

**Lee County Board of County Commissioners  
Agenda Item Summary**

Blue Sheet No. 20020940

**1. REQUESTED MOTION:**

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Approve the Lee County Library System's Public Internet Access Plan of Action to implement the five (5) options as directed by the Board of County Commissioners

**WHY ACTION IS NECESSARY:** To formally adopt the policies, procedures and Board options for library patrons' use of public Internet computers.

**WHAT ACTION ACCOMPLISHES:** Enhances control of Internet Access at the Lee County Libraries

**2. DEPARTMENTAL CATEGORY:**  
COMMISSION DISTRICT #

*C6C*

**3. MEETING DATE:**

*08-27-2002*

**4. AGENDA:**

- CONSENT
- ADMINISTRATIVE
- APPEALS
- PUBLIC
- WALK ON
- TIME REQUIRED:

**5. REQUIREMENT/PURPOSE:**  
(Specify)

- STATUTE
- ORDINANCE
- ADMIN. CODE
- OTHER

**6. REQUESTOR OF INFORMATION:**

A. COMMISSIONER

B. DEPARTMENT Library

C. DIVISION

BY: Cynthia N. Cobb, Director

**7. BACKGROUND:**

-BACKGROUND CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO-

**8. MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**9. RECOMMENDED APPROVAL:**

| A<br>Department<br>Director               | B<br>Purchasing<br>or<br>Contracts | C<br>Human<br>Resources | D<br>Other | E<br>County<br>Attorney         | F<br>Budget Services |                      |                        |                      | G<br>County<br>Manager      |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Jeri R. Crawford</i><br><i>8/14/02</i> |                                    |                         |            | <i>R. Lee</i><br><i>8/14/02</i> | OA<br><i>8/14/02</i> | OM<br><i>8/14/02</i> | RISK<br><i>8/15/02</i> | GC<br><i>8/15/02</i> | <i>OO</i><br><i>8-15-02</i> |

**10. COMMISSION ACTION:**

- APPROVED
- DENIED
- DEFERRED
- OTHER

RECEIVED BY  
COUNTY ADMIN. *TB*  
*8-14-02*  
*2:35*  
COUNTY ADMIN.  
FORWARDED TO: *SE*  
*6/15 1:20*

REC'D.  
by CO. ATTY.  
*8/13/02*  
*11:15 PM*  
CO. ATTY.  
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*Nichol*  
*8/14/02 2:10 PM*

**-BACKGROUND CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE-**

At the July 1, 2002 Management and Planning Meeting the Board of County Commissioners directed the library staff to move forward with five options for enhancing control of Internet Access at Lee County Libraries. Those five options are:

- 1) Require presentation of a valid Lee County library card or other form of identification to use the computers for Internet access
- 2) Use of reporting software to monitor Internet activity
- 3) Strategically position computers
- 4) Develop a strong policy on Internet use with enforcing consequences for misuse
- 5) Create Web Pathfinders

Attachments: Action Plan for Options 1 - 5

Draft amended Internet Policy

Current Internet Policy

Guidelines for Public Internet Access

Lee County Library System  
Public Internet Access Action Plan  
August 12, 2002

At the July 1, 2002 Management & Planning Meeting, the Board of County Commissioners directed the staff to move forward with five options for enhancing control of Internet access at Lee County libraries. Those five options are:

1. Require presentation of a valid Lee County library card or other similar form of identification to use the computers for Internet access.
2. Use of reporting software to monitor Internet activity.
3. Strategically position computers.
4. Develop a strong policy on Internet use with enforcing consequences for misuse.
5. Create Web Pathfinders.

The following pages are the Lee County Library System's action plan for addressing each of these options.

Although this action plan addresses the options selected by the Board of County Commissioners we consider our work to be on going. We will continue to monitor the advances being made in technology that address Internet access, the activities of other large public library systems, and our own community needs.

## OPTION 1

We have addressed the need for anyone who wishes to use a computer for Internet access to present valid identification in the newly revised Internet Policy. In the section titled: "LEE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM RULES FOR INTERNET USE", rule number four states: "A Lee County Library card or other valid identification is required to use an Internet station." This rule will be enforced at all Lee County libraries at the time of sign-up once the revised policy is adopted.

## OPTION 2

A meeting was held with Lee County Library staff, ITG staff and representatives from the County Attorney's office to discuss the option. At this time it is not recommended that monitoring software be employed.

While the Lee County Public School System is apparently satisfied with the results they have obtained from their monitoring product, it would not be conducive to being used in a public library. It would actually filter the computers and put staff in a very labor intensive and policing mode, which we do not recommend.

