

Computer and Internet Use Policy

To fulfill its mission to provide public access to information of all types, Whitehall Township Public Library provides access to the vast information available through the Internet. Our computers offer high speed OC3-ATM Internet connections provided through the Whitehall-Coplay School District. The library does not choose the material on the Internet. Information may be inaccurate, obsolete, offensive or illegal. The library is not responsible for the accuracy, currency or appropriateness of the information on the Internet. The library reserves the right not to install some software programs to preserve the security of our computer network. Some websites or services may not be available because of these restrictions.

Computer Use

Due to limited resources, the library may set limits on the amount of time an individual can use the library computers. Also, restrictions may be set on downloading files, installing software on our computers,

Computer users must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, including laws governing the transmission and dissemination of information while using the Internet as well as with all library policies and procedures.

The library reserves the right to ask any user to relinquish use of the system at any time.

The following activities are prohibited:

The use of any library equipment to access material that is illegal, obscene, child pornography or "harmful to minors" consistent with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Consolidated Statutes Title 18, Part II, Chapter 59 §5903.

The use of library equipment for unauthorized access to computer networks (including the library's network), hacking, spamming, phishing, deliberate spread of computer viruses or other malicious computer programs, attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords or data belonging to the library or to others.

Intentional damage to or theft of computer equipment or programs.

Violation of federal copyright laws.

Violation of software license agreements.

Transmitting speech not protected by the First Amendment such as libel or obscenity.

Violating or attempting to violate the library's computer security features.

Disruptive behavior. Examples include (but are not limited to) overuse of equipment that denies others access to the equipment or excessive sound volume

Unauthorized use of computer accounts or PIN numbers belonging to someone else.

Privacy

The library does not collect or retain information about the websites that you visit, the information that you viewed or the words that you used to search the Internet. While the library respects your privacy, we cannot guarantee it. Other library users may see material on computer screens by accident or on purpose. Please use reasonable precautions when using library computers. Please use care in safeguarding your private information. Please respect the privacy of other computer users.

The library reserves the right to ask for the identification of people using our computers.

Filtering

As required by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the library has implemented filtering on all of its computers in order to remain eligible for certain federal funding. This software protects against access to visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography, and, in the case of persons under the age of 17 years, materials that are "harmful to minors."

However, all currently available filtering software results in a degree of both "underblocking" (*i.e.*, permitting access to certain material that falls within the foregoing categories) and "overblocking" (*i.e.*, denying access to certain constitutionally protected material that does not fall within the foregoing categories). The choice of filtering software attempts to comply with CIPA while providing library users with the broadest possible access to constitutionally protected speech and information.

The Library cannot and does not guarantee that the filtering software will block all obscenity, child pornography, or materials that are harmful to minors. Nor can the Library guarantee that the filtering software will not restrict access to sites that may have legitimate research or other value. In order to help address the overblocking problem and to enhance users' access to constitutionally protected speech and information, the Library requests that all users, both adults and minors, notify the library staff to request unblocking of an incorrectly blocked site. In addition, any user who is 17 years of age or older may request that the filtering software be disabled in order to obtain unfiltered Internet access for bona fide research or other lawful purpose by speaking to a staff member.

Children and Internet Use

Parents are responsible for guiding their children's use of the Internet whenever they are using our computers by informing them about materials they should avoid. While all of the library computers have basic filtering, parents should remember that no filter is completely successful. Please be aware of what your children are viewing. Children under age 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

Internet Security

The Internet is not secure. Other persons may be able to obtain information about user activities online. The library will not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public except as required by law or necessary for the proper operation of the library.

Children's Internet Safety Guidelines

- Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name, or telephone number.
- Let parents or guardians decide whether personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information should be revealed.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone via the computer without parents' or guardians' approval.
- Never respond to messages that are suggestive, obscene, threatening, or make one uncomfortable.
- Have parents or guardians report an incident to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-843-5678 if one becomes aware of the transmission of child pornography.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are.
- Remember that everything you read may not be true.

Compliance

The library reserves the right to take appropriate action to insure compliance with this policy including suspension of library privileges and notification of law enforcement officials if necessary.

Printing

Printing is available. There is a charge to print. Brochures describing printing are available at each computer. Please preview materials before you print. You will be charged for each page printed – even if it is blank.