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**Subject: Internet Safety and Computer Use Companion Document**

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The mission of Monterey County Free Libraries is to bring ideas, inspiration, information and enjoyment to our community.

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**Policy Statement**

It is the policy of Monterey County Free Libraries (MCFL) to uphold the rights of individual users to access constitutionally-protected information; however, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Neighborhood Children’s Internet Protection Act (NCIPA), and in order to receive certain federal funds, MCFL will implement technology protection measures, including Internet filtering, for all its Internet-accessible computers and other Library owned electronic devices using MCFL’s Internet service. The technology protection/filtering software will, to the extent practicable, prevent access by patrons and staff, whether minor or adult, to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors as defined by federal law. MCFL also provides educational information promoting the safety and security of all Internet users, including minors, when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication, and guarding against the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information. MCFL prohibits the use of Library computers to engage in any unlawful activities, including the use of “hacking” to gain access to the Library computer networks.

**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 16 years, materials that are “harmful to minors” as defined by U.S. Code. Users should be aware, however, that all currently available technology protection measure/filtering software results in some degree of both “under blocking” and “over blocking.” MCFL 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 MCFL 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, whether adult or minor, may speak to Library staff or contact the Library at [611-Seaside-Ref@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:611-Seaside-Ref@co.monterey.ca.us) concerning any incorrectly blocked site.

## **Use by Minors**

MCFL 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.

## **Internet Safety**

MCFL makes information to promote safe and secure computer use available to all users. This includes using caution when using e-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. MCFL is not and cannot be responsible for maintaining the privacy or confidentiality of personal or personally identifiable information provided by a user 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 CIPA, inappropriate network usage includes both unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities; and the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors. Damage to the Library's computer resources is prohibited and users must be in compliance with all applicable copyright laws and licensing agreements. Violation of these rules may result in the loss of Library privileges.

## **Disabling Filters**

Any user who is 17 years of age or older may ask library staff to disable the filtering software for bona fide research or any other lawful purpose. Library staff may request filtering software to be disabled if necessary to perform their work duties. Procedures for disabling the filters shall be the responsibility of the Library Director or his/her designated representatives.

## **Definitions**

1. **MINOR.** The term "minor" means any individual who has not attained the age of 17 years.
2. **TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE.** The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:
3. **OBSCENE**, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
4. **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or Harmful to minors.
5. **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.

**6. 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.

Related policies: Library Behavior Policy, Internet Safety and Computer Use