Computer and Internet Use

The Great Falls Public Library offers access to the Internet in the belief that it is a vital information source. The Library promotes access to the Internet through public access computers, WIFI network, device lending and hotspot lending.   The library's connection to the Internet is provided to the public without charge.

The Internet is a freely accessible and largely unregulated resource. While the vast majority of sites on the Internet are neutral arenas for information exchange, some sites may contain material that might prove offensive to some users. Some information accessed through the Internet may not meet the Great Falls Public Library collection development policy guidelines. Patrons are encouraged to ask staff for help and advice in locating the best sources of information.

- All Great Falls Public Library patrons whether or not they have a Library card, have access to the library's public computers and WIFI.
- Users may print from library computers or from mobile devices. Printouts can be picked up at the print release station for a nominal charge.
- Saving to library computer hard drives is allowed, but files will be automatically deleted upon restart of the computer.   Patrons may save to USB drives. USB drives are available at the library for a nominal charge.
- Connecting other types of devices to the computer using the USB ports (such as digital cameras) is allowed. USB devices must not require device drivers or special software to be used on library computers.
- Requests for additional software may be considered. However, broad appeal, security, computer/network functionality, bandwidth utilization and support issues will determine whether the software is added. Final decisions on adding software rest with the Library Technology Systems Coordinator with input from library staff members.
- Parents who are concerned about their children's use of the Internet should provide guidance for their own children. Parents or guardians who believe that their children cannot responsibly use the Internet should personally supervise their use of library computers.
- The Library does not assure the security of data, including email when using any of the publicly available PC's or wireless network. Patrons are responsible with transacting with secure web sites when transmitting personal information over the Internet.
- Audio output must be muted or directed to headphones with the volume not audible to others. Headphones are not provided by the library, but are available for purchase at the for a nominal fee.
- Users are responsible for the configuration of their own equipment. Staff is unable to provide comprehensive technical support for personal computers and devices. Great Falls Public Library staff will provide limited assistance or recommendations regarding configuring or troubleshooting equipment.

- A wireless connection is less secure than a wired connection. Users are responsible for understanding the risks. Great Falls Public Library does not assure the security of data when using any of the publicly available PCs or the wireless network.
- The Library is not responsible for any damage or loss of any personal device connected by patrons. The library is not responsible for lost or damaged disks or files.

Computer in Kids' Place and Teen Scene

- The Kids' Place Computers are intended for children age 3 through 11 and for teens and adults who need to do homework, access the Internet, etc., while caring for young children playing in the Kathy's Corner play area. The computers in Teen Scene are available only to patrons 12-18 years old, unless approved by a staff member.
- While the Great Falls Public Library follows a Safety Policy to protect minors, the Library supports the right of each family to decide what use of computers/Internet is appropriate for their children. Responsibility for a child's use of library computers and Internet lies with their parent or legal guardian.
- The use of headphones is required when watching videos, playing games, etc. Sound should not be audible to other Patrons.
- The Kids' Place Computer Lab includes a preschool gaming computer intended for children ages 5 and under and a Chromebook reserved for virtual meetings, especially for distance learning, and other webcam use.
  - Non-participants in virtual meetings cannot be recorded and/or photographed without consent from a parent/legal guardian.
  - An adult must accompany children under 8 while using the computer lab.

Please see the Patron Behavior Policy for a full description of behavior guidelines for the use of Library computers, Kids Place Computers, Teen Scene Computers and WIFI network.

Internet Safety Policy

It is the policy of Great Falls Public Library to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Definitions

Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

> **MINOR** The term "minor" means any individual who has not attained the age of 17 years.

TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE. The term ''technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

> 1. **OBSCENE**, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
> 2. **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
> 3. Harmful to minors.

HARMFUL TO MINORS. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

> 1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
> 2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
> 3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT. The terms ''sexual act" and ''sexual contact" have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

Access to Inappropriate Material

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information.

Specifically, as required by the Children 's Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Great Falls Public Library online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Education, Supervision and Monitoring

To the extent practical, it shall be the responsibility of the Great Falls Public Library staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children 's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Library Technology Systems Coordinator or designated representatives.