

Internet Policy

To fulfill its mission of providing public access to information of all types in a wide range of formats, the Merrimac Public Library provides access to Internet resources. The use of any public computer workstations in the Merrimac Public Library or access to the Library's wireless network constitutes acceptance of this Internet Safety and Computer Use Policy. By providing access to the Internet, the library is opening a gateway to information broader than its traditional practice of selecting materials and specific services. Merrimac 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 Service and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Right.

The Merrimac Public Library is not responsible for the content of the internet, changes in content of the sources to which the Library home pages link, or for the content of sources accessed through secondary links. The library does not censor or filter access to materials or sources of information accessible via the Internet. The Internet may include materials an individual may find personally offensive, distasteful, controversial or inappropriate. The Internet is a global entity with a highly diverse user population and library patrons use it at their own risk.

Internet users are reminded that the library's computer terminals are located in public areas which are shared with library users and staff of all ages and backgrounds

Internet Access Policy

1. Computers are available on a first come first serve basis. The Library cannot guarantee access to a public computer.
2. Parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding what library resources are appropriate for their children.
3. No more than two people may use any workstation at a time.
4. Merrimac Public Library endeavors to maintain access to the Internet. However, technical, mechanical or other problems may interrupt service. The library is not responsible for problems that may arise when patrons are unable to connect to the Internet.
5. The Library offers free wireless Internet access through an open, unsecured public network. The Library assumes no responsibility for the security or safety of equipment, personal information, or data files resulting from connection with the Library's wireless network.

6. While using a computer station or personal laptop the user needs to have earphones on while listening to audio content.
7. The Library may set limits, for example, on use of large files of still or moving images or sound, or on downloading files in any medium.
8. The Library also reserves the right to limit the amount of time an individual user can devote to a single session.
9. The Library is not responsible for monitoring personal electronic devices in the library.
10. The Library's electronic resources are to be used in a responsible manner consistent with the educational and informational purposes for which they are provided. The following purposeful, illegal activities by adults or minors online constitute unacceptable use.

Users may not:

1. Use Library workstations for any illegal or criminal purpose that violates local, state or federal laws, including committing fraud, violating copyright law or software licenses or in a manner inconsistent with the Library's tax-exempt status or its proper operation.
2. Attempt to gain unauthorized access to the resources of the library's network or attempt to gain unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," to the resources of other networks.
3. Attempt to make unauthorized downloads of programs or software from the Internet onto Library computers or onto disks.
4. Patrons using laptops and other personal devices may not alter the setup of Library network equipment.
5. Make any attempt to damage computer equipment or software.
6. Personal software may not be installed on the library's computers.
7. Deliberately display obscene materials or child pornography which is prohibited as a violation of Massachusetts General Law.
8. Distribute unsolicited advertising.

Internet Access By Minors

Parents, legal guardians and care providers, not the staff of Merrimac Public Library, are responsible for what their minor view or post on the Internet. Parents, legal guardians, or care givers who wish to limit or restrict their minor's access to the Internet must accompany minors while they are using the Internet at the Library. The Library encourages parents or legal guardians to discuss with their minors the appropriate use of electronic resources available through the Internet and basic rules for safety and security when using electronic mail, chatrooms and social media.

Penalties For Unacceptable Use

Violations may result in loss of access to the Internet while using library computers or wireless network. Any subsequent misuse of computer hardware or software may result in temporary or permanent loss of public computer privileges at the discretion of the library staff. Unlawful activities will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Library Staff Assistance

1. The staff of Merrimac Public Library can provide basic assistance to patrons in finding information they wish to access on the Internet. Staff cannot do extensive research for patrons.
2. Depending on staff availability, librarians may be able to provide limited technical assistance, while using a personal or library computer terminal, or laptop.
3. Library staff will make reasonable efforts to assist patrons in their use of public computers.

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