

Pequot Lakes Community Library

Computer and Internet Public Use Policy

The purpose of this policy is to guide the public, volunteers, and Library Board when using the Pequot Lakes Community Library as a point of access to information that is publicly available through computers connected to the Internet.

Values/Principles:

1. Providing system-wide access to the Internet supports the Pequot Lakes Community Library mission and vision.
2. The library offers access to information resources on the Internet in response to advances in technology and to the changing information needs of an increasingly diverse clientele.
3. Internet access is one component of the library's objective to acquire, organize, and preserve materials that advance human knowledge and stimulate ideas. The library seeks to provide equal access to these materials to all individuals and groups in the community for education, information, research, or use of leisure time.
4. The information and resources available on the Internet expand the library's information services beyond traditional collections and electronic resources.
5. The library recognizes that information on the Internet may be controversial and that any site may offend some patrons. Only individuals can determine what is most appropriate for their needs.
6. The library strives to balance the rights of users to access different information resources with the rights of users to work in a public environment free from sounds and visuals intended to harass other library users or library volunteers.
7. Parents and legal guardians have responsibility for their children's use of the Internet, including email, chat rooms, and other forms of electronic communications. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to define for their family members what materials or information is consistent with their personal and family beliefs; only they can apply those values for themselves and their children.
8. Upon reasonable belief that a violation has occurred, library volunteers will enforce statutes that prohibit children and adults from viewing child pornography and obscenity, and children from viewing material harmful to minors.

9. The library recognizes the importance of providing training and information to help library users effectively and efficiently access the Internet for their needs.
10. The library endorses the standards of privacy, confidentiality, and intellectual freedom outlined in the Minnesota data Practices Act and endorsed by the American Library Association, as they apply to the Internet.

Guidelines for Use of Library Computers

1. Patrons wishing to use the computers must have on file a signed agreement to abide by Library Computer Use Policies. Patrons must also sign in each time by neatly writing their full names on the Library's Computer Log Sheet. Patrons may not save personal files on the library computers.
2. Not all Internet sources provide accurate, complete, or correct information and some may be offensive. The Internet is a rapidly changing environment. The library has no control over information found on the Internet and is not responsible for content. Users are responsible for determining that the information they access is acceptable, reliable, and suitable to their needs.
3. There is a 30-minute time limit for computer use if other patrons are waiting. If no one is waiting, there is no time limit.
4. Children under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian in the library if they wish to use a computer other than a computer in the Children's Room.
5. ACCEPTABLE USE: The Pequot Lakes Community Library strives to balance the rights of users to access different information resources with the rights of users to work in a public environment free from sounds and visuals intended to harass other library users or library volunteers. We ask all library users to remain sensitive to the fact that they are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages, with a variety of information interests and needs. In order to ensure an efficient, productive computing environment, the library supports principles of cooperative computing in its Internet Public Use Policy. It is not acceptable to use Pequot Lakes Community Library Internet access to:
 - Degrade or disrupt equipment of system performance.
 - Vandalize the data of any other user.
 - Gain unauthorized access to resources or entities.
 - Invade the privacy of individuals.
 - Violate federal, state, or local laws or regulations, including those regarding accessing, viewing, printing, and distributing obscenity, child pornography, and materials harmful to minors.
 - Engage in any activity that is deliberately offensive or create an intimidating or hostile environment.

6. **SANCTIONS:** If individuals violate the above Acceptable Use Guidelines, their right to use library computer resources will be suspended. The library may remove persons from the library who intentionally gain access to or attempt to gain access to illegal materials, including child pornography, obscenity, and materials harmful to minors. Illegal acts involving library resources may also be reported to local, state, or federal authorities for prosecution.
7. **LIABILITIES:** The Pequot Lakes Community Library assumes no responsibility for any damage, direct or indirect, that users or anyone else may suffer through library access to the Internet. All public Internet users at the Pequot Lakes Community Library agree to hold the library harmless from any claims, losses, damages, obligations, or liabilities relating to:
 - Infringement of U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, United States Code) governing the reproduction, distribution, adaptation, public performance, and public display of copyrighted material.
 - The use and/or accuracy of information obtained from the library's electronic information system.
 - Damage to non-library software or hardware resulting from viruses downloaded via the library's Internet services.

Library's Role

1. The library will strive to provide assistance and information for library users to take advantage of the resources of the Internet. The Internet contains information on all subjects and from many viewpoints; not all sources provide information that is accurate, complete, or current, and some may be offensive.
2. Upon reasonable belief that a violation that has occurred, library staff will enforce statutes that prohibit children and adults from viewing child pornography and obscenity, and children from viewing materials harmful to minors.

Parent Responsibility

1. Because of the nature of the Internet, users can follow a series of links that can take them to any website on the Internet. Any restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian. Parents are encouraged to work with their children to develop rules for the use of the Internet.
2. Tips for parents:
 - Visit the library often with your child.
 - Spend some time online visiting sites with your child.
 - Discuss with your child any topics that may be off limits when they are on the Internet.

- Tell your child never to give out identifying information, such as home address, telephone number, password, or school name.
- Emphasize with your child to never arrange to meet in person with people they become acquainted with using email, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications.
- Encourage your child to ask library staff for help in finding information on the Internet.