

## MOORE MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY INTERNET POLICY

(approved by the Moore Memorial Library Board of Trustees on August 22, 2005)

### Mission and purpose

Moore Memorial Public Library was founded to meet the informational needs of the citizens of Texas City. Recognizing the diversity of the community and the surrounding area, the library strives to provide information in a variety of formats to meet the educational, professional, cultural, and recreational needs of its patrons. The library offers materials to foster inclusion and contribute to cross-cultural understanding, to help patrons keep pace with the progress of technology, to allow persons to participate fully in political and social organizations and to perform their daily tasks more proficiently, to develop creative and spiritual potentials, to foster appreciation and enjoyment of our diverse culture, to promote personal and social well-being, and to contribute to the growth of knowledge in all areas.

The library's mission is to create a community of life-long learners in which all citizens share equally in the opportunities to increase skills, knowledge and understanding in all fields, regardless of wealth, race, age or cultural background. Special emphasis is also placed on providing special services to very young patrons with the goal of fostering a life-long love of reading and learning.

The Library realizes that free access to the full range of ideas and information is critical to the accomplishment of its mission, and views the Internet as a powerful and evolving tool to link our citizens to information and to the electronic community. It also provides integral access to business, educational, medical, social, cultural, historical and governmental organizations which make up the fabric of our society and our world.

### Scope of Internet access

From the library workstations, library patrons may access online library catalogs, full text and bibliographic databases, standard office software, electronic books and media, distance education sites and other information sources.

Although Moore Memorial Library does not offer free e-mail accounts to the public, patrons are welcome to use library workstations to set up free web-based email accounts.

### Intellectual Freedom

The Library recognizes the inherent right of individuals to determine what is most appropriate for their needs. Moore Memorial Public Library staff and Board of Trustees support intellectual freedom and subscribe to the principles outlined in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and its statements, Freedom to Read and

Freedom to View. Users should recognize that the information accessed on the Internet may be controversial, inaccurate, misleading, or offensive.

As with the Library's other materials and services, parents and legal guardians are responsible for the information accessed by children. The library cannot regulate Internet access points for children and accepts no responsibility for information or sites they may select. Parents or legal guardians who wish to limit or restrict the access of their own children should personally oversee the child's use of the Internet. The library staff assumes no responsibility in monitoring the child's usage of the Internet.

All patrons should be very cautious when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other methods of direct electronic communications. Parents should instruct their children never to provide personal or financial information about themselves or their family without prior approval.

A patron's use of Internet resources carries with it a responsibility to evaluate the quality and content of the information received. If a patron feels that information obtained through the Internet is inaccurate or offensive, the library encourages that patron to contact the original producer or distributor of that information. The availability of information does not constitute endorsement by the library of the content of that information.

#### Liability

The Library assumes no responsibility for any damage, direct or indirect, that users or anyone else may experience through interaction with the Internet. The library is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal disks, software, files, etc. used at the workstations.

#### Privacy/Confidentiality

The Library tries to protect First Amendment rights of its patrons and their individual right to privacy and confidentiality. However, facility limitations and space limitations require that the workstations be located in public areas. Patrons should exercise caution and common sense in providing personal, financial or other sensitive or confidential information on public workstations. Images on the screens are subject to view by other patrons who are physically present in that area. All patrons are asked to respect the privacy of other users and not attempt to comment on, or censor, what others are viewing. The Internet is a public forum, and security may be minimal, defective or nonexistent on a specific site.

#### Assistance in use of the Internet

Library staff will be available to provide basic assistance in the use of the Internet. To insure the continuation of traditional reference assistance and other library services,

instruction on usage of the Internet and operation and function of the workstations or the software will be limited.

### Use of the Internet

To insure equality of access to all patrons, Internet resources, including computer workstations, may be allocated at the discretion of the Reference Staff and the Library Administration. Computer workstations are assigned on a first-come first-served basis, depending on the availability of resources. Use of all library collections, including online resources, is not prioritized by staff perceptions on the value of the use of the resources. Access to workstations is not restricted to Texas City residents.

Time limits will apply to all users and access may be limited to one session per day. A valid Moore Memorial Public Library card or a form of picture ID is necessary for workstation use, except for those terminals restricted to the Library's online catalog.

The Library determines the levels and types of Internet services available, including which browser software versions and plug-ins are available on the workstations.

Printing is allowed and charges, as posted, will be collected by the reference staff. Failure to pay printing charges may result in loss of Internet privileges. Printing may be limited by library staff.

Files may be saved to disk, CD or other medium, if provided by the patron and allowed by the network. Files may not be stored on the workstation's hard drive or elsewhere on the network.

Patrons are expected to exercise common sense principles in using the Internet, respecting the rights and sensitivities of others, and recognizing that patrons of all ages utilize the public library.

Patrons may NOT use library equipment or Internet access in the library to:

1. Degrade or disrupt the equipment or software
2. Vandalize data or products of other users
3. Gain unauthorized access to other data bases or resources
4. Invade the privacy of others
5. Violate Federal, State or local laws or regulations
6. Install private software

Users of library workstations must comply with the terms of applicable contracts including software licensing and copyright regulations.

Library staff reserves the right to terminate an Internet session at any time and seize any materials which may have been printed in violation of this policy, the rules and regulations of the Library, or any local, state or federal law.

Use of the library workstations and equipment is a privilege, not a right. Abuse of this privilege, or failure to abide by these requirements, may result in termination of workstation access by Library staff, prohibition from subsequent access or prosecution. Use of the library computers or workstations will be considered as agreement with the terms of this policy.