



OTIS LIBRARY INTERNET FILTERING AND COMPUTER USE POLICY

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Otis Library to uphold the rights of individual users to access Constitutionally-protected speech and information in a wide range of formats, including that available over the Internet. However, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act (“CIPA”) and in order to receive certain federal funds, Otis Library will implement technology protection measures (Internet filtering) for all Internet-accessible computers and other electronic devices using the Internet service provided by or through the Otis Library.

The technology protection measure/filtering software will, to the extent practicable, (a) protect against access by staff and patrons, both minors and adults, to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors as defined by federal law; (b) promote the safety and security of all Internet users, including minors, when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication; (c) guard against unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding all Internet users, including minors; and (d) prevent unauthorized online access to the computer networks of the Library and others, including so-called “hacking”, and any other unlawful activities by all Internet users, including minors.

Practice and procedure

Access to Inappropriate Material

The technology protection measure/filtering software installed on the Library’s Internet-accessible computers is intended to protect against access to visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography, and, in the case of persons under the age of 18 years, materials that are “harmful to minors,” as defined by federal law. Users should be aware, however, that all currently available technology protection measure/filtering software results in some degree of both “underblocking” (permitting access to certain material that falls within the foregoing categories) and “overblocking” (denying access to certain constitutionally protected material that does not fall within the foregoing categories). The Library cannot and does not guarantee that the technology protection measure/filtering software will block all obscenity, child pornography, or materials that are harmful to minors. Nor can the

Library guarantee that the technology protection measure/filtering software will not restrict access to sites that may have legitimate research or other value. In order to help address the problem of over- and under-blocking and to enhance users' access to constitutionally protected speech and information, users, both adults and minors, may speak to a library staff member or contact the Library at bfarwell@otislibrarynorwich.org concerning any incorrectly blocked site.

Use by Minors

The Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their children's access to Library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet. A parent or legal guardian of a minor under age 11 years and under must sign the minor's application for an Otis Library card and approve access to the Library's computer resources.

Internet Safety

Otis Library will take steps to promote the safety and security of all users of the Library's on line computer network. At the time library cards are issued, Library staff will provide all users with information designed to promote safe and secure computer use. This includes using caution when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, and steps users can take to prevent unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information. Library staff will oversee use of the Library's online computer network and access to the Internet by all patrons in accordance with this policy. However, the Library is not and cannot be responsible for maintaining the privacy or confidentiality of personal or personally identifiable information provided by a user to a third party via the Internet.

Inappropriate Network Usage

Unauthorized access to the Library's computers, databases, network, hardware or software settings is prohibited. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors. Damage to the Library's computer resources also is prohibited. Users must comply with applicable copyright laws and licensing agreements. Violation of these rules may result in the loss of Library privileges.

Disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection

Any user who is 18 years of age or older may ask Otis staff to disable the technology protection measure/filtering software in order to obtain unfiltered Internet access for bona fide research or any other lawful purpose. Otis staff may request technology protection

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measure/filtering software to be disabled if necessary to perform their work duties. Procedures for disabling the measures shall be the responsibility of the Director or Assistant Director or a designated representative.

TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE. The term “technology protection measure” means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. **OBSCENE**, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18 United States Code; or
3. Harmful to minors

HARMFUL TO MINORS. The term “harmful to minors” means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT. The terms “sexual act” and “sexual contact” have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

MINOR. The term “minor” means a person under the age of eighteen years (Connecticut General Statutes sec. 1-1d).