

# ***Warren-Newport Public Library District*** **Staff Manual**

## **517 Internet Usage**

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Internet access is provided by the Warren-Newport Public Library District (WNPLD) to assist employees in serving our patrons and in obtaining work-related data and information. The following guidelines have been established to help ensure responsible and productive Internet usage.

WNPLD's Internet access is primarily for Library business. Occasional personal use of Internet resources is permitted except when such use negatively impacts staff performance of official duties. Infringements of this will be addressed on an individual basis.

The equipment, services, and technology provided to access the Internet remain at all times the property of WNPLD. All Internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications systems is considered to be part of the official records of WNPLD. Employees should not consider their Internet usage to be private when using staff computers, software, or email accounts. Personal passwords are not an assurance of confidentiality. As such, WNPLD reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic, and to retrieve and read any data composed, sent, or received through our online connections and stored in our computer systems. Internet data is also subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in Internet e-mail messages and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful.

Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the Internet is expressly prohibited. As a general rule, if an employee did not create the material, does not own the rights to it, or has not obtained authorization for its use, it should not be put on the Internet. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that the person sending any material over the Internet has the appropriate distribution rights.

Internet users should take the necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the Internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses; all compressed files are to be checked before and after decompression. Employees should contact the Information Technology Department for assistance in checking files for viruses or for other malicious programs.

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Abuse of the Internet access provided by the Warren-Newport Public Library District in violation of law or WNPLD policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for any violations of this policy. The following behaviors are examples of previously stated or additional actions and activities that are prohibited and can result in disciplinary action (See also Policy 701 in this manual):

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images
- Using WNPLD's time and resources for personal gain
- Stealing, using, or disclosing someone else's code or password without authorization
- Copying, pirating, or downloading software and electronic files without permission
- Violating copyright law
- Failing to observe licensing agreements
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage WNPLD's image or reputation
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials
- Sending or posting messages that defame or slander other individuals
- Attempting to break into the computer system of another organization or person
- Refusing to cooperate with a security investigation
- Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities
- Using the Internet for political causes or activities, religious activities, or any sort of gambling
- Jeopardizing the security of WNPLD's electronic communications systems
- Passing off personal views as representing those of the WNPLD
- Sending anonymous email messages
- Engaging in any other illegal activities