**INTERNET USE POLICY**

The Sullivan County Public Library maintains online public access computers for the benefit of patrons. This allows access to purchased online databases, local collections, and Internet access to a vast array of information to meet users’ cultural, educational, and recreational needs.

While the ability to access information on the Internet provides a wealth of information, the Internet also enables access to materials that may be inaccurate, offensive, disturbing, and possibly illegal. Effective July 1, 2004, the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires that an Internet filtering system be placed on all juvenile computers in the Sullivan County Public Library system to protect against access to visual depictions that (1) are obscene, (2) contain child pornography, or (3) are harmful to minors (defined as any person under 17 years of age). While the Library will make every attempt through its filtering system to prevent access to materials that would not generally be acceptable in a public library, it is technically impossible to guarantee that the filtering system will be error free.

When using the Internet, the individual user must accept responsibility for determining what is appropriate. The user must also be aware of and respect the rights of others. The Library recognizes and supports federal laws dealing with access to information and is obligated to comply with said laws. Additionally, peer-to-peer file sharing through sites such as BitTorrent is prohibited.

With the freedom and privilege to access computer networks comes the responsibility to use them in an ethical manner that includes but is not limited to the following:

* Using resources for educational, informational, and recreational purposes only and not for unauthorized, illegal, or unethical purposes.
* Respecting the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself, attempting to gain access to files, passwords or data of others, or by gaining unauthorized access to any computer system or damaging or altering software of any network or database.
* Making only authorized copies of copyrighted or licensed software or data.

Complaints regarding the application of this policy should be brought to the attention of the Director who will investigate and take appropriate measures.

The Sullivan County Public Library retains the right to determine what appropriate uses of its computer equipment are in order to enforce this policy. Users may have their privileges revoked if they refuse to abide by instruction or requests made by Library staff.

Library staff is available to assist patrons in the use of these resources but may not be familiar with every application or database a patron may wish to use. Staff may not be able to provide complete technical support at all times. Due to liability reasons, Library staff are prohibited from entering information in for a patron on their behalf, whether it is on a patron computer, a patron’s own device, or otherwise. Certain circumstances may warrant exceptions under Director approval, such as assisting patrons with disabilities.