



Fitchburg Public Library

Public Internet and Computer Use Policy

The Fitchburg Public Library is proud to provide our patrons with access to the Internet through CW MARS (Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing).

The Library's primary mission is to provide "materials and exceptional service to all people in their quest for information, recreation, research, and life-long learning." Access to the Internet is provided to extend and complement the existing collections of the Library.

The same standards of intellectual freedom as expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights that apply to traditional sources and services also apply to electronic services. Internet access is available for adults and children. As with other library materials, a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian.

Legal and Ethical Use

The public computers at the Fitchburg Public Library can be used only for legal purposes by the public and the staff. Examples of illegal use include, but are not limited to:

- Harassment of other patrons
- Use of material deemed illegal by the state and federal courts
- Destruction of or damage to equipment or software
- Disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communication
- Unauthorized copying of copyright-protected material
- Violation of computer system security
- Unauthorized use of computer accounts, network identification, or access codes
- Use of computer communications facilities that impede the computing activities of others
- Violation of software license agreements
- Violations of network usage policies
- Violations of another's privacy

Public Use of the Internet

- The Library staff has no control over the information available through the Internet because the Internet is a vast, unregulated medium. Information obtained from the Internet may be reliable and current, or it may be inaccurate and out of date. Due to constant changes in sites, Library staff cannot be responsible for the content on sites linked from our home page. Patrons are encouraged to evaluate the validity of the information accessed via the Internet.
- Public computers may be designated for use by adults, teens, or children. Patrons will be directed to use the computers in the appropriate area.
- When viewing the Internet in a public place, use discretion and avoid sites that others may reasonably interpret as obscene. The deliberate display of obscene materials or child



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pornography is prohibited as a violation of Massachusetts General Law Ch.272, Sec.29 & Ch.272, Sec. 31.

- In accordance with the principles of intellectual freedom, the Library does not use filtering software.
- The Library does not keep a permanent record of the Internet sites visited or searches performed by individuals, nor does it retain any personal information from patrons using library computers.
- Library staff may limit the use of computer equipment purchased using grant funds, according to the terms or intent of the grant agreement.
- The Library reserves the right to discontinue the use of the Internet by any patron violating this policy.