Computer Use Policy

The Hampstead Public Library (HPL) provides access to a broad range of information sources, including those available on the Internet. We make this service available as part of our mission to provide equal access to all information sources to all the citizens in the town to enrich their lives for education, enlightenment, and entertainment.

HPL and its Board of Trustees subscribe to the ALA Access to Electronic Information, Services and Networks: An interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, which states that "libraries should use technology to enhance, not deny, access to information."

HPL provides unfiltered wired and wireless access to the Internet as a service for users. The Internet is a global and unregulated information network. Information that is controversial or mature in nature, as well as information that is not complete, accurate or current is unavoidable.

HPL seeks to provide equal access to information for persons of all ages and will not restrict access to library materials and services for minors. Parents and guardians of children under the age of 18 are responsible for deciding what library materials are appropriate for their children. Supervision or restriction of a child's access to the Internet, as with other library resources, is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Library Staff will provide general information on the settings necessary to access the Internet via the wireless network. If a user has problems accessing the Internet over this connection, staff will only verify that the library's connection is operating normally. Staff will not perform troubleshooting on the patron's own wireless device.

The Library cannot guarantee a secure connection to the Internet in a wireless environment. Patrons are advised to use the latest anti-virus, anti-spyware and other standard protection software to prevent unauthorized access to their wireless devices. Wireless users are advised not to transmit credit card information, passwords or other sensitive personal information while using wireless access in the Library. Patrons are also advised that there is no content filter on wireless access.

The Library is not responsible for any information that is compromised, hacked or stolen, or for any damage caused to users' hardware or software due to security issues, viruses, hacking or library systems.

All users of HPL resources are expected to use them in a responsible manner, consistent with the educational, informational and recreational purposes for which they are provided.   Responsible, ethical use of such resources includes the following:

- The wired and wireless connections shall not be used for any illegal activity. HPL will not tolerate use of its computers in any way that violates local, state, or federal laws.
- Users shall not:
    - Attempt to modify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others
    - Introduce viruses
    - Seek unauthorized access to any computer system
    - Damage or alter software or hardware components of this or any other network or database
    - Make unauthorized copies of copyrighted or licensed media or other information

- Users are reminded that HPL computers are located in public places that are shared with library users and staff of all ages, backgrounds, and sensibilities. Individuals are expected to consider this diversity and respect the sensibilities of others when accessing potentially offensive information or images. Library staff members reserve the right to ask users to refrain from displaying computer images that are inappropriate for public viewing.
- Blatantly offensive visual or text-based materials constitute potential sources of sexual harassment to other patrons and to library staff and will not be tolerated.
- Users will be held responsible for any damage done to hardware, software, or data owned by HPL.

HPL reserves the right to terminate a computer or wireless access session that disrupts library services or that involves patron behavior that violates this policy. Violations of any part of this policy may result in the loss of library privileges. Penalties may include suspending or terminating the patron's access to library computers and/or Internet access.

Illegal activity involving the Library's computer or Internet resources will be subject to prosecution by the appropriate authorities. By use of the HPL computers or Internet resources, users agree to allow all files and related information on the computer to be used by law enforcement personnel in the prosecution of a crime.

HPL reserves the right to modify this policy at any time. Use of the library's wired and wireless Internet access constitutes acceptance of the current version of the policy.

Accepted by the Board of Trustees, March 21, 2012
Revision Approved by Board of Trustees, September 20, 2016