

Florida Public Library Internet Policies & Filtering

