must present their library card or suitable identification at the circulation desk, except for searching the library catalog.

2. Access to the computers is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

3. Computer time will be limited to 30 minutes when others are waiting.

4. A patron may use only one computer at any one time.

5. No more than two people may sit at one terminal at a time.

6. There will be a charge of 15 cents per page for copies.

7. Floppy disks are available at the circulation desk @ $1.00 per disk.

Rules Governing Use

The Library is a public and open environment. Users may not:

- distribute unsolicited advertising for commercial products

- distribute information for political lobbying

- invade the privacy of others

- make any attempt to damage the Library's computer equipment or software

- engage in any activity that is harassing or defamatory

- use the Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other rights of third parties

- access chat rooms or any form of instant messaging

- send or display text or graphics that may reasonably be construed by the Library staff as offensive to the public. The display or transmission of sexually explicit graphic material, obscenity or disruptive text, files or images, or materials harmful to minors is inappropriate and prohibited.

- change or add files to the Library's network

- save or add files to the Library's storage network

- download or upload to or from any library storage medium

Access by Minors

1. Parents are responsible for their children's use of computers.

2. As with all other library materials, parents or legal guardians, not the library staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected and/or accessed by their children.

3. Parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding what library resources are appropriate for their own children. Parents or legal guardians should guide their children in the

use of the Internet and inform them about materials they should not use. There may be material on the Internet which parents would consider inappropriate for their children to view.

4.   Children ages 12–17 may only use the Internet workstations with a permission form signed by a parent or legal guardian, which is available at the circulation desk.

5. Children aged 11 and under may only use Internet workstations when accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

6. The library cannot assume the parent's responsibility to monitor the child's Internet use to see if it conforms to the parent's standards. Only parents may restrict their children from access to Internet resources available at the Library.

7. Parents are advised to supervise their children's computer sessions and to encourage them not to give out personal information, such as names, addresses and phone numbers.

Public Users' Security

Users should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information regarding users' activities. However, the Putnam Valley Library will not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public except as required by law or necessary for the proper operation of the library.

Compliance

While respecting individual users' rights to privacy, staff reserves the right to monitor the use of the Internet workstations to ensure compliance with this policy. Misuse or abuse of Library computers or Internet access may result in the suspension of Library privileges.

- Staff will take appropriate action as they become aware of violations. Violations of these rules may result in a shut down of a computer station, the suspension of computer privileges, and possible referral to appropriate authorities.
- Any illegal activity involving the use of the Library's computers, including the Internet, will be subject to prosecution by the appropriate authorities.

Computer Use Assistance

The library staff is available to provide limited assistance in basic computer and Internet use, such as logging onto the library's catalog and databases and to the Internet, and to give very general advice on searching methods, but they cannot provide training.

Warning: Although the library uses a virus-checker on its computers, this may not protect those diskettes from picking up a virus. The Putnam Valley Library is not responsible for damage to a patron's diskette or computer, or for any loss of data, damage, or liability that may occur from patron use of the library's computers.

Policy Revision

The Library reserves the right to revise its Computer and Internet Use Policy from time to time.

ADOPTED 4/21/03
Policy Committee revisions
Draft revision 3/1/07
2nd draft revision 3/14/07
3rd draft revision 4/12/07
Adopted revised policy April 23, 2007

Parental Permission Agreement

As the parent or legal guardian of the child named below, I have read and I agree to the library's "Computer and Internet Use Policy." I understand that the material on the Internet is not regulated, but I agree to allow my child aged eight to seventeen to use the Internet independently. My child under the age of eight will be supervised by me or another adult of my choosing who accompanies him/her to the library in accessing the Internet. I understand that my child will be required to show a valid library card each time he/she uses the computer in the library.

Child _____

Parent or Legal Guardian _____

Address _____

Telephone # _____

Date _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT CLAUSE

(to be signed by all adult patrons)

Users of the Library's computers are expected to abide by the Library's Computer and Internet Use Policy. The undersigned acknowledges that he/she has read and understands the Library's Computer and Internet Use Policy and agrees to follow these guidelines. Persons who do not adhere to these rules may be barred from the Library, prohibited from using Library computers or prosecuted for illegal activities by the appropriate authorities.

NAME_____
(Print)

SIGNATURE_____
(Print)

DATE_____
(Print)

PUTNAM VALLEY LIBRARY
Computer Misuse Incident or Complaint Report

This form is to be completed to report any event, which occurred due to the misuse of the Library's computers, according to the Library's Computer & Internet Use Policy. This report should be completed as soon as possible after the occurrence, while details are fresh in your mind.

DETAILS OF INCIDENT: Date: Time:

Name of Computer user, if known:

Does the person have a PVL card?

Please describe the individual, so your co-workers could recognize the person if there are future incidents, i.e., male/female, approximate age, height, facial or physical features, clothing, etc.

Name of Patron making complaint, if known:

Name of staff involved who observed misuse, spoke to computer user or received patron's complaint:

Describe event, please document as many details as possible, i.e., specific inappropriate website address, if known, text or graphics, description of image(s), etc. (USE BACK OF FORM FOR ADDITIONAL SPACE)

If you spoke to computer user, please describe his/her response and if he/she terminated access to material.

Please include any additional comments or concerns: (USE BACK OF FORM FOR ADDITIONAL SPACE)

Was the Sheriff's Dept called?   Yes   No
Outcome?

FORM COMPLETED BY & DATE:

PROCEDURES FOR STAFF RE COMPUTER & INTERNET USE POLICY

(adopted April 23, 2007)

A library user who has agreed to the conditions of the library's Internet policy, will receive one written warning, if library staff observes the user sending or displaying text or graphics, which is reasonably construed as offensive to the public.

(Written warning is being drafted by Legal Counsel)

Definition of above: The display or transmission of sexually explicit graphic material, obscenity or disruptive text, files or images, or materials harmful to minors is inappropriate and prohibited.

The display of the inappropriate site or sites or text should be documented on the library's appropriate report form. (see attached

If the person receives a warning and agrees to cease the display or transmission of this material, may they may remain on the computer to retrieve or send email, use MS word, or use the internet for other sites, or use other library resources.

If library staff observe the user viewing an inappropriate site a second time, the site or sites should be documented, if possible.

On the basis of the previous written warning and documentation, the user's Internet privileges will be revoked immediately due to his/her failure to abide with the policy. The person may use other library resources.

The Putnam County Sheriff's Office will be contacted if the staff observe a computer user viewing child pornography.