

# PAULINE HAASS PUBLIC LIBRARY

## **POLICY: Public Internet Access**

Adopted by Library Board: September 17, 2008

The Pauline Haass Public Library serves as a gateway to lifelong learning and community engagement. The mission is to provide a welcoming, easy-to-use environment, to promote literacy, and to connect people to information and ideas through staff, services, materials, and technology. The primary purpose of the library's Internet workstations is to supplement and extend its print, non-print, and electronic collections of information materials. Although the Internet can be used for a variety of purposes, use of the library's workstations is intended only for those functions which are appropriate to its mission.

The Internet is a worldwide computer network which provides access to a massive body of information. This expands the library's information services beyond traditional collections and electronic resources. The Internet is also a rapidly changing environment, and therefore the library cannot monitor or control the information available on the Internet and is not responsible for its content beyond the library's own home pages. Users are responsible for determining that the information they access is acceptable, reliable, suitable to their needs, and complies with this policy and accompanying guidelines.

Responsibility for the use of the Internet by children and young adults rests with their parents or legal guardians. Parents are strongly encouraged to discuss appropriate use of Internet resources with their children and to supervise their children's Internet sessions.

Internet users need to be aware that they may find material in graphical or text format that they consider offensive, just as they might find objectionable material in other formats such as books, tapes, or videos. This includes sexually explicit material and materials of questionable accuracy. Just as the library does not endorse the viewpoints of written and recorded material in its collections, it does not do so for electronic information.

### **Acceptable Use Rules**

1. Users shall observe the Internet procedures and regulations of the Pauline Haass Public Library. The library staff has developed procedural restrictions, which may change with time and circumstances, necessary to allow for equitable and responsible use of the Internet. Current procedures for use of the Internet accompany this policy and are posted at each Internet terminal. Misuse of the Library's computers or any violation of the Library's Internet policy and procedures may result in the loss of Internet privileges, loss of library privileges, and/or criminal prosecution.
2. Users shall observe all federal, state, and municipal laws and regulations.
3. Illegal use of the Internet is prohibited and subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

4. Children under age 12 may not use the Internet terminals in the adult area of the library unless sharing a single terminal with a supervising adult. Children under age 12 may use the Internet terminals in the Youth Services area. The Youth Services terminals open to a home page which is designed to guide children to child-friendly websites. Children age 7 and under must be accompanied by an adult when using an Internet terminal, to assure proper use of the equipment. Library staff will not assist a child under the age of 12 in setting up an e-mail account.
5. The Internet workstations in the Youth Room are for use by children and the parents who are supervising them in the room. Children have priority at these workstations, so an adult may be asked to end his or her session if a child is waiting. Adults using these workstations are expected to be sensitive to the presence of children in the room and may be asked to use an adult workstation if the site(s) they are viewing are deemed by staff to be inappropriate for children.
6. Adults who are *not* accompanying children who are using the Youth Room must use the workstations in the adult area, rather than those in the Youth Room.
7. An Adult who is using an Internet workstation in the adult area, and who is accompanied by a child under the age of 12, may be asked to move to the Youth Room if the child is disruptive.
8. Minors are strongly admonished, for safety reasons, to not reveal any personal identification information (name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, etc.) to unknown persons or through websites on the Internet. No other person may, without consent, disclose, use, or disseminate personal identification information about a minor.
9. Internet computers shall not be used for illegal activities, to access illegal materials, or to access materials that may be reasonably construed as obscene. Transmitting and/or receiving of child pornography is a crime.
10. Examples of unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to: accessing files, passwords, or data belonging to others; damaging or altering hardware or software; unauthorized reproducing of copyrighted, licensed, or other protected material; misrepresenting oneself as another user; harassing or interfering with other users; and violating applicable local, state, federal, or international laws.
11. Minors, whether or not accompanied by a parent or guardian, shall not use computers for any illegal activity or to access illegal materials, child pornography, obscene materials, materials “harmful to minors” as defined by Sec. 948.11 of the Wisconsin Statute. Beyond these restrictions and others in this policy, determination of what is inappropriate for a minor rests with his or her parent or legal guardian.
12. Adults shall not expose minors to materials defined as “harmful to minors” by Sec. 948.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Because minors use the library during all open hours,

and an Internet user cannot be aware of who may be viewing his or her screen, viewing these materials is never allowed.

13. Staff will monitor use of Internet workstations to ensure compliance with this policy. Because security of files is technologically difficult to achieve, and the scope of law enforcement searches varies, Internet users are advised that electronic transactions and files could become public.
14. Library users whose accounts have been referred to a collection agency are prohibited from Internet use until full restitution is made to the Library. Staff members will assist such users in meeting their information needs, just as they would assist any customer.
15. The Library is not responsible for loss or damage to user hardware, software, or data.

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the Library Board of Trustees at least every three years or as needed.

Adopted by Library Board: August 12, 1998  
Revised by Library Board: February 18, 2004  
Revised by Library Board: June 16, 2004  
Revised by Library Board: December 19, 2007  
Revised by Library Board: May 21, 2008  
Revised by Library Board: September 17, 2008