POLICY 305  
COMPUTERS FOR PUBLIC USE AND INTERNET ACCESS

General Statement of Policy:

Computers for public use in the Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library are primarily for access to sources of information through the Internet, and for standard office applications such as word processing and spreadsheets.

The Library’s Home Page links to many sites that have been selected by Professional Librarians, as well as to proprietary databases to which the Library subscribes. The open-ended nature of the Internet also allows patrons to access sites that are not reviewed, selected or recommended by Library staff. The Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library makes no warranty, expressed or implied, for the timeliness, accuracy or usefulness of information accessed through the Internet or through other media available in the Library. Any person using the Internet workstations in the Library implicitly agrees to this policy.

Rules and Regulations regarding Internet Use:

The Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library provides Internet Access to Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library cardholders through workstations located in the Library’s reference areas. To meet the requirements of the New York State Education Commissioner’s Regulation 90.3, only four specific workstations will be designated for joint use by non-residents and H-WPL cardholders on the lower level and one specific workstation in the Youth Services area. Should any station be out of order, the Library will be under no obligation to assign an additional workstation for non-resident use. The use of Internet workstations is subject to State and Federal Laws including the United States Copyright Law.

The Library also provides a wireless connection to the Internet. Library users may gain access to this through use of their own equipment. This service is available to a limited number of patrons at a time, and is provided on a first come, first served basis. Those who use their own equipment are responsible for the configuration of such equipment, including the maintenance of virus protection and other security software.

The dissemination of obscene or indecent materials, as defined under Article 235 of the Penal Code as amended, is prohibited. Therefore, such material may not be accessed in the Library, on Library property, or through the Internet facilities of the Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library.

Cyber harassment, as defined in Section 240.30 of the Penal Code, is prohibited.

While library records in all formats are confidential, in accordance with Section 4509 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules of the State of New York, they are subject to subpoena. In addition, they may be disclosed to the extent necessary for the proper operation of the Library.

Users are responsible for the proper use of Library equipment. Any attempt to alter, damage, degrade or tamper with the equipment or system is prohibited.

E-mail accounts are not available through the Library’s Internet Service Provider, although patrons may use the Library’s equipment.

The Library will also provide access to proprietary databases to all persons who require such access on workstations dedicated to this task.

Patrons may download data to a “flash drive.” The Library sells drives at the Circulation desk.
Patrons who wish to print information may use their own 20lb. paper, or may purchase paper at the Library’s circulation desk.

The demand for use of computers may vary. Use is regulated by software that has been programmed to:

- provide for patron self check-in
- impose a 1 hour time limit if others are waiting to use the equipment
- issue visitor passes
- differentiate between HWPL cardholders and others
- shut down the computer 15 minutes before closing

Other considerations:

- Parents must accompany children who wish to use the Internet workstations located on the lower level. Children being defined as those who do not possess an adult library card. Parents who wish their children to have unaccompanied access on this level should notify the Library Director
- Children may not use the Internet workstations located in the Children’s Library unless accompanied by an adult
- A one-half hour time limit will be in effect in the Children’s Library if there are others waiting to use the equipment
- During busy periods, the Children’s Librarian may restrict Internet access for “homework only”
- Parents who wish to prohibit their children’s access to the Internet must notify the Library Director in writing. An entry will be made in the child’s library card record and a confidential entry will be made at the Children’s Service Desk
- Internet workstations in the children’s room are equipped with ‘filtering’ software to minimize the possibility of access to obscene or pornographic websites

Conclusion:

The Library’s Board of Trustees, through the Library’s Administration, will inform the community of all significant changes in its Policy regarding Internet access. It is the patron’s responsibility to use this tool effectively and with care. The Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library cannot be held responsible for any loss of privacy, fees incurred, and/or personal harm caused to patrons because of their disclosure of personal information over the Internet. Parents have the responsibility of instructing their children in “Internet safety” both in their homes and in the Library. Users are warned not to give names, telephone numbers, addresses, credit card numbers or any other personal information out over the Internet, unless they can verify the security of the site with which they are communicating. The Library staff cannot verify the security of any web site or e-commerce site.

Failure to abide by rules and regulations as set forth in this policy may result in the loss of Library privileges.

Preliminary Policy, Adopted by Board of Library Trustees, June 8, 1998
Revised Policy, Adopted by Board of Library Trustees, May 9, 2000
Revised Policy, Adopted by Board of Library Trustees, June 12, 2001, to be effective August 1, 2001
Under revision, June 2011
Revised and approved, BOT, July 18, 2011
Revised and approved, BOT, February 8, 2016
Revised and approved, BOT, February 10, 2020