

Talbot County Free Library Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The Talbot County Free Library (the Library) is committed to serving the informational, recreational, and lifelong learning needs of all of its citizens. Providing access to the Internet enables the Library to greatly expand its information services. In addition, the Library organizes, catalogs and indexes a variety of information that it provides through connections to the Internet, websites and commercial databases. The Internet is a free, open and largely unregulated resource. Not all sources on the Internet provide information that is accurate, complete, current, legal or philosophically acceptable to all people.

The unauthorized or illegal use of the Talbot County Free Library's computing systems and facilities may result in revocation of Internet use privileges, general library privileges and/or constitute grounds for civil or criminal prosecution.

To promote a welcoming and child-friendly library experience, the Library 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 and/or are harmful to minors. Such images must not be accessed with the Library's computers or Internet service. [1]

The Library is required by the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) of 2000 and the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, § 23-506.1, to prohibit Internet access for children age 16 and younger to obscenity, child pornography, and materials that are harmful to minors. In order to implement the law, the library uses a web content filter on all public access computers.

The web content filter disables access to certain websites. Upon request by a library customer age 18 and older, library staff may offer unfiltered access on a per session basis. Library staff may request proof of age. Unfiltered access is not available for Wireless users. The library reserves the right to enforce the Acceptable Use Statement if the requested material appears to violate the law. Web content filters are not 100% accurate and may allow access to inappropriate sites. Parents and guardians of children under the age of 18 are responsible for their children's use of the Internet. The Library staff does not act in the place of parents (in loco parentis) to restrict what a child may access. The library assumes no liability in the event the filter is not 100% effective.

The Library provides computers and Internet access for legal purposes only. Any illegal activity on the Library's Internet service or computers will be reported to law enforcement officials. The Talbot County Free Library prohibits the following:

- Accessing any programs or files outside of the installed Internet browsers and Microsoft Office and other library-installed software.

- 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.
- Violation of copyright laws or software licensing agreements.
- Activity which violates another customer's legally protected privacy rights
- Activities that disrupt the library or its network, including but not limited to: attempting to access, modify or delete files, passwords or data belonging to others, seeking unauthorized access to the library's or any other computer system, port scanning, running a denial of service attack, downloading or installing software harmful to the library's computers, or damaging or modifying library equipment or software.

Patrons obtain, evaluate, and transmit information including but not limited to financial and other personal data at their own risk. For your own protection, verify that you are submitting personal information through an encrypted (<https://>) connection. The library is not responsible for the misuse of personal information entered on websites.

Privacy Statement - The Talbot County Free Library is committed to protecting the privacy of its patrons. Information, documents or programs accessed during your use of our equipment and/or Internet Service is confidential and will not be released without a court order. However, the Library may confirm to law enforcement your use of our computers and the times your use took place.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT MAY RESULT IN LOSS OF ACCESS TO THE INTERNET OR REMOVAL FROM LIBRARY PROPERTY AT THE LIBRARIAN IN CHARGE'S DISCRETION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LIBRARY'S CODE OF CONDUCT.

[1] In this policy, the term "pornography" 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).

Adopted December 1, 2016, by the Talbot County Free Library Board of Trustees.