BETHEL PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

POLICY NUMBER: 106
TITLE: Internet and Computer Use Policy
DATE ISSUED: June 2008; Revised June 2017; Revised March 2011; Revised November 2026

PURPOSE:
In response to advances in technology and the changing information needs of our community, the Bethel Park Public Library endeavors to develop collections, resources, and services that meet the personal, professional and educational needs of our community. It is within this context that the Bethel Park Public Library offers access to the Internet.

STATEMENT OF POLICY:
The Internet is an unregulated global communication network and information resource with a highly diverse user population and information content. The library does not assume responsibility for the accuracy, quality, or timeliness of Internet information. As with all library materials, the determination of viability and usefulness of Internet information rest with the individual patron.

The library provides access to Internet resources equally to all library users and upholds and affirms the right of each individual to have access to constitutionally protected material. However, users need to be aware that obscenity and child pornography are not constitutionally protected. Internet computers shall not be used for any fraudulent or unlawful purpose, including any activity prohibited under any Federal, State or Local Law including activities in violation of 18 Pa Cons. Stat. Sec. 5903, which prohibits certain acts of public indecency.

While Library staff will work to provide a safe environment for children and uphold applicable laws, a parent or legal guardian, not the library or its staff, is responsible for monitoring a child's use of the Internet and for the information selected and/or accessed by that child. The library strongly encourages parents or legal guardians to supervise their children's Internet use and to provide them with guidelines about acceptable use. While the library staff will work to provide a safe environment for children and uphold applicable laws, the library and its staff will not act in place of the parent.

Material on the Internet is copyrighted. It is the user's responsibility to be aware of any notices concerning the copyright of information and to respect the copyright laws of the United States.

CHILDREN'S INTERNET PROTECTION ACT (CIPA) COMPLIANCE
The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law that requires all computers in a public library to be filtered if that library accepts any federal funds for Internet access or computers used for Internet access. [Supreme Court decision: United States v. American Library Ass'n, Inc., No. 02-361 (June 23, 2003)] Bethel Park Public Library complies with the requirements of CIPA and with Allegheny County Bill No. 1899-05.

All computers in the Bethel Park Public Library are filtered. Please be aware that filters are unreliable, at times blocking sites of legitimate informational or educational value, or allowing access to sites that are illegal, obscene, or sexually explicit within the meaning of 18 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec 5903.

The library uses filtering software that blocks or filters Internet access to some Internet sites that may not be consistent with the policy of Bethel Park Public Library.

Any adult (18 years of age or older) may request that the filter or technology protection measure be disabled without significant delay by a library staff member authorized by the Library Director, consistent with the privacy policy of the Library.

An authorized staff member may override the filter or technology protection measure for a minor (age 17 years or younger) if the filter wrongly blocks or filters Internet access to a site with legitimate informational value.

Bethel Park Public Library cannot be responsible for any patron's unauthorized use of a computer with a disabled filter.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Any patron who wishes to file a written complaint concerning the filtering software on the library computers may do so within thirty (30) days of an incident to:

1. The Library Director and/or the Library Board President;
2. The Director of the Electronic Information Network;
3. The Federal Communications Commission.

See a library staff person for a complaint form (Appendix C).

GUIDELINES FOR USE
In an effort to ensure that the use of the Internet is consistent with the mission of the Library, the Library has adopted the following guidelines:

- The Internet computers must be used in a responsible manner, respecting the rights of other users. This includes but is not limited to the following:
  - Users may not make any attempt to damage computer equipment or software.
  - Computer and Internet settings may not be changed.
  - Users may not use the network to make unauthorized entry into other computational, informational or communication services or resources.
  - Users may not invade the privacy of others or engage in any activity that is harassing or defamatory.
- Card holders with fees exceeding ~~$5.00~~ $35.00 will not be granted computer access.
- Users must log in and out of the Envisonware software.
- Use of Internet computers will be on a first come, first served basis.
- The Library reserves the right to limit computer use during peak hours.
- The Library reserves the right to limit or prohibit downloading of files in any medium.
- Listening to audio/video files requires headphones.
- The Library does not allow the use of personal software on library computers. However, you may use your own flash drives or CD-R.
- Library staff reserve the right to limit instant messaging, chat and game sessions.
- A printer is available for patron use. Copies are ~~.15¢~~ $0.25 per page for B&W copies or .50¢ for color copies. See a staff member to release your print job.
- To end your computer session, click on the "logout" button on the screen. *Please do not shut down the computer.*
- The library staff will provide limited start up assistance to patrons wanting to use the Internet. If a patron has limited computer experience or has specific questions about the Internet, free computer classes are available in the library. In addition, circulating books and reference materials pertaining to computers and the Internet are also available.

