Putnam County Public Library
Internet Use and Safety Policy

In keeping with the mission of the Putnam County Public Library to provide professionally guided access to information in all formats and to serve educational, cultural and recreational needs of the people of Putnam County, the Putnam County Public Library provides public access to the Internet.

The Internet and its available resources contain a wide variety of material and opinions from many points of view. In offering Internet access, Putnam County Public Library staff cannot control access points that often change rapidly and unpredictably. The Putnam County Public Library is not responsible for the content or accuracy of information accessed over the Internet. The individual user is responsible for determining what is appropriate and for being aware of and respecting the rights of others.

It is the policy of the Putnam County Public Library to comply with the Neighborhood Children's Internet Safety Act. The following provisions outline the Putnam County Public Library's policies adopted in compliance with the federal statute:
  * The use by minors (individuals under age 17 years) of library equipment to access material that is obscene, illegal or harmful to minors is prohibited.
  * Unauthorized access, including hacking and other unlawful activities online, is prohibited.
  * Unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors is prohibited.

The Putnam County Public Library complies with the Children's Internet Protection Act by adding filtering software to all computers accessing the Internet to protect against visual depictions that are obscene, unlawfully pornographic (child pornography), or harmful to minors. While this constitutes an attempt to prevent access to unacceptable materials, it is technically impossible to prevent access to all objectionable material.

Authorized staff members may disable the filtering software upon request by an adult for use that complies with Putnam County Public Library's acceptable use policy (see below).   Filtering will not be disabled for minors (individuals under age 17). Parents and guardians are encouraged to instruct their children in the safe use of electronic mail and chat rooms and never to give out personal information online. The library provides information on Internet safety for parents, teens, and children, and will periodically hold internet safety workshops for all patrons.

In addition to its evolving set of e-resources including databases, ebooks/audio platforms, streaming services, and research tools, and other sites containing information of artistic, literary,

historic, scientific or educational merit, the Library also maintains a list of useful sites to help provide answers to most frequently asked questions regarding internet use and safety.

Downloading any content to a library-owned computer's hard drive is not permitted. In order to be able to fill the demand for access to the Internet, PCPL has established time limits for the use of Internet computers.

Individuals are expected to use the Internet in a responsible manner. Unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to, the following:

* Viewing or printing sexually explicit materials, regardless of age.
* Attempting in any way to alter, damage, abuse, or sabotage computer equipment or software; alter configurations; or install any software without permission from a librarian.
* Damaging library equipment or software in a malicious manner (which will result in financial liability to the user).
* Using any library computer for illegal purposes.
* Violating licensing agreements or Copyright Laws.
* Using library computers for any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment for other users.
* Disregarding time limits on the use of a library computer while others are waiting.
* Attempting to gain or gaining unauthorized entry to other computing, information, or communication devices or resources.
* Interfering with or disrupting other computer users, services or equipment.

In the event that a patron violates any of the above guidelines, the library may ask the patron to log off the computer and to leave the area. Repeated violation may result in the patron being asked to leave the library and/or having his/her library account temporarily frozen.

Should a patron attempt to access pornography on library-owned computers, the following steps will be taken:
* first offense will generate an automatic prompt warning the patron to leave the site
* second offense will result in the patron's account being frozen for 1 day (system-generated warning)
* third offense will result in the patron's account being frozen for a duration of time (1 week to 1 month) depending on the nature of the offense

The library reserves the right to freeze a patron's account for any number of reasons relating to computer and/or internet use.

The use of the Internet is considered a privilege and users are expected to abide by the Putnam County Public Library Internet Safety Policy. All Internet computers are in a public area and are

subject to monitoring by library staff. The Library retains the right to determine what is appropriate use of its equipment for the purpose of enforcing this policy.

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