



PUBLIC SERVICES MANUAL

Internet Filtering Policy

Date of Origin: 8/94	Policy Owner(s): Public Services Team
Date(s) of Revision: 9/94, 3/00, 10/04, 3/10	Approved By: KCLS Board of Trustees

PURPOSE

The King County Library System (KCLS) provides access to the Internet on all of its public computers, as well as wirelessly. In compliance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the KCLS Board of Trustees approved the implementation of Internet filtering software on all of its public computers in August 2003. This policy outlines the manner in which the Internet can be accessed in KCLS’ libraries.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

KCLS operates by the Internet filtering protocols required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), which mandates that any public library using federal funding must filter Internet access for children. CIPA’s intent is to filter information that is considered “harmful to minors.” Under this law, any person under the age of 17 years must have filtered access to the Internet. To best fit the ages and needs of patrons, KCLS provides computers with two levels of filtered access: “some” and “most.”

Every patron’s library card begins with the default filtering level (“some”).

The following categories of information are blocked for patrons with “some” filtering: adult/mature content, pornography, nudity, proxy avoidance, violence/hate/racism, IWF-Restricted, phishing/fraud, spyware effects/privacy, spyware effects/malware sources and suspicious.

Computers in all children’s areas of KCLS libraries are set to the restrictive filtering level (“most”).

The “most” restrictive filtering level blocks all of the same categories of information that are blocked for patrons with “some” filtering, as well as the following: web advertisements, alcohol and tobacco, blogs/personal pages, newsgroups/forums, social networking, chat/instant messaging, illegal, gambling, hacking, web hosting, illegal drugs, intimate apparel/swimwear, personals and dating, pop-ups, search engines/portals, abortion, alternative sexuality/lifestyles, LGBT, sexual education, auctions, shopping, weapons and email.

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to monitor and/or restrict the Internet use of their minor children. Patrons may request the “most” restrictive level of filtering for themselves and their children on all computers.

If a patron (17 years of age or older) wishes to opt out of filtering, he/she may request this of a KCLS staff member. With valid photo ID, the KCLS staff member may change the patron’s card status to allow unfiltered access for “legitimate research or other lawful purposes.”

KCLS cannot control the resources on the Internet even through the use of filtering software. No Internet filter is 100% effective. A filter may still allow information that is objectionable or potentially offensive to children to be accessed. Patrons may report sites that should potentially be blocked or unblocked to a KCLS staff member to be evaluated.



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DEFINITIONS (*if applicable*)

- **Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA):** The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections.
- **Filter Categories:** Groupings of online information to which access can be blocked. Terminology used to describe filter categories are set by the provider(s) of filtering software.
- **Valid Photo ID:** Acceptable examples of photo ID include a driver's license (current or expired), Washington state ID card, passport, U.S. military ID, or matricula consular (issued by the Mexican government).

SEE ALSO...

- [CIPA Fact Sheet](#)
- Parental Responsibility Policy
- Materials Selection and Access to Electronic Information, Services & Networks (CMS Manual)
- Internet Filtering Guidelines for Staff