

**Subject:** Internet Use

**Application:** All employees, customers, consultants, contractors, vendors and visitors

Westchester Library System (WLS) and its member public libraries endeavor to develop services that meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of Westchester County's diverse, multicultural community. We do this by providing access to Internet resources that offer many valuable local, national and international sources of information.

WLS and the 38 member libraries support the right to privacy and confidentiality of Library users in accordance with the ALA's Library Bill of Rights; the Freedom to Read Statement; the Freedom to View; Access to Electronic Information Services and Networks; and with the policies, goals and objectives of this public library system.

However, the System and its member libraries do not monitor and have no control over the information accessed through the Internet, and therefore, cannot warrant the information available through its Internet connection to be accurate, authoritative, factual, timely or useful. In addition, because the content of the Internet is not managed or governed by any entity, users may encounter materials they consider offensive.

The Westchester Library System, Westchester Library System Board of Trustees and its employees, and any of our 38 member libraries assume no responsibility for damages of any type arising from the use of Internet workstations.

As with other library materials, the restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian. With regard to children and teenagers, we recommend that parents take an active interest in and responsibility for their children's online use. While young people need a certain amount of privacy, they also need parental involvement and supervision in their daily lives. The same general skills that apply to daily life apply while online.

Illegal use of the Internet is prohibited. Such illegal activities may result in loss of system privileges and criminal prosecution. Use of the WLS Internet gateway/connection is intended for private, non-commercial activities, and does not permit unauthorized sales and marketing of products or services.

It is illegal for library users to use Library Internet access to view, print, distribute, display, send or receive images or graphics of material that violates laws relating to child pornography.

Library users may not knowingly exhibit or display any material which is harmful to minors in its content or material that is obscene in any place of public accommodation where minors are or may be present and where minors are able to view the material.

In certain libraries in Westchester County there are workstations equipped with filtering software.

Library staff will assist patrons with Internet use as time permits, but cannot offer personal instruction. Formal instruction or information on the Internet may be offered by various Westchester Library System member libraries at designated times. Contact a member library for details.

Information and resources on the Internet enhance those already held in the library and often go beyond what is locally available. Users are encouraged to take advantage of the Internet and to exercise good judgment and discretion in their use of it.

*This policy was approved by the WLS Board of Trustees at their 9/29/2009 Meeting and is to be reviewed annually.*