

## **Kent County Public Library**

### **INTERNET USE POLICY**

**Policy:** Kent County Public Library supports customers' informational, educational, and recreational interests by providing access to services, materials and information via the Internet.

The Internet is an important resource enabling library users to access information beyond the walls of the library. The Internet is a free, open, and largely unregulated resource, which includes inaccurate, incomplete, and out-of-date information. Therefore, KCPL cannot guarantee the reliability or truthfulness of information obtained via the Internet.

Library users who obtain, evaluate, and transmit information via the Internet while using a library computer do so at their own risk and are responsible for determining the suitability of Internet content for themselves. The Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents and legal guardians to make decisions regarding what library resources, including those found on the Internet, are appropriate for their own minor children. The Library staff does not act in the place of parents (*in loco parentis*) to restrict what a child may access.

The following activities are not permitted on the Library's Internet service or computers:

- Violation of copyright laws or software licensing agreements;
- Activity which is unlawful, libelous, or slanderous;
- Activity which violates another customer's legally protected privacy rights;
- Access and display of materials that are obscene or constitute child pornography as defined by Federal statutes, 18 U.S. Code, Sections 1460 and 2256, and Maryland Annotated Code, Criminal Law Article, Title 11, Subtitle 2.

Any illegal activity on the KCPL's computers or wifi networks will be reported to law enforcement officials.

To promote a welcoming and child-friendly library experience, KCPL prohibits the use of its Internet resources for the purpose of accessing visual depictions of sexually explicit conduct, as defined by 18 U.S. Code §2256. Such prohibited images include, but are not limited to, visual depictions that are pornographic, contain child pornography, solicit sex with minors, and/or are otherwise harmful to minors.

In compliance with the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 and Maryland Law Article 23, Section 506.1, filtering software is installed to block pornography on the Library's computers and Internet service. However, even with the filtering software in use, customers may still encounter Internet sites they find

personally offensive. For this reason, customers assume responsibility for their own use of the Internet. Parents or guardians are strongly advised to closely supervise their children's use of this service on Library premises.

Library users may request access to a blocked site for bona fide research or other lawful purposes by presenting their request to a member of the library's senior team. It may not be possible for a decision about the request to be made immediately, but a response to the appeal will be provided within 5-7 business days. If a user disagrees with the decision regarding access to blocked sites or depictions, a further appeal may be made to the Executive Director.

This policy is an update and replacement to the Internet Policy originally created on May 18, 2000 and replaces revisions adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on May 24, 2004; April 25, 2011; and May 21, 2012.

**Date:** January 30, 2023

**Signature:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John W. H."

**Definitions:** "Pornography" - For the purposes of this policy, this term includes, but is not necessarily limited to, visual depictions of an actual or simulated human sexual act such as sexual intercourse, oral sex, or explicit sexual arousal. The terms "obscene", "child pornography", and "harmful to minors" are defined in the federal *Children's Internet Protection Act* (HR 4577 § 1701 et seq., printed in the Congressional Record 12/15/2000, page H12302).