

Ellsworth Public Library	1549 DeWitt St	Tel 1-515-836-4852
	PO Box 338	Fax 1-515-836-2162
	Ellsworth, IA 50075-0338	ellslib@netins.net

INTERNET POLICY

Prepared for: Ellsworth Public Library

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Internet Policy

Policy Statement

The Ellsworth Public Library will offer access to electronic resources as an integral part of the library's commitment to provide services based on changing technology and the needs of patrons. Wireless access to the internet is available.

Internet Policy

Regulations

Ellsworth Public Library patrons in good standing will be allowed to use the computer with Internet capabilities. Time limit is 30 minutes if there is another patron waiting to use the computer. As with other library material, restriction of children's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or Legal guardian. The Library has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. E-mail will be available to patrons who use a personal account. No food or drink allowed in the computer area.

Users should be aware that not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information. The library denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained. The library urges patrons to be informed consumers and carefully evaluate information obtained via the Internet.

Internet users should be aware that viewing of certain materials in the public library may be considered improper in time, place or manner. They must respect the rights of other library patrons not to be inadvertently exposed to material and images, which could be considered offensive. The library has no means or statutory authority to assure that only constitutionally protected material is accessed by the public. The authority to determine what is obscene rests with the Hamilton county attorney (Sec. 728.6 Code of Iowa*) not with the staff of the Ellsworth Public Library. Public Libraries are exempted under Sec.728.7, Code of Iowa**. The availability of information does not constitute endorsement of the content by the Ellsworth Public Library. Ellsworth Public Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through the Internet, or any consequences thereof. The library reserves the right to end an Internet session at any time. The Library reserves the right to grant the use of the Library computers, Internet Access and other electronic service to the general public.

As stated in the American Library Association's Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software, the use of filtering software to block access to constitutionally protected speech violates the Library Bill of Rights; therefore, Ellsworth Public Library will not impose blocking or filtering software to limit access to Internet sites.

Library staff may equip designated computer stations with filtering software and offer a list of selected web sites that allow filtered searching. However, filtering software has technological limitations; it cannot always adapt to the varying ages and maturity levels of individual users nor guarantee blocking of what some may consider “objectionable” material.

All users of the library’s Internet connection, whether using library computers or their own hardware, must abide by this policy.

***728.6 Civil suit to determine obscenity.**

Whenever the county attorney of any county has reasonable cause to believe that any person is engaged or plans to engage in the dissemination or exhibition of obscene material within the county attorney’s county to minors the county attorney may institute a civil proceeding in the district court of the county to enjoin the dissemination or exhibition of obscene material to minors. Such application for injunction is optional and not mandatory and shall not be construed as a prerequisite to criminal prosecution for a violation of this chapter.

****728.7 Exemptions for public libraries and educational institutions.**

Nothing in this chapter prohibits the use of appropriate material for educational purposes in any accredited school, or any public library, or in any educational program in which the minor is participating. Nothing in this chapter prohibits the attendance of minors at an exhibition or display of art works or the use of any materials in any public library.

Internet Policy

Procedures

The Library staff will assist and guide patrons, but will not censor use. Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of the Internet. Privacy in using the Internet in the library cannot be guaranteed. There exists a possibility of inadvertent viewing by others. Customers are urged to respect the sensibilities of others when accessing information that may reasonably be offensive to someone else. Children under the age of 8 may not use the library's computers unless supervised by a parent or guardian, or at the discretion of the Director.

Access, use or dissemination of information via the Internet in the library is the responsibility of the customer. It is illegal to use the library's computers to access, view, print, distribute, display, send, or receive images or graphics of material that violates state or federal laws, including those relating to child pornography.

The Internet is not a secure, private environment. Customers handling financial transactions or other activities that require confidentiality do so at their own risk. In general, electronic communication is not absolutely secure and is subject to outside intervention. It is also subject to monitoring by network administrators in the usual performance of their duties.

It is the library's practice not to maintain a history of our customers' computer use. The library will not retrieve any information, including web sites visited, passwords or credit card numbers, or any other information a customer has entered. At the end of the business day, all customer computer use and reservation records are erased.

The library provides free, unsecured, wireless Internet access for public use. The library does not provide personal wireless devices for public use. The library does not provide technical support for privately owned personal wireless devices. Security for personal wireless devices rests solely with the owner of the wireless device. Personal use of the library's public wireless access will conform with policies regulating other types of public Internet access provided by the library. Local school laptop computers have parental control built in.

Internet Policy

Guidelines

Patrons of the library will be checked in by staff using the Beacon software on the staff computer before using the public access computers. Time limit is 30 minutes if there is another patron waiting to use a computer. When no one is waiting, additional time on the computer is limited to one additional 30-minute session per day. Trading computers is not allowed unless both users agree. Computer Lab sessions (homework, etc.) are for 60 minutes, with an additional hour option when no one is waiting. However, if use of a computer results in disruption of library services or if behavior becomes inappropriate for a library setting, the library reserves the right to end the session at any time.

Patron's wanting to save data should bring a disk or USB flash drive, or purchase a blank disk (\$1.00) at the circulation desk. Patron's wishing to print copies may do so for the fee's stated (black and white print \$.15per side, color print \$.25 per side, black and white pictures \$.75, color pictures \$1). Downloading must be approved by Library Director.

The library's Internet connection and wireless service may be used only for lawful purposes. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material and threatening or obscene material. Internet users agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Ellsworth Public Library from any claims resulting from their use of service, which damaged the user or another party.

The Library is not responsible for lost data and does not guarantee any supplied program. **Users will be held financially responsible for any damage or alteration to equipment or software. Misuse of any equipment or failure to follow any of these guidelines, including failure to abide by time limits, will result in loss of Internet and computer privileges.**

The library cannot accept liability for any risk taken by the patron who chooses to connect their own device to the library's wireless service.