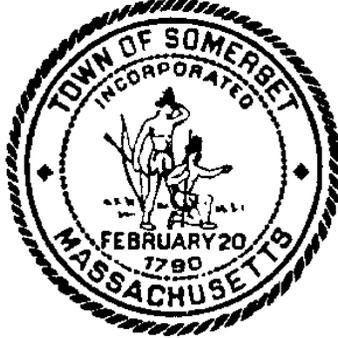


Somerset Public Library

Public Internet Access



Adopted 3/18/1997

Revision approved by Town Counsel, March 26, 2011

Revision approved by vote of the Board of Trustees, April 19, 2011

Reviewed and revised November 14, 2014

The Somerset Public Library exists to serve as a center of informal learning, individual growth and recreation for the citizens of Somerset. The Library expects to make a contribution to the learning process and to aid individuals in the lifelong process of growth and appreciation and understanding of themselves, their neighbors, and the world around them. In addition, the library makes its building available as a setting for appropriate events according to the needs and interests of the community.

It is the policy of the Somerset Public Library to secure for the Community access to cultural, intellectual and recreational materials and information on as broad a range of subjects, for as broad a range of interests, and from as broad a range of viewpoints as possible. The Internet is one of the many ways of delivering these materials in electronic format. The Internet allows access to a wealth of information that the Library could not otherwise afford, or might not be able to obtain in another format. Therefore, it is the policy of The Somerset Public Library, within the limits of our financial resources, to make the Community's access to the Internet as full and free as possible.

In no case does the display of any material on the Library's Internet workstations constitute an endorsement by the Library of the material's content and/or point of view. On the other hand, the Library does not control or limit access to Internet material. If material appears which you didn't search for and it makes you uncomfortable, please alert the librarian right away. The library is not responsible for the accuracy or comprehensiveness of material displayed on its Internet workstations. As with all other library material, patrons need to be good information consumers, assessing the validity of the information they find.

The Somerset Public Library endorses the *Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association (ALA), and the ALA's "Access to Electronic Information, services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights"*.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all uses of Internet workstations located in the Somerset Public Library and to any home use of the Internet which is obtained through SAILS, the consortium of libraries to which the Somerset Public Library belongs.

DEFINITION

The term "Internet" refers to a worldwide computer network that is capable of the rapid transmission of information to any of its component parts.

SCOPE OF ACCESS ALLOWED

Patrons may use the Library's Internet workstations to gain access to any information available in standard Internet resources. Email use is allowed under the terms explained later in this policy. The library reserves the right to establish limitations on the downloading and printing of information and the length of each Internet session.

CONFIDENTIALITY

For technical reasons, the sources of information to which a patron gains access on the Internet cannot be kept strictly confidential. Subsequent users of the Library's public Internet workstations may be able to see where previous users have "gone" in search of information. Privacy and identity fraud are an issue of concern for all users of any electronic equipment. Patrons therefore make use of the library's public Internet workstations at their own risk. It is not recommended that you input personal passwords or personal information on these workstations for your own security. The library is not responsible for information gained by a third party through use of the computers.

Patrons must also understand that the network system administrator or website administrator may have to access e-mail while performing required duties. Use of the e-mail system should be considered comparable to writing a letter or postcard and posting it in a public place. Even if information has been deleted, it may still be retrievable.

CHILDREN'S USE OF THE INTERNET

The public library, unlike schools, does not serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent). Librarians cannot act in the place of parents in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. The responsibility for what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents or guardians. The Somerset Public Library will not be responsible for any child's access to any Internet materials. Patrons under the age of 18 are required to have parental permission to use the Internet at the Somerset Public Library

EMAIL USE

Access to Internet based email is allowed. The library cannot provide detailed instruction on setting up email accounts nor is the library responsible for passwords, lost messages, etc. You must have no expectations of privacy in anything you create or send via email. Sending or forwarding of email falling under libel or obscenity laws may be considered illegal acts and may be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE

Librarians will help the patron get started in accessing the Internet, but cannot provide in-depth training. They may be able to offer searching tips and answer some questions, as with other forms of reference service. Library staff will not type documents for patrons or download files to personal devices. The Somerset Library Staff will make accommodations for patrons with disabilities. Please contact the Reference Librarian or the Library Director if any accommodations are needed.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

As with all other Library resources and services, patrons are expected to use public Internet workstations in a responsible manner, respecting the rights of others. Library computers are located in public areas that are shared by library users of all ages, backgrounds and values. We request that our computer users remain sensitive to the fact that they are occupying a public environment shared by others. Examples of unacceptable purposes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance
- Vandalizing the data of any other user
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities
- Invading the privacy of individuals
- Violating software license agreements and copyright laws
- Harassment of other users
- Libeling other users
- Violating other Federal, State, or local laws.
- Utilizing library equipment to access material that is obscene, pornographic or harmful to minors.

Violation of any of these provisions may result in suspension or cancellation of the patron's access to the Library Internet workstations. Illegal acts involving Library computer resources may be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

WORKSTATIONS

Public Internet use is permitted only at workstations identified by appropriate signage and during announced periods of availability. The library cannot guarantee availability of workstations.

- You must have a public library card in good standing. Arrangements can be made for out-of-town users or for extenuating circumstances.
- Workstations are used on a first-come first served basis.
- Use is limited to a 30-minute block of time. If no one is waiting, you may stay on until the next person reserves use of a computer. Patrons are limited to a total of four (4) hours use per day.
- Workstations are connected to a central printer.
- There is a cost for the printing of copies.
- Printing is at a centralized site – privacy cannot be guaranteed.
- Use of personal flash drives is permitted. The library is not responsible for loss or damage of flash drives.
- Computers are shut down 15 minutes before the library closes.
- Headphones are allowed, volume must not distract others.
- Use only the computer assigned to you. Do not change computers during a session or attempt to use more than one computer at a time.
- Patrons may not gather around computer users since doing so may distract others.
- If you experience any problems in using the computer and/or the printer, report the problem immediately at the Reference Desk. The staff will assist you.
- Be respectful of other patrons' rights to a quiet and private environment in which to use the Internet. Do not engage other patrons in conversations or remain in the Web station area when others are using the Internet.
- Leave the computer exactly as you found it. For example, do not change preferences or delete bookmarks. Do not turn off the machine.

The library reserves the right to end an Internet session and/or discontinue computer privileges to anyone breaking the rules established in this policy by the Board of Trustees of the Somerset Public Library on the use of the Internet or the computers at this library.

The Board of Trustees will review this policy annually.

[Policy for wireless access on your own computer.](#)

TRUSTEE APPROVAL DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE
03/18/1997	Original release, approved by Town Counsel
3/26/2011	Revision presented, approved by Town Counsel
4/19/2011	Revised policy approved by Board of Trustees
11/14/2014	Revised, approved by Board of Trustees
	Policy is reviewed annually, only noted if changes are made.