Additionally, in the school environment school staff are dealing with a defined age group – the majority of which are children – which allows them to “block” all sites dealing with pornography and other illegal activities. In a public library setting, where the age of the user varies, the technology that exists today does not allow for a distinction between which sites are legal and which are illegal – depending on the age of the person viewing them (i.e. it can not differentiate between “child pornography” and “pornography” being viewed by an adult).

We will continue to monitor and investigate any improvements and/or advances in the technology that address these concerns and will consider implementing a monitoring feature when it is appropriate.

### OPTION 3

We have worked with the staff at all of the library locations to position the computers in such a way so as to provide the greatest visibility to staff. In addition, we have been able to identify, at each location, computers that can be designated for use by children. We also have worked with the ITG staff to redefine specific profiles for the computers. As a result we will be able to log on computers designated for use by children with a "limited profile". This profile will provide access to library resources and pre-selected Internet sites that are suitable for use by children, but will not allow access to the "full Internet". If someone should attempt to access a site not pre-selected, a message that indicates the site is not available will be displayed.

#### OPTION 4

We have included a draft of our newly revised Internet Policy (see attachment). There have been some significant changes made in response to the directives given by the commissioners, the Library Advisory Board, library staff and public concerns. The draft policy adopts the "zero tolerance" approach when dealing with inappropriate use of the Internet by library users. This is a much stronger approach than was offered in our previous policy. As mentioned previously, we have also added the requirement for some form of valid identification to be provided in order to use the computers.

This revised policy provides staff with both the rules for Internet use to be followed and a clear directive for how to handle those individuals who violate those rules. We understand that in order for the policy to be effective, the library staff needs to be diligent in monitoring computer use and enforcing the consequences of inappropriate behavior as listed in the policy. The true strength of the policy lies not in the words, but in the enforcement of the policy by the staff.

Included with the revised policy is a copy of our current "Guidelines For Public Internet Use" brochure, which we provide to the public. This document will also be updated to reflect the changes in, and stronger statements added to, the revised policy.

## OPTION 5

The Lee County Library System has always provided web pathfinders on our own Internet web site. They are located on our "Reference Links" page under the heading "Web Resources". These resources provide links to sites on a particular subject and are reviewed by staff on a regular basis to ensure they are still valid. We have highlighted the existence of these selected links in the revised Internet policy. On both page one in the "INTRODUCTION AND DISCLAIMER" section, where it states: "Library staff have identified on the Lee County Library's web site, links to specific sources and sites on the Internet which are consistent with the Library's mission." and page two under the "INTERNET USE AND SAFETY" section: "Library staff have identified on the Lee County Library's web site links to specific sources and sites on the Internet which may be helpful as you are searching for information."

In addition we will now be providing specific, pre-selected links appropriate for children as part of our computer profiles (previously mentioned). The source of these sites has been reviewed to ensure they are monitored *regularly for updates*. Staff also previewed the links to ensure scope, authoritative content, and lack of ability to be easily circumvented by a savvy user. In addition, we have worked with the ITG staff to further restrict circumvention by building in blocks to any sites other than those pre-selected.

The new revised policy provides information about sites that parents can visit to learn about how to protect their children and teens when they are using the Internet. There are also links for adults to sites that address safety for all Internet users. These sites will also be provided as links directly from the Library's web site.



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SUBJECT INTERNET POLICY

DRAFT

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**INTRODUCTION AND DISCLAIMER**

The Lee County Library System offers Internet access in support of our mission to satisfy the informational needs of library users. Internet sites are additional sources of information that supplement the print sources we own and other electronic sources that are available. In offering Internet access, the library does not monitor or have control over information that can be accessed over the Internet. Although the Internet offers access to many valuable local, national, and international sources of information, not all sources are accurate, complete, current, or appropriate for all users. Library staff have identified on the Lee County Library's web site links to specific sources and sites on the Internet which are consistent with the Library's mission.

**PATRON'S RIGHT TO ACCESS INFORMATION**

In providing access to the Internet, the Lee County Library System subscribes to the patron's rights to access information, adopted by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners. In addition, the Lee County Library System subscribes to the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read statement, Resolution on the of Filtering Software and its interpretation of these documents.

**ACCEPTABLE USE**

It is the policy of the Library to provide an atmosphere conducive to the appropriate use of Library services and facilities. Patrons using the Internet in the Library are responsible for reading and complying with the Patron Code of Conduct and Guidelines for Public Internet Access posted in the Library and on the corresponding Library Internet web pages. Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in loss of Library privileges and/or subject the use to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities.

