

# **Policy for use of Computers and the Internet at the Library**

Lewiston Public Library provides public access to information of all types in a wide range of formats to meet its mission of “providing quality services, resources, and lifelong learning opportunities to meet the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs and interests of the residents of the Town and Village of Lewiston and Niagara County, and through participation in the NIOGA Library System, of residents in Genesee and Orleans County.” Electronic resources, including the Internet, are available as reference tools to supplement and complement the collections. The library provides PCs with access to the Internet and word processing software for use by registered library users.

## **THE INTERNET**

The Internet is a fundamental resource for a wide range of information which expands the scope of resources available to users. It is an unregulated medium that changes rapidly and unpredictably. Lewiston Public Library cannot be held responsible for the content of sites on the Internet. Users are hereby notified they are responsible for the choice of sites they visit. The Library neither censors access to materials nor protects users from information they may find offensive.

Since not all sites on the Internet are accurate, current or complete, users must exercise critical judgment in evaluating the validity and appropriateness of the information found. Users access the Internet at their own discretion and are responsible for following guidelines of all networks traversed.

In providing access to electronic resources, Lewiston Public Library is guided by its mission statement and the following American Library Association statements on access to information:

Library Bill of Rights

Freedom to Read Statement

Freedom to View Statement

Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights:

Free Access to Libraries for Minors

Access to Electronic Information, Services and Networks

## **RIGHTS OF USERS**

The Lewiston Public Library respects a patron’s right to both confidentiality and privacy. Patrons are cautioned the Internet is not a secure medium and all transactions, files, and communications may be subject to unauthorized access by third parties. The Library, however, will not release information on the use of electronic resources by members of the public except as required by law.

The Library seeks to provide an atmosphere conducive to the best use of its resources. To this end, it strives to balance the rights of users to access all types of information resources with the rights of users and staff to work in a public setting free from disruptive sounds and visuals.

Patrons are reminded the Library's computer terminals are located in public areas which are shared with library users and staff of all ages, backgrounds and sensibilities. Individuals are expected to consider this diversity and respect the sensibilities of others accessing potentially offensive information or images.

## **CHILDREN**

Internet resources accessible through the Library are provided equally to all users. Parents or legal guardians, not the Library or its staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected and/or accessed by their children. Parents or legal guardians — and only parents or legal guardians — may restrict their children—and only their children — from access to Internet resources through the Library. Parents/guardians are advised to supervise their children's Internet session. While the Library will make every effort to ensure the use of the Internet is consistent with its mission statement, parents/guardians are encouraged to work closely with their children in selecting sites consistent with personal and family values and boundaries. The library does have online and printed materials about the Internet, including Child Safety on the Information Highway.

Children age 13-18 must have parental/guardian permission to use the Internet. Children under the age of 13 may use the Internet provided a parent/legal guardian closely monitors the child's use. Lewiston Public Library assumes no responsibility for the use of the Internet by children. It is not possible for library staff to control specific information children and young adults may locate on the Internet. It is the responsibility of the user (in the case of children, the parent or legal guardian) to determine what is appropriate.

## **RULES AND LIMITS**

Use of the Internet for activities that violate local, state or federal laws is prohibited. This includes activities such as viewing child pornography, committing fraud, hacking or spreading libel or slander.

It is the responsibility of all users of electronic resources at Lewiston Public Library to respect intellectual property rights. Copyright restrictions may exist for individual electronic resources. Patrons may only make copies allowable by copyright laws or licensed software agreements. A work protected by copyright may not be copied without permission of the copyright owner unless the proposed use falls within the definition of "Fair Use." Violation of the copyright law may subject you to action for damages and/or an injunction.

Users of the Library's computers and related peripheral equipment are expected to abide by the rules of the Library, including its Rules for Computer and Internet Use. Copies of these rules are available upon request at the circulation desk and are posted near the computers. Furthermore, users are expected to be aware of and abide by these rules in using the Library. In accordance with the authority of the Board of Trustees of Lewiston Public Library, persons who do not abide by these rules may be barred from the Library, prohibited from using computers or other library equipment, and/or prosecuted for illegal activities.

Lewiston Public Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through its electronic resources or any consequences thereof. Use of the Library's Internet connection is intended for private, noncommercial activities and does not permit unauthorized sales and marketing of goods and services.

Lewiston Public Library staff cannot provide in-depth computer training but will answer questions and, as time allows, help users locate and use resources on the Internet or on other electronic tools in the Library.

## **RULES FOR ACCESSING COMPUTER TERMINALS**

Before signing on to Internet workstations users must complete the "Use and Consent Form" at the circulation desk.

All users must use their own valid borrowers' card for use at Lewiston Public Library.

Use of Internet workstations is limited to 60 minutes per session, including downloading and printing time. Computers are checked out by the patron with his/her valid library card, just as books and other library materials are checked out. Users must have their own library card. If a patron forgets his/her card, he/she will not be able to use the computer.

Users need to be aware of time for their Internet checkout sessions. If no one is waiting or has a hold on a computer, users may renew the computer (just as they do for books) for one additional 60-minute session.

In general, only one person may use a computer at a time except for an adult working with a child.

Cost of printing is 20 cents per page for black and white prints.

Patrons agree to print or download to a disk in accordance with local, state or federal laws concerning pornography and copyright.

Use of commercial software CDs on library computers is prohibited.

Users must be logged off no later than 15 minutes prior to closing time.

## **RULES FOR USING COMPUTER TERMINALS**

Users of electronic information resources, including the Internet, are expected to use these resources in a responsible manner consistent with the educational and informational purposes for which they are provided.

Users may not:

install, delete, or modify library hardware or software

move or change the arrangement of library computers and attached equipment

download software from the Internet onto the library's computers

use the network to make unauthorized entry into other computational, informational or communication services or resources

make any attempt to damage computer equipment or software

make any attempt to cause degradation of system performance

misuse library computers or other equipment and resources

## **LOSS OF PRIVILEGES**

Use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in forfeiture of this privilege. Failure to abide by these rules may result in the loss of computer privileges for a minimum of six months, subsequent infractions will result in loss of computer privileges up to one year's time.

Approved by:  
Lewiston Public Library Board of Trustees  
October 23, 2006