

## **ELECTRONIC INFORMATION NETWORKS**

### **Networks and the Library's Mission**

Libraries make it possible for citizens to have access to the information they need to make informed decisions. As a member of the Metropolitan Library System (MLS) and the Illinois Library and Information Network (ILLINET), the Worth Public Library District is committed to networking which represents good public policy by maximizing the use of the resources of all types of libraries. Every library user benefits from expanded access to information beyond the library building.

The Worth Public Library District and other ILLINET and MLS libraries use electronic information networks such as the Internet for a variety of purposes:

- Access to shared automation systems that provide bibliographic access to the collections of the local library, libraries in the region, and libraries across the state and country.
- Access to the wealth of informational resources available via the Internet
- Access to general and specialized licensed databases.

### **“Global” Versus “Local” Resources**

Most resources available via the Internet and other electronic information networks are “global” resources rather than “local” resources. The Worth Public Library District does not and cannot control the information content available through global resources, such as information obtained from outside sources via the Internet. Internet resources enhance and supplement resources available locally within a library. Library users must be aware that the Worth Public Library District does not exercise control over information obtained via the Internet and must keep in mind the following points of evaluating information obtained via the Internet:

- Information obtained via the Internet may or may not be reliable and may or may not come from a reliable source.
- Information obtained via the Internet may or may not be accurate.
- Information obtained via the Internet may or may not be current and up to date.
- Links to information on the Internet may not always be valid, and particular information sites on the Internet may sometimes be unavailable, and this unavailability occurs unpredictably.
- Certain information obtained via the Internet may be considered controversial by some library patrons.

The Worth Public Library District urges library patrons to be informed consumers and to evaluate carefully information obtained via the Internet. Library staff may be available to assist patrons in making judgments about the reliability or currency of certain types of Internet information sources, but are unable to provide definitive analysis of particular sources due to the extremely large variety and volume of information available via the Internet.

The Worth Public Library District is not responsible for damages, direct or indirect, arising from a library patron's use of Internet information resources.

### **Library Patrons' Rights**

Library patrons have certain rights with respect to use of electronic information networks such as the Internet. The Worth Public Library District shall work with other libraries in the Illinois Library and Information Network and the Metropolitan Library System to preserve and protect these rights, subject to limitations imposed by licensing and payment agreements with database providers.

- Library patrons have the right to confidentiality and privacy in the use of electronic information networks to the extent possible given certain constraints such as proximity of other patrons and staff in public access settings.
- Library patrons have the right to equitable access to electronic information networks.
- Library patrons have the right to access and read all library service policies and discuss questions with appropriate library staff.

### **Patron Assistance and Instruction**

The Worth Public Library's staff may provide assistance to patrons in the use of electronic networks as time and staff knowledge permits. Printed online documentation and instructions are available at or near points of service.

### **Use of Equipment and Networks**

The Worth Public Library District requires that those library patrons using electronic information networks such as the Internet do so within the guidelines of acceptable use. The following activities are unacceptable:

- Use of electronic information networks for any purpose that results in the harassment of other users.
- Destruction of, damage to, or unauthorized alteration of the library's computer equipment, software, or network security procedures.
- Use of electronic information networks in any way which violates a Federal or State law.
- Use of electronic information networks in any way which violates licensing and payment agreements between the Worth Public Library District and network/database providers.
- Unauthorized duplication of copyright protected software or violation of software license agreements.
- Violation of system security.
- Behaving in a manner that is disruptive to the use of others, including, but not limited to, overuse of computer equipment which serves to deny access to other users.

### **Children's Access to Electronic Information Networks**

The Worth Public Library District supports the right of all library users to access information.

The Worth Public Library District recognizes that the electronic information networks such as the Internet may contain material that is inappropriate for children. Parents are expected to monitor and supervise their children's use of the Internet. Library

staff are unable to monitor children's use. Parents are encouraged to discuss with their children issues of appropriate use and electronic network safety.

**Library Procedures Relating to Electronic Networks**

The Worth Public Library District has developed certain procedures to assist staff and patrons in the use of electronic information resources. These procedures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Time limits for access to allow use of resources by the maximum number of library patrons
- Cost recovery for printouts using the library's computer equipment
- Specific instructions for downloading
- Restrictions on the use of personal software on the library computer equipment
- Minimum age requirement for use without supervision of parent or guardian
- Library permission form for Internet access signed by the parent or guardian of each child under the age of eighteen [18] consenting to the child's accessing the Internet and designating whether the child may access the Internet with or without supervision of a parent or guardian.

**Breach of Policy**

Violation of any aspect of this policy may result in the loss of library privileges.

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President, Board of Trustees