Customers must comply with copyright laws and all other applicable laws. Electronic resources, like other Library resources, will be used in compliance with Library policy and procedures and applicable law.

**CHILDREN AND THE INTERNET**

As with all Library resources, it is the responsibility of parents or guardians to monitor and supervise their children's access to the Internet and its resources. Parents and guardians are encouraged to read "Child Safety on the Internet Highway" (distributed with permission of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children), the American Library Association's "Especially for Children and Their Parents," "GetNetWise" - a website devoted to online safety for children and teens, or "SafetyEd International" - a website that provides Internet safety education, child advocacy and child protection.

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**INTERNET USE AND SAFETY**

The Internet provides electronic access to many valuable local, national, and international sources of information. Library staff have identified on the Lee County Library's web site links to specific sources and sites on the Internet which may be helpful as you are searching for information. The staff may also be contacted for assistance with conducting searches and guiding you to appropriate and reliable sites.

Before using the Internet all patrons are encouraged to preview the following sites: The Federal Trade Commission's "Site Seeing on the Internet," or "How to Protect Yourself: Internet E-Mail" and "How to Protect Yourself: Internet Shopping" - both created by the Florida Attorney General's Office.

**LEE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM RULES FOR PUBLIC INTERNET USE**

There is an enormous demand for Internet access at the Lee County Library System. The Library asks patrons to abide by the following rules when using the Internet.

1. The Lee County Library System's Patron Code of Conduct applies to the use of Internet work stations. As stated in the Patron Code of Conduct, "Engaging in disorderly conduct, unreasonable disturbing or offending library users or staff" is unacceptable behavior. Patrons whose behavior or action while using the Internet constitutes a nuisance to others will be asked to end their Internet session or leave the library.
2. Internet use is subject to all applicable laws. Illegal use of Library Internet stations will subject the patron to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities.
3. The Library's Internet computers are available on a first come, first served basis.
4. A Lee County Library card or other valid identification is required to use an Internet station.
5. Internet stations may be used only for specific periods of time. Time periods may vary based on the type and location of the station.
6. Use of the Internet stations is limited to two persons at one time.
7. Internet access is available up to 15 minutes before Library closing time.
8. Personal software or hardware installation on Library equipment is prohibited.
9. For additional information about using the Library's Internet resources, please review the Lee County Library System's Internet Policy for Public Use available on the Library's web site.

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**WEB ADDRESSES FOR SOURCES MENTIONED IN POLICY DOCUMENT**

Lee County Board of Commissioners - Material Selection Policy :  
[www.lee-county.com/AdminCodes/PDF14-0/ac14-10.pdf](http://www.lee-county.com/AdminCodes/PDF14-0/ac14-10.pdf)

American Library Association - Library Bill of Rights:  
[www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/librarybillofrights.pdf](http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/librarybillofrights.pdf)

American Library Association - Freedom To Read Statement:  
[www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/freedomtoread.pdf](http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/freedomtoread.pdf)

American Library Association - Resolution on the Use of Filtering Software:  
[www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/filteringresolution.pdf](http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/filteringresolution.pdf)

American Library Association - Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software:  
[www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/statementonfiltering.pdf](http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/statementonfiltering.pdf)

Lee County Library System - Patron Code of Conduct:  
[www.lee-county.com/library/web address](http://www.lee-county.com/library/web%20address)

Lee County Library System - Guidelines for Public Internet Access:  
[www.lee-county.com/library/web address](http://www.lee-county.com/library/web%20address)

“Child Safety on the Internet Highway”:  
[www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com)

American Library Association - “Especially for Children and Their Parents”:  
[www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/children.html](http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/children.html)

“GetNetWise”:  
[www.getnetwise.com](http://www.getnetwise.com)

“SafetyEd International”:  
[www.safetyed.org](http://www.safetyed.org)

**Public Services**

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“Site Seeing on the Internet”:

[www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/online/sitesee/index.html](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/online/sitesee/index.html)

“How To Protect Yourself: Internet E-Mail”:

<http://legal.firn.edg/consumer/tips/tipemail.html>

“How To Protect Yourself: Internet Shopping”:

<http://legal.firn.edg/consumer/tips/internet.html>

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## INTRODUCTION

The Lee County Library System offers Internet access in support of our mission to satisfy the informational needs of library users. Internet sites are additional sources of information that supplement the print sources we own and other electronic sources that are available.

