

Internet Access Policy:

The Internet is an electronic network used by many organizations. Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library provides workstations for patrons to access information on the Internet. Because the Internet is a global electronic network with no governing body, there is no control over its contents or users. Some of the resources available on-line may contain material that is objectionable to some users. Alpena County Library cannot censor access to the material on the Internet, nor protect its users from offensive information. The Internet has the ability to change quickly and unpredictably. Alpena County Library has no control over the material found on the net and cannot guarantee that any of the information found on-line is accurate, current or complete. Users need to independently evaluate the information they find on the Internet.

Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of the Internet. The Library staff will not attempt to control any of the information children may locate on the Internet.

Just as the purchase of print materials by the Library does not indicate that Alpena County Library endorses the contents therein, so the availability of electronic information does not imply endorsement of that information by Alpena County Library or any of its employees.

The Library is a public forum designed for public inquiry and, therefore, must not deny access to information protected by the first amendment. On the other hand, text or images that may be reasonably believed to be prohibited by Michigan law should not be displayed on library computers. In accordance with Supreme Court guidelines, we will choose the least restrictive means possible so that valid information and protected speech are not inadvertently blocked.

Internet access in the library by minor children under 18 years of age also must comply with Michigan law. Public Act 212 of 2000, which takes effect October 1, 2000, requires that the library either a) make available to individuals of any age, one or more terminals that are restricted from receiving obscene matter or sexually explicit matter that is harmful to minors and reserving to individuals 18 years of age or older or minors who are accompanied by their parent or guardian, one or more terminals that are not restricted from receiving any materials or b) utilizing a system or method that is designed to prevent a minor from viewing obscene matter or sexually explicit matter that is harmful to minors. The library believes that the appropriate definition for what is harmful to minors as determined by the 'contemporary local community standard' is the standard set by the parent or guardian for the minor. Therefore, we recommend that the parent or guardian supervise their child's Internet sessions if they have concerns about what their child may be accessing. To most effectively address the issue of unsupervised minors, the library will employ a combination of methods allowed under PA 212.

The procedure we use involves the following:

- An Internet policy geared to protect the interests of minors. It is handed to first-time users with the proviso that the use of the lab means understanding and agreement with policies currently in place. It is also prominently displayed in the lab.
- Time limits of two hours per day on computers.
- Each workstation is by reservation only.
- A patron signs in when registering for a workstation using their library card or a guest pass. They register at the Reservation Station kiosk and are assigned a computer to use.
- Guest passes are obtained at the Reference Desk.
- Brochures on Internet safety are provided.
- Classes on how to use the Internet are taught on a regular basis.
- A website directing users to pre-selected sites has been created.
- Use is monitored.

Rules for Use of Internet Access at Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library

1. All users must sign in at the Reservation Station kiosk and are assigned a computer to use. The use of the workstations is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Time is limited to two hours a day and all users must sign in and agree to this limitation as a condition of use. No more than two people at a computer at a time. If there is excessive noise or problems, the second person may be asked to leave. If there are difficulties with a computer, please ask for help at the desk. Do not move to another computer.
2. The computers in the lab are provided by the library for the purpose of doing research, word processing, and office applications. Patrons are expected to maintain a professional, business-like atmosphere conducive to research and study. Viewing certain materials in the public library may be inappropriate. These materials include graphics with explicit violence or sex. The Library reserves the right to end an Internet session at any time and to revoke Internet privileges. Individuals found in violation of this rule may lose their computer privileges for the day and possibly permanently if it becomes a repeat problem.
3. Please do not change any of the configurations on the computer.
4. If you have an e-mail account through an Internet vendor, you may access it. The library does not provide e-mail accounts.
5. You may not use your own software programs on computers.

6. You may bring your own flash-drive if you wish to save or download files. No files are to be saved or installed on the computer. The library is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal property when downloading.

7. A printer is available for copies. A fee of \$.10/page will be charged for all copies. It is the user's responsibility to check the print preview option to determine the length of the article. After the print job is initiated the patron must go to the Reference Desk to pay for their copies. After payment, the copies are then printed. If the patron is unable to pay for their copies the print job is canceled and no copies are printed.

8. The Internet workstations at Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library are intended for independent patron use. Staff will assist users with basic Internet instruction if time permits. However, the staff is not able to offer extensive explanations or in-depth training.

9. Use of the Internet must be for legal purposes only. Examples of unacceptable purposes include, but are not limited to the following:

- Harassment of other users or library staff
- Libeling or slandering other users.
- Destruction of or damage to equipment, software or data belonging to the library or other users.
- Unauthorized copying of copyright-protected material.
- Viewing child pornography
- Displaying pornography to a minor
- Cyberbullying

10. Alpena County Library's Internet Policy and the Computer Lab Use Rules and Procedures posted in the lab. By registering to use a computer, you are agreeing to read and abide by these policies and rules. Failure to follow the guidelines may result in the loss of your computer Privileges.

The Library Board of Trustees has adopted this policy in a good faith effort to comply with Michigan State Law by October 1, 2000. Library staff will continue to evaluate Internet access in the library and ways to regulate its use.