

Internet Use Policy  
Commerce Township Community Library  
Approved 9/13/2005

The Commerce Township Community Library seeks to make a variety of sources of information, education and entertainment available to its patrons. One of the most prevalent sources in current use is the Internet. The Library offers high-speed access to the Internet. It is a format which strongly supports information-seeking activities at all levels, supplements formal educational efforts and provides a variety of entertainment functions.

Specifically, 'Internet use' is defined as electronically accessing the network of databases and websites which are external to those resources held by the Library. While access to The Library Network's (TLN) shared system is accomplished through Internet connection, such access is not included in this policy. In addition, Internet access may be 'filtered' or 'unfiltered'. Filtered access to the Internet is accomplished by the use of software, either at the computer or server level, which restricts access to certain types of information. Popularly, these restrictions include pornography, inappropriate language, hate speech and chat rooms. There are no perfect filters. With any filter it is possible that information which is intended to be blocked is not blocked, and that which is expected to be made available becomes filtered. The Library is not responsible for failures of the filtering software. Unfiltered access is that which involves no mediation at the computer or server level.

The Library provides three levels of filtering, based on the location of the computers. The adult public computers are unfiltered. Young adult public computers are filtered to remove the most objectionable speech. The children's computers are more highly filtered. Adults who wish to have filtered access to the Internet may indicate this to the library staff and use the computers normally reserved for the children or young adults.

Internet computers may be used by any library patron. Children under twelve years of age must use the computers in the children's section of the library. Patrons aged twelve to seventeen must use the young adult computers and adults are to use the computers in the adult area except when supervising a minor's use or as detailed above in regard to chosen filtering levels.

The Library has configured the computers to retain no user history, in an effort to protect the confidentiality of its patrons.

The establishment of sign-ups and time limits is at the Library's discretion, based on the pattern of usage of the public computers, and may range from no limits to a more restrictive usage within specific computer clusters.

While the Library will not regulate access to legal content via the Internet, it is expected that the use of the Internet will fall within patron behavioral policy guidelines.

Printing from the public computers is available at ten cents per page. The print station will accept payment from a Commerce Township Community Library card or in cash. The print management software is designed to protect the privacy of the patron who wishes to print a document.

The Library will offer as much assistance as time permits to any patron who has questions or problems concerning the Internet, computers and printers.

If a patron wishes to request a change to the Library's Internet Use Policy, he or she should put this request in writing addressed to the Library Director. The Director will respond in kind with a decision and an explanation of action taken or not taken regarding the request. If the patron is not satisfied, he or she may appeal to the Library Advisory Board who will also respond to the patron with its decision. This may be appealed to the Commerce Township Board whose decision on a matter is final.

This policy, as well as any Library policy will be made available on the Library's website, or in print format upon request.