## ~~PATRONS' RIGHT TO ACCESS INFORMATION~~

~~The Lee County Library System subscribes to the American Library Associations policies on patrons' rights to access information. (Administrative Code, Board of County Commissioners, Code Number AC-14-10, adopted September 28, 1977, amended August 9, 1989, and June 23, 1998 - Internet Policy Addendum 1.) Supporting documents are:~~

~~◆ Library Bill of Rights, adopted June 18, 1948, revised February 2, 1961, January 23, 1980 and January 23, 1996 - Internet Policy Addendum 2.~~

~~◆ Resolution on the use of Filtering software in Libraries, July 2, 1997 - Internet Policy Addendum 3.~~

~~◆ Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software, July 1, 1997 - Internet Policy Addendum 4.~~

~~◆ Freedom to Read, adopted June 25, 1953, revised January 28, 1972, and January 16, 1991 - Internet Policy Addendum 5.~~

## OBSCENE MATERIALS

~~Florida State Statues make it illegal to display obscene materials. (See Florida Statutes Chapter 847 Obscene Literature; Profanity - Internet Policy Addendum 6.) If a patron is leaving images deemed offensive by other patrons, it is appropriate to ask them to desist. If they do not, it is appropriate to tell them to close out their session at the computer.~~

## COPYRIGHT RESTRICTION

~~A copy of the "Notice Warning Concerning Copyright Restrictions" should be prominently displayed in area where internet access computers are situated. (Internet Policy Addendum 7.)~~

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~~**ACCESSING THE INTERNET AT THE LIBRARY**~~

~~Use the following guidelines for patrons accessing the internet at Lee County Public Libraries:~~

- ~~◆ Patrons may use the Internet station for a block of time.  
If no one is waiting, they may continue until another patron needs the station.~~
- ~~◆ Use of the Internet stations is limited to two persons at a time.~~
- ~~◆ Internet access is available until 15 minutes before closing.~~
- ~~◆ Personal software or hardware may not be installed or used on library equipment.  
Any time information is downloaded to a floppy disk the potential exists for transporting a virus.~~
- ~~◆ Patrons should be sure an clear their stations at the end of their session.~~
- ~~◆ Displaying obscene materials is illegal in the state of Florida.~~

~~See also Attachment A - *Guidelines for Public Internet Access Brochure.*~~

## Rules for Use

- ◆ Internet stations may be used for a block of time. The time period may be extended if no one is waiting.
- ◆ Use of Internet stations is limited to two patrons at a time.
- ◆ Copyright law prohibits the unauthorized reproduction of copyright materials.
- ◆ It is unlawful to display obscene materials or images, per Florida Statute 847.
- ◆ Internet access is available up to 15 minutes before library closing time.
- ◆ Personal software or hardware may not be installed or used on library equipment, due to virus transport potential.

## Your Responsibilities

- ◆ Please respect the rights of others. Please leave the area ready for the next person at the scheduled time.
- ◆ Be an aware consumer. Question the validity of information retrieved from the Internet.
- ◆ There are information sources on the Internet which are inappropriate in a public library setting. Because the library is a public place, the library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session at any time, as a result of misuse, or abuse of Internet access.
- ◆ Ask at the library for scheduling guidelines at that location.

# Guidelines for Public Internet Access



Lee  
County  
Library  
System

Fort Myers, Florida

# Guidelines for Public Internet Access

The Lee County Library System (LCLS) offers Internet access in support of its mission to satisfy the informational needs of library users. The Internet can provide additional sources of information to supplement the various electronic, recorded and print resources available in the library.

Some Internet sites may contain controversial material. Because public libraries try to provide access to all information protected by the Constitution, individual users are responsible for choosing the sites they access. Any restriction of access by a child is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian of the child, not the library staff.

LCLS subscribes to the American Library Association (ALA) Bill of Rights, the ALA Freedom to Read statement, and the ALA Resolution on the Use of Filtering Software in Libraries. Copies of these documents are available at the library.

Even the most experienced user may require some training, due to the dynamic nature of the Internet. Patrons requiring in-depth Internet training are encouraged to contact commercial vendors, local schools or colleges.

While the library staff may offer suggestions and answer basic questions about the Internet, their skill levels may vary greatly. Reference staff will gladly assist in the search for any needed information in library books, periodicals, CD-ROM databases and other sources.

Provision of the Internet networked information does not constitute any endorsement of the content of that information by LCLS. Contact the original producer or distributor to report any information deemed inaccurate or offensive.

LCLS cannot guarantee the accuracy or validity of the constantly changing information available through the Internet. Individual users need to monitor and assess any information gathered from the Internet.

*Approved by the Lee  
County Board of County  
Commissioners  
July 2001*



**LEE COUNTY**  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA