



Billerica Public Library

INTERNET POLICY:

This policy applies to all computers owned by the library, as well as all personal electronic devices accessing the Internet via the library's Internet connection.

Introduction:

To fulfill our mission, the Billerica Public Library provides access to a broad range of information resources, including those available through the Internet. The library makes this service available in order to offer a broadly defined program of informational, educational, recreational, and cultural enrichment opportunities to all patrons regardless of age or background. The Billerica Public Library subscribes to and fully supports the principles of intellectual freedom laid out in the American Library Association's Bill of Rights and the American Library Association's Statement on Access to Electronic Information Services and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

Disclaimer of reliability:

Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. Users need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of the information. Some information accessed electronically may not meet the standards of the Billerica Public Library's Material Selection Policy. The accuracy and authenticity of electronic information is not guaranteed by the Billerica Public Library.

A message to patrons about the services available:

Library staff is available to offer suggestions for search strategies, to answer questions or help you find information on the Internet, and to provide you with information on how to evaluate websites. Appointments are available for more in-depth assistance and training.

Specific rules:

Time limits on computer use sessions may be imposed by staff if other patrons are waiting for a workstation.

No more than two people may use any workstation at a time.

The library cannot provide e-mail accounts to patrons.

Personal software may not be installed on the library's computers.

You may use computers at the Billerica Public Library for educational, informational, and recreational purposes only, not for unauthorized or illegal purposes.

The library strives to balance the rights of patrons to access all types of information resources with the rights of patrons and staff to work in a public setting free from disruptive sounds and visuals. Patrons are reminded that the library's computer terminals are located in public areas that are shared with library users and staff of all ages, backgrounds and sensibilities. You may not send, receive or display text or graphics that may reasonably be construed as obscene by any local, state or federal laws. The deliberate display of obscene¹ materials is prohibited as a violation of Massachusetts General Law.² In addition, any unauthorized disclosure, use or dissemination of personal identification regarding minors is prohibited.

Use of a public Internet workstation to modify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others or to seek disallowed access to any computer system via the Internet is prohibited.

Internet access for children:

The Internet and its available resources may contain material of a controversial nature. Individual users are reminded that they are responsible for the sites they choose to access. The Billerica Public Library will not deny or abridge access to information available via electronic resources because of alleged controversial content, because of perceptions of the value of the material, or because of the age or background of the user.

However, as a reasonable balance between the above-stated commitment to provide information freely and the presence of material and graphics on the Internet that are unsuitable for children, the Library will provide filters on computers in the children's room to guard against inadvertent and often unwanted access to this material. Children, for whom the filter restricts research, will be able to access needed information on the computers in the adult area.

Parents of minor children are responsible for their child's use of the Internet while in the Library. As with all library materials, any restriction of a child's access is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian, not the library staff. Parents are encouraged to work closely with their children in selecting Internet sites. You may wish to supervise your children's Internet sessions. Any purchases that your child makes, with or without your knowledge, will be your responsibility.

Local liabilities:

All users of this service agree to hold the Billerica Public Library harmless from any and all claims, losses, damages, obligations or liabilities, directly or indirectly relating to the use of the Internet. Patrons are responsible for any intentional destruction or damage to computer equipment. As with all library material, unauthorized copying of copyright-protected materials available on the Internet is illegal. Library staff reserves the right to ensure compliance with the Internet policy. Staff may ask users to remove themselves from library equipment if they observe any behavior that they judge to be in conflict with this policy.

Documents saved to library computers are erased each night after closing. Patrons are encouraged to save any files they wish to keep and delete all personal documents from the computer before logging off.

The library computers are accessible to all members of the public. Patrons are responsible for protecting their own security while using library computers. The library assumes no responsibility for patron failure to log out of their email, social network sites, online banking sites, or any other site or to properly end their computer use sessions.

Violation of the policies and guidelines governing the use of the library's Internet resources may result in a suspension or loss of the privilege to use these resources. Patrons are also required to follow all other library policies, as may be applicable, when utilizing library computers to access the Internet.

Any individual subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to revocation or suspension of library privileges, may appeal the decision to the Library Trustees within 30 days of such decision. The Library Trustees require that all appeals be in writing.

The Trustees of the Billerica Public Library reserve the right to set policy and rules relating to every aspect of Internet use in the Library.

*Revised and adopted by vote of the Board of Library Trustees
April 2016*

1 The standard for "obscenity" was set forth in *Miller v. California*, 413 U.S. 15 (1973).

[2 MGL, Chapter 272, Section 29: Crimes Against Morality, Good Order - Dissemination or Possession of Obscene Matter; and Chapter 272, Section 31: Crimes Against Morality, Good Order –Definitions.](#)