

Computer and Internet Use Policy

The Library does not monitor and has no control over the information found through the Internet and is not responsible for its content, timeliness, or accuracy. While the Internet and the World Wide Web provide a vast and valuable variety of information and resources, not all sources on the Internet are accurate, complete or up-to-date. It is possible that individuals might access information that they find offensive or disturbing to themselves or their children. The Internet is a global entity that does not fall under the control or governance of any single agency, government or organization. The availability of networked information via Library computers does not constitute the Library's endorsement of the content of that information. The Library does not warrant information found on the Internet to be accurate, authoritative, factual, timely or useful for patrons' purposes. If any patron believes that information obtained via Library terminals is inaccurate or offensive, the patron should contact the original producer or distributor of the information.

The Library does not select the material on the Internet and has no means or statutory authority to assure that only constitutionally protected material is available on the Internet. The authority to determine what is illegal content rests with the courts as defined in Maine and Federal statutes.

Access, use, or dissemination of information via the Internet in the Library is the responsibility of the user. In the case of minors, it is a joint responsibility of the user and the parent or guardian. Because parents or guardians may feel that information available through the Internet is not suitable for viewing by children in their care, supervision is advised.

Guidelines

The Library has set time limits so that all patrons seeking access will have an appropriate opportunity. The Library reserves the right to end an Internet session when time limits are exceeded, or if maintenance is needed on the computers or server.

1. Computers are available only during normal Library hours and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. All use of computers in the Library must end when the Library closes, or earlier per Staff request.
2. Users, ten years or younger, must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, caretaker, or sibling over 12 years of age to use a computer. The children may not be left alone at the Library.
3. Normally, Internet sessions are 30 minutes in length. Extra time may be granted only if there are no other patrons waiting for Internet access. The Library reserves the right to terminate a patron's session to make an Internet station available for another patron. Patrons may request to use the Genealogy Room computers for longer periods for genealogical, educational, employment and other Staff approved purposes.
4. Persons who use the computers are responsible for their actions and activities involving Library computers, networks and Internet services. The Skowhegan Free Public Library will not be responsible for injuries or damages to possessions of individuals or groups resulting from the use of the computers.

Library Assistance

As it does with other Library resources, the Library will provide basic training on its electronic resources. It will also make information available to help parents and guardians in their efforts to exercise their rights and responsibilities regarding their own children's use of electronic resources. For more information on Internet safety for children see SafeKids.com at <http://www.safekids.com/>.

Parents and children are encouraged to start their exploration of the Internet with the American Library Association's website "Great Websites for Kids" <http://gws.ala.org/>.

Supervising Children

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 Skowhegan Free Public Library supports the right of each family to decide what is appropriate Internet use for its children. The responsibility for what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents or guardians.

The following are recommended guidelines for parents and guardians to ensure that children have positive online experiences.

1. Use the Internet as a family. Join your children in Internet exploration. Explore the wide range of available information and tell your children about sites you consider inappropriate for them.
2. Encourage children to use recommended sites and counsel them to avoid sites you consider unsuitable.
3. Provide guidelines for your children on the amount of time they spend online, just as for television viewing.
4. Instruct children NEVER to give out personal information (name, address, password, telephone number, credit card number) online.
5. Provide children with guidelines on acceptable use of electronic resources, including email, chat rooms, and social networking sites.
6. Teach children to be good online consumers. As with print information, consider the source, date, and accuracy of online information.

Legal and Acceptable Uses

The Library's computers may be used only for legal purposes. Users of all ages must abide by the following restrictions. Unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Transmitting of threatening, harassing, or obscene materials including but not limited to communications, postings, or attachments;
2. Libeling, slandering or maliciously offending other users;
3. Disrespecting the privacy of others by misrepresenting oneself as another user;

4. Attempting to modify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others;
5. Attempting to crash, degrade performance of or gain unauthorized access to the library's computer systems and networks;
6. Modifying or damaging equipment, software or data belonging to the Library or other users.
7. Exposing children to harmful materials. Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading, scanning, or displaying materials that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, and/or illegal. This also includes sending, receiving, printing or displaying any text or graphics that are legally defined by State of Maine law as "child pornography" (for more information see ME Revised Statutes Annotated Statute Title 17, Section 2911 Dissemination of Obscene Matter to Minors, Appendix A attached below; and Title 17-A section 281, Appendix B also attached below).

These restrictions also apply in email, chat room and social networking environments accessed through Library computers. If an individual or group of Internet users creates a disturbance that limits the effective use of the Library by others, they will be asked to correct their behavior, disband, and/or leave the building as appropriate.

Copyright

U.S. Copyright law (Title 17 US Code), which can be found at <http://www.copyright.gov/title17/circ92.pdf>, prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted material, except as permitted by the principles of fair use. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials, including electronic mail, text, images, programs or data, without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for the consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user. The Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use. The Library expressly disclaims any liability

or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through its electronic information systems, or any consequences thereof.

The Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to alter this policy without prior notice.

Approved 04/03/12

Appendix A;

Maine Revised Statute Title 17: CRIMES

Chapter 93-A: OBSCENITY

§2911. Dissemination of obscene matter to minors

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context indicates otherwise, the following words shall have the following meanings.

- A. "Distribute" means to transfer possession, whether with or without consideration. [1977, c. 410, §2 (NEW).]
- B. "Exhibit" means to display for viewing by the public. [1977, c. 410, §2 (NEW).]
- C. "Matter" means any printed or written material, any picture, photograph, motion picture or other visual representation. [1983, c. 300, §2 (AMD).]
- D. C-1. "Minor" means a person under 18 years of age. [1983, c. 300, §3 (NEW).]
- E. "Obscene matter" means matter which:
 - (1) To the average individual, applying contemporary community standards, with respect to what is suitable material for minors, considered as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest;
 - (2) Depicts or describes, in a patently offensive manner, ultimate sexual acts, excretory functions, masturbation or lewd exhibition of the genitals;and

(3) Considered as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. [1977, c. 696, §168 (AMD); 1983, c. 300, §§ 2, 3 (AMD).]

2. General rule. A person is guilty of disseminating obscene matter to a minor if he knowingly distributes, or exhibits or offers to distribute or exhibit to a minor, any obscene matter declared obscene, in an action to which he was a party, pursuant to subsection 3.

A. This section shall not apply to any noncommercial distribution or exhibition for purely educational purposes by any library, art gallery, museum, public school, private school or institution of learning, nor to any commercial distribution or exhibition by any art gallery or museum. [1977, c. 410, §2 (NEW).]

B. It shall be a valid defense to any proceeding under this section that:

- (1) The defendant was a parent or guardian of the minor;
- (2) The distribution or exhibition is exempt under paragraph A; or
- (3) For motion pictures, the minor was accompanied by his spouse, parent or legal guardian. [1983, c. 300, §4 (AMD).]

3. Procedure for adjudicating obscenity. Whenever the Attorney General, or any district attorney, reasonably believes a person is disseminating to minors matter which is obscene, he may petition the Superior Court to declare the matter obscene pursuant to Title 14, sections 5951 to 5963. The Attorney General or district attorney may join all persons he reasonably believes to be disseminating that matter to minors as parties to the action. The hearing on such petition shall be held not more than 10 days from the filing of the petition.

A. Trial on the issue of obscenity shall be by jury. [1977, c. 410, §2 (NEW).]

B. Intervention by others disseminating the same matter shall be freely allowed. [1977, c. 410, §2 (NEW).]

C. Determination by a court pursuant to this subsection that a matter is obscene shall not bar relitigation of that issue in a criminal prosecution under this section. [1977, c. 410, §2 (NEW).]

[1977, c. 410, §2 (NEW) .]

4. Penalty. Disseminating obscene matter to a minor is a Class C crime.

[1983, c. 300, §5 (AMD) .]

SECTION HISTORY

1977, c. 410, §2 (NEW). 1977, c. 696, §168 (AMD). 1983, c. 300, §§2-5 (AMD).

Appendix B;

ME Revised Statute Title 17A: Maine Criminal Code

Chapter 12: SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF MINORS

§281. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings. [2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW).]

1. "Disseminate" means to manufacture, publish, send, promulgate, distribute, exhibit, issue, furnish, sell or transfer or to offer or agree to do any of these acts.

[2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW) .]

2. "Minor" means a person who has not attained 18 years of age.

[2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW) .]

3. "Photograph" means to make, capture, generate or save a print, negative, slide, motion picture, computer data file, videotape or other mechanically, electronically or chemically reproduced visual image or material.

[2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW) .]

4. "Sexually explicit conduct" means any of the following acts:

A. A sexual act; [2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW).]

B. Bestiality; [2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW).]

C. Masturbation; [2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW).]

D. Sadomasochistic abuse for the purpose of sexual stimulation; [2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW).]

E. Lewd exhibition of the genitals, anus or pubic area of a person. An exhibition is considered lewd if the exhibition is designed for the purpose of eliciting or

attempting to elicit a sexual response in the intended viewer; or [2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW).]

F. Conduct that creates the appearance of the acts in paragraphs A to D and also exhibits any uncovered or covered portions of the genitals, anus or pubic area.

[2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW).]

[2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12 (NEW) .]

SECTION HISTORY

2003, c. 711, §B12 (NEW).