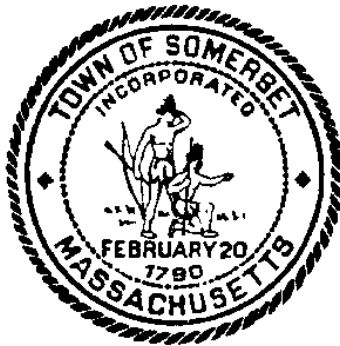# Somerset Public Library

Public Internet Access

October 20, 2020

The Somerset Public Library exists to serve as a center of informal learning, individual growth and recreation for the citizens of Somerset. The Library expects to make a contribution to the learning process and to aid individuals in the lifelong process of growth and appreciation and understanding of themselves, their neighbors, and the world around them. In addition, the library makes its building available as a setting for appropriate events according to the needs and interests of the community.

Somerset Public Library
1464 County Street
Somerset, MA 02726
508-646-2829
www.somersetpubliclibrary.org

It is the policy of the Somerset Public Library to secure for the Community access to cultural, intellectual and recreational materials and information on as broad a range of subjects, for as broad a range of interests, and from as broad a range of viewpoints as possible. The Internet is one of the many ways of delivering these materials in electronic format. The Internet allows access to a wealth of information that the Library could not otherwise afford, or might not be able to obtain in another format. Therefore, it is the policy of The Somerset Public Library, within the limits of our financial resources, to make the Community's access to the Internet as full and free as possible.

In no case does the display of any material on the Library's Internet workstations constitute an endorsement by the Library of the material's content and/or point of view. On the other hand, the Library does not control or limit access to Internet material. If material appears which you didn't search for and it makes you uncomfortable, please alert the librarian right away. The library is not responsible for the accuracy or comprehensiveness of material displayed on its Internet workstations. As with all other library material, patrons need to be good information consumers, assessing the validity of the information they find. This policy applies to all uses of Internet workstations located in the Somerset Public Library.

The Somerset Public Library endorses the *Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association (ALA), and the ALA's "Access to Electronic Information, services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights".*

DEFINITION
The term "Internet" refers to a worldwide computer network that is capable of the transmission of information to any of its component parts.

SCOPE OF ACCESS ALLOWED
Patrons may use the Library's Internet workstations to gain access to any information available in standard Internet resources. Email use is allowed under the terms explained later in this policy. The library reserves the right to establish limitations on the downloading and printing of information and the length of each Internet session.

CONFIDENTIALITY
For technical reasons, the sources of information to which a patron gains access on the Internet cannot be kept strictly confidential. Subsequent users of the Library's public Internet workstations may be able to see where previous users have "gone" in search of information. Privacy and identity fraud are an issue of concern for all users of any electronic equipment. Patrons therefore make use of the library's public Internet workstations at their own risk. It is not recommended that you input personal passwords or personal information on these workstations for your own security. The library is not responsible for information gained by a third party through use of the computers.

VIRUSES AND MALWARE

Files downloaded from any Somerset Public Library computer may contain viruses and/or malware. The Library is not responsible for any damage incurred to a patron's storage device or home computer, or for any loss of data.

CHILDREN'S USE OF THE INTERNET
The public library, unlike schools, does not serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent). Librarians cannot act in the place of parents in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. The responsibility for what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents or guardians. The Somerset Public Library will not be responsible for any child's access to any Internet materials.

EMAIL USE
Access to Internet based email is allowed. The library cannot provide detailed instruction on setting up email accounts nor is the library responsible for passwords, lost messages, etc. You must have no expectations of privacy in anything you create or send via email. Sending or forwarding of email falling under libel or obscenity laws may be considered illegal acts and may be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE
Librarians will help the patron get started in accessing the Internet, but cannot provide in-depth training. They may be able to offer searching tips and answer some questions, as with other forms of reference service. Library staff will not type documents for patrons or download files to personal devices. The Somerset Library Staff will make accommodations for patrons with disabilities. Please contact the Reference Librarian or the Library Director if any accommodations are needed.

UNACCEPTABLE USE
As with all other Library resources and services, patrons are expected to use public Internet workstations in a responsible manner. Examples of unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Installing software to any library computers
- No settings on library installed software may be changed
- Modifying any library computer hardware
- Degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities
- Invading the privacy of individuals
- Violating software license agreements and copyright laws
- Harassment of other users
- Libeling other users
- Violating other Federal, State, or local laws.
- Utilizing library equipment to access material that is obscene, pornographic or harmful to minors.

Violation of any of these provisions may result in suspension or cancellation of the patron's access to the Library Internet workstations. Illegal acts involving Library computer resources may be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

WORKSTATIONS
Public Internet use is permitted only at workstations identified by appropriate signage and during announced periods of availability. The library cannot guarantee availability of workstations.

- You may log on to a workstation with a library card. If you do not have one, you may receive a guest pass to use at the Reference Desk.
- Workstations are used on a first-come first served basis. You can also reserve a computer in advance by contacting the Reference Desk staff.
- Use is limited to a 60-minute block of time. If no one is waiting, you may stay on until the next person reserves use of a computer.
- Workstations are connected to a central printer. Privacy cannot be guaranteed.
- There is a cost for the printing of copies.
- Use of personal flash drives is permitted. The library is not responsible for loss or damage of flash drives.
- Computers are shut down 15 minutes before the library closes.
- Headphones or earbuds are required when listening to any computer program with audio. The volume must not distract others.
- Use of cell phones at the computer workstation should only be conducted as a necessity to the work being done on the computer. They must be brief and as quiet as possible so as not to disturb others.
- Use only the computer assigned to you. Do not attempt to use more than one computer at a time.
- No more than two people are permitted at a workstation at a time.
- If you experience any problems in using the computer and/or the printer, report the problem immediately at the Reference Desk. The staff will assist you.
- Be respectful of other patrons' rights to a quiet and private environment in which to use the Internet. Do not engage other patrons in conversations or remain in the computer area when others are using the Internet.
- Leave the computer exactly as you found it. For example, do not change preferences or delete bookmarks. Do not turn off the machine.

The library reserves the right to end an Internet session and/or discontinue computer privileges to anyone breaking the rules established in this policy.

The Board of Trustees will review this policy periodically.