

Shutesbury Public Library Internet Use Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

The Shutesbury Public Library, hereafter referred to as Library strives to provide Shutesbury residents of all ages with materials and programs to meet their education, entertainment and information needs in an environment that fosters community. We aim to be a place where past and future are joined, not only in our collection of local historical information and current technological resources, but also by bringing together community members young and old to share and learn from one another. We endeavor to help all our patrons make the most of the current technologies that can provide vital information services, as well as entertainment and cultural enrichment.

Equitable Access to Digital Services

The Library strives to provide equitable access to internet resources and digital literacy support to help residents participate fully in civic, educational, and economic life.

Internet Service Provided

The Library provides free, open and unfiltered access to the internet. Patrons may access the internet on computers and devices provided by the library or on their own devices through our free wireless internet access. Wi-Fi access is available both inside and outside the library building and we strive to provide this service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Unacceptable Use of the Internet

Internet access at the Library is a privilege provided to patrons in good standing. Unacceptable use of the Library's internet access is prohibited and will result in the loss of computer privileges. The following examples of inappropriate or illegal activities constitute unacceptable use:

- Using the internet for illegal purposes including but not limited to using the internet in violation of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 272, Section 31 ("harmful to minors")
- Disclosing, using or disseminating personal identity information about minors
- Compromising the privacy of users
- Transmitting threatening, harassing or defamatory materials or messages
- Engaging in communications which are libelous or slanderous
- Committing fraud
- Violating copyright law or software licenses
- Developing, transmitting, or distributing malware or attempting to compromise security of local or remote systems or any other computer or network resources

- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to the resources of the Library’s devices, Internet, computers, or networks
- Disrupting the intended use of the Library’s devices
- Destroying the integrity of computer-based information in the Library’s Internet computers
- Displaying content in a manner that creates a hostile or disruptive environment in shared public spaces

Email

Library users with existing email accounts may access their accounts through the library’s devices. The Library does not accept responsibility for the privacy of possible cached (temporarily stored) messages left after such use.

Filtering or Blocking Software

The Library has not installed filtering or blocking software on any devices. Staff may request that users adjust screens or relocate if displayed content is disruptive to others. Should funding or legal requirements change, this policy will be reviewed.

Internet Use by Minor Children

As stated in our mission statement, “The Shutesbury Public Library Library strives to provide Shutesbury residents of all ages with materials and programs to meet their education, entertainment and information needs.” As with other library materials, the library affirms the right and responsibility of parents and guardians to guide and monitor their children’s use of the internet. Library staff do not act in place of parents or guardians and do not monitor minors’ individual Internet sessions.

Misuse Penalties

Violators of the Library’s policies, including the Internet Use Policy, may lose library privileges. Repeated or serious violations may result in temporary or permanent suspension of the user’s Internet/Wi-Fi access. Patrons may appeal suspensions in writing to the Library Board of Trustees.

Offensive and Disruptive Materials

The library’s devices are located in public areas, which are shared with library staff and users of all ages. Users are expected to respect the sensibilities of others when accessing potentially offensive information or images. Staff may intervene—such as offering privacy screens, relocation, or session adjustments—if display choices disrupt others’ use of the Library.

Waiver of Responsibility

The Library has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Individuals must accept responsibility for evaluating

content they access. Public networks carry security risks; the Library cannot guarantee confidentiality or data integrity.

Guidelines for Library Internet Use

Users are responsible for understanding and adhering to Library policies. To protect against malware, patrons may not install software on Library computers. Patrons may save files to personal removable media or cloud storage at their own risk; files saved to Library PCs are purged at logoff.

Patrons are asked to limit themselves to one hour of public computer use per day. At staff discretion, sessions may be extended when no one is waiting.

Library staff will shut down public computers five minutes before the library closes.

Privacy and Security

The Wi-Fi network is unencrypted; users should exercise caution when transmitting sensitive information. Limited connection data (device address, connection times) may be collected for troubleshooting and deleted regularly. The Library does not monitor the content of patrons' internet activity and discloses information only when required by law.

Accessibility

Upon request, reasonable accommodations will be made to ensure equitable access, including extended sessions or assistance with accessibility features.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees December 1, 2025.