COMPLIANCE WITH LIBRARY POLICY AND GUIDELINES
Violation of the policies and guidelines that govern the use of the Library's Internet resources may result in suspension or loss of the privilege to use these resources and/or expulsion from the library facility.

Any illegal activity involving the Library's Internet resources or equipment will be subject to prosecution by the appropriate authorities.

The Library reserves the right to take appropriate actions to ensure compliance with this policy.

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING INTERNET POLICY VIOLATION
At the discretion of the librarian on duty, and in consideration of the severity of the offense:

1st offense:	Verbal warning
2nd offense:	Written warning and suspension of privileges for three (3) days. Patron is to receive and sign a copy of the Library Policy Violation Form (Appendix A). A copy of the signed form is to be kept on file at the library.
3rd offense:	Suspension of privileges for 30 days. Patron to be informed by registered letter (Appendix B) which is to include a copy of the Internet and Computer Use Policy and signed Library Policy Violation Form on file at the library*.

Subsequent or severe violations may result in permanent suspension of Internet privileges.

The Library Director and the Library Board of Trustees are to be informed of any violations at the 3rd offense or higher.

*For minors, the letter will be addressed to "The Parent or Guardian of" the offender.

APPENDIX A – LIBRARY POLICY VIOLATION FORM

Bethel Park Public Library Policy Violation Form

_____ has violated the following library policy or policies:

_____ **#106 Internet and Computer Use** _____ **#102 Patron Behavior**

_____ **Other:** _____

This is a □**1st warning** □**2nd warning** □**final notice**. By violating library policy, the above-named patron has forfeited the right to use the library and/or its resources including

computers for the following period: _____. Upon return, if the

above-named patron violates a policy again, the library reserves the right to rescind all use of

the library by said patron. Comments: _____

_____

Date: _____ Patron Signature: _____ Staff: _____

Bethel Park Public Library Policy Violation Form

_____ has violated the following library policy or policies:

_____ **#106 Internet and Computer Use** _____ **#102 Patron Behavior**

_____ **Other:** _____

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_____

Date: _____ Patron Signature: _____ Staff: _____

APPENDIX B

Bethel Park Public Library
5100 W. Library Avenue
Bethel Park, PA 15102
412-835-2207 · Fax 412-835-9360
www.bethelparklibrary.org

Date

Patron Name
Address
Address

Dear Patron,

As you have been verbally informed on [date], your Internet privileges at the library have been suspended for thirty (30) days.

This suspension is a result of violating the library's Internet Use policy. Specifically, you were violating the library's policy of [name violation].

Please find enclosed a copy of the library's Internet Use Policy and the Library Policy Violation Form which you signed on [date]. You are welcome to use any of the other resources in the library during your Internet suspension. Your Internet privileges will be reinstated on [date].

Future violations may result in permanent suspension of your Internet privileges at Bethel Park Public Library.

Sincerely,

Christine McIntosh
Director
Bethel Park Public Library

APPENDIX C

Bethel Park Public Library
Internet Filtering Software Complaint Form

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Phone # _____

URL/Web address of site in question: _____

Nature of Complaint:

☐ The filter blocked a site that it should not have.

☐ The filter failed to block an inappropriate site.

☐ The staff member did not disable the filter or unblock the site quickly enough.

You will receive a response within thirty (30) days.

Bethel Park Public Library
5100 W. Library Avenue
Bethel Park, PA 15102
412-835-2207 · 412-835-9360
www.bethelparklibrary.org

APPENDIX D

ALLEGHENY COUNTY BILL NO. 1899-05

Allegheny County Council
Legislative File ID **1899-05**

Type:	**Resolution**	Status:	**Approved**
Enactment Date:	**5/27/2005**	Enactment No.:	**17-05-RE**
Title:	**Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, requiring annual verification that all libraries under the umbrella of the Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) have implemented a policy on Internet and computer use that is in compliance with all Federal, State and Local laws; requiring an annual review of filtering software utilized by the Electronic Information Network (eiNetwork) to comply with Federal, State and Local laws; requiring annual reports by each library of incidents in which the federal and state laws concerning the use of the computers and network are violated and how such violations were handled; establishing a public education component in cooperation with County agencies; and, further, providing that non-compliance with these provisions will result in the suspension of County funding of the eiNetwork.**		
Controlling Body:	**Committee on Public Safety**		
Introduced:	**3/15/2005**	Version:	**2**
Final Action:	**5/18/2005**	Contact:	
Sponsors:	**Vince Gastgeb, Joan Cleary, Chuck Martoni, Jan Rea, Eileen Watt, John DeFazio**		