

<p style="text-align: center;">Cromaine District Library Policy</p>	<p>Policy #: 3020 Page 1 of 4</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>INTERNET USE</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Tracking Record</u> Date Approved: 8/20/98 Revised: 9/16/99; 6/22/00; 12/21/00; 3/20/03 Review by Counsel: 3/22/00; 12/7/00; 2/03</p>

Purpose

The Cromaine District Library is offering public access to the Internet as an information and educational resource available to library users of all ages. The Library has adopted this Internet Use Policy in order to provide equitable, convenient access to the Internet; not to limit content of the information retrieved.

Scope

Consistent with our mission and the professional principles of public librarianship, this policy affirms the safeguarding of First Amendment rights, intellectual freedom, equity of access, confidentiality of information about library patrons and their use of all library resources, and individual responsibility. The Library affirms the following principles and user rights as delineated in the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights in Cyberspace*:

Electronic information, services, and networks provided by libraries should be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users.

Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to information available via electronic resources because of its controversial content or because of personal beliefs or fears of confrontation.

Information retrieved or utilized electronically should be considered constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court with appropriate jurisdiction.

Responsibility for, and any restriction of, a child's use of the Internet rests solely with his or her parents or legal guardians.

Nature of the Internet

The Internet offers access to a wealth of information that can be personally, professionally and culturally enriching. Internet sites include useful ideas, information and opinions from around the world. But, because the Internet is a vast and unregulated information network, it also enables access to information, ideas and commentary beyond the confines of the Library's collection, mission, selection criteria and collection development policies. Because of this and the fact that access points on the Internet change often, rapidly and unpredictably, the Library cannot protect individuals from information and images which they might find offensive or disturbing.

Users are cautioned that ideas, point of view, and images can be found on the Internet which are controversial, divergent and inflammatory. The provision of access does not mean or imply that the Library endorses or sanctions the content or point of view of any of the information or commentary which may be found on the Internet.

Nature of the Library Setting

Computers available to the public, which can be used to access the Internet, must be shared by library users of all ages, background and sensibilities. Since staff cannot consistently and effectively monitor the public's use of the Internet, Library patrons are asked to be sensitive of others' values and beliefs when accessing potentially controversial information and images.

While the Library upholds users' rights to privacy and confidentiality in their use of all library resources, the nature of electronic resources makes it impossible to guarantee these rights. Users are cautioned that, because security in an electronic environment such as the Internet cannot be guaranteed, all transactions, files and communications are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use and, therefore, should be considered public.

Acceptable Use

Internet resources accessible through the Library are provided equally to all library users. Users are expected to use this resource in a responsible and courteous manner, consistent with the purpose for which it is provided. Responsible use includes the following:

Being mindful that the Library is a public place and using discretion in displaying text or graphics which may be offensive to others;

Respecting the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself as another user; by not attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others; by not seeking unauthorized access to any computer system, or damaging or altering software components of any network or database;

Respecting the rights of other library patrons by not interfering with their use of the Internet;

Refraining from using the Library's Internet resources to conduct a business or commercial enterprise, or engage in commercial activity such as the distribution of advertising.

Compliance with Public Act 212 of 2000

In order to comply with Public Act 212 of 2000, the Cromaine District Library has designated the Internet workstations in the Youth Department for the use of those 17 years of age or younger. An exception will be made for parents who are assisting their children with Internet research. Parents who have children under six (6) with them may also use the Youth Department Internet workstations.

It is a violation of library policy for minors to give others private information about themselves or others, including names, addresses, phone numbers, credit card and social security numbers;

or to arrange face-to-face meetings with people they have “met” on the computer network or Internet without a parent’s permission.

Adults, patrons 18 years old or older, must use the Internet workstations in the Adult Department. Privacy screens have been placed over these workstation monitors. They may not be removed without permission of the library staff.

A Special Note to Parents

As with other materials in the Library’s collection, it is the Library’s policy that parents or legal guardians are responsible for deciding which library resources are appropriate for their children. The Library urges parents and guardians to discuss Internet use with their children and to monitor their use of this valuable educational tool.

To assist parents, the Library has available on-line and in print form the pamphlet *Child Safety on the Information Highway*, published by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. In addition, the Library’s website Parent Page provides links to on-line resources for parents.

Legal Use

Internet resources may only be used for legal purposes by the public and staff. Examples of unacceptable purposes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Harassment of other users;

- Libeling or slandering other users;

- Destruction of or damage to equipment, software or data belonging to the Library or other users;

- Disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications;

- Transmitting threatening, obscene or harassing materials;

- Failing to prevent a minor from viewing obscene matter or sexually explicit matter which is harmful to minors as required by Public Act 212 of 2000.

- Transmitting or displaying text or graphics which are illegal, obscene or sexually explicit matter which is harmful to minors.

- Compromising the safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications;

- Permitting another to use his or her account or password to access the computer network and Internet.

Ethical Use

Computing resources should be used in accordance with the ethical standards of the Library. Examples of unacceptable use (some of which may also have legal consequences) include, but are not limited to, the following:

Unsolicited advertising (spamming);
Violation of computer system security;
Use of computer communications facilities in ways that unnecessarily impede the computing activities of others;
Violation of software license agreements;
Violation of network usage policies and regulations.

Copyright

U.S. Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of "fair use." Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including electronic mail, text, images, programs or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

Staff Assistance

Staff will assist library users in getting started on the Internet. However, the Library cannot guarantee that Internet-trained staff will be available to assist users at all times the Library is open. Time permitting, staff will try to answer specific questions about the Internet and offer suggestions for effective searching. Staff can also provide information about Internet training opportunities and Internet books and manuals.

Compliance with Library Policy and Guidelines

Access to the Library's computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. The Library's Internet policy is presented to each Internet user during Netscape log on. By clicking the "accept" button the patron agrees to abide by the policy. Patrons should be aware that violation of the policies and regulations that govern the use of the Library's Internet resources may lead to the suspension or revocation of library access to the Internet and its resources. Illegal activity involving the Library's Internet resources will be subject to prosecution by the appropriate authorities.

Consonant with the Library's *Policy on Public Conduct* (#2030), a patron will be given notice of the policy and that they have violated it and an opportunity to correct his or her behavior. Patrons who continue to violate the policy will lose their Internet privileges for one day. A second violation will result in suspension of privileges for two weeks and a third violation in loss of privileges for six months.

Approved by the Board of Trustees after a duly called public hearing on March 20, 2003.

The Library believes this policy to be in compliance with the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) P.L. 106-554, subtitle C (Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act), § 1731-32.