JERSEY CITY FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY
INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

Adopted by the Board of Trustees
June 11, 2002

Section 1. Introduction

It is the policy of the Jersey City Free Public Library to: (a) prevent unacceptable uses of its computer network; (b) protect minors from viewing inappropriate material over its computer network; and (c) comply with the Neighborhood Children’s Internet Protection Act [Public Law No 106-554; Subtitle C], which was codified within 47 United States Code 254 (h) (7) and (l). (Minor means a person less than 17 years of age.)

The Library affirms the right and the primary responsibility of parents/guardians to determine and monitor the use of the Internet by their minor children.

Section 2 Unacceptable Uses of Library Computers

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this policy are the following:

A. Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law. Transmitting of offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading pornographic materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, users should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.

B. Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property. Engaging in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); uploading a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems; using the Library’s computers to send unsolicited voluminous emails (for example, spamming) or to intercept, interfere with, or redirect email intended for third parties.

C. Uses that jeopardize the security of access of the computer network or other networks on the Internet. Disclosing or sharing the user's password with others; impersonating another user; using one's own software programs on the library's computers; altering the Library's computer settings; damaging or modifying computer equipment or software.

D. Uses that compromise the safety and security of minors when using e-mail and other forms of direct electronic communications: Minors under age 17: Giving others
private information about one's self or others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers; arranging a face-to-face meeting with someone one has "met" on the computer network or Internet without a parent's permission.

E.  Uses that Violate Confidentiality of Information: The New Jersey Confidentiality of Library Records Law (NJSA 18A:73-43.2) prohibits unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information regarding Library users, including minors. Personally identifiable information about users may not be disclosed or used in any way, except to law enforcement authorities as provided in the law. Users should be aware, however, that due to the technical difficulties involved in providing absolute security, transactions and files may become public.

Section 3. Other Issues Related to Computer Usage

A.  Internet-based electronic mail services will be permitted for all users; however, because of network restrictions and the need for staff intervention to reapply the default settings, the email function of the web browser will not be activated, so that users will not be able to access their individual email accounts with their own Internet Service Providers.

B.  The chat and the instant messaging features will not be activated on library computers. Internet telephony will not be permitted.

Section 4. Access to Inappropriate Matter by Minors

A.  Inappropriate matter is defined as that which is
   1. Obscenity
   2. Child Pornography, as that term is defined in section 2256 of Title 18, United States Code; or
   3. Material Harmful to Minors. The term “harmful to minors” means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:
      a. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
      b. 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
      c. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.
      (The terms “sexual act” and “sexual contact” have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of Title 18, United States Code.)

B.  To the extent practical, minors will be protected from viewing inappropriate matter via the World Wide Web, email, or other forms of electronic communications. Signs will be posted to specify that this matter may not be viewed on the library computer network. To the extent practical, library staff will monitor the use of its computers by
minors to discourage access to inappropriate matter. A staff member who observes the
access of inappropriate matter by a user will advise the user that this access is opposed to
library policy.

Section 5. Response to Violations:

Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures will result in the forfeiture of
the user’s right to access Library computers.

The user’s access to the Library’s computer network and Internet is a privilege,
not a right. A staff member who observes inappropriate usage will advise the user that
this usage is opposed to library policy. If the user does not comply with this warning,
the staff member may terminate the Internet session.

Section 6. Disclaimers

While the Library endeavors to provide access to information of the highest
quality, the Library specifically disclaims any warrant as to the information's accuracy,
timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness or fitness for a particular purpose.

The Library will have no liability for direct, indirect or consequential damages
related to the use of information accessed through the Library's Internet service.

Since software and information downloaded from any sources, including the
Internet, may contain computer viruses, users are advised to utilize virus-checking
software on their home computers. The Library is not responsible for damage to users'
disks or computers or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of
the Library's computers.

Section 7. Reaffirmation of Policy on Computer Usage

The Board incorporates in this Internet Safety Policy the provisions of its Policy
on Computer Usage (as in effect from time to time), including the Guidelines for Parents
and Caregivers and the Rules of Conduct for Use of Public Computers to Access the
Internet and Online Databases.

Section 8. Adoption:

This Internet Safety Policy was adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Jersey
City Free Public Library at a public meeting, following public notice, on June 11, 2002,
and will take effect on June 30, 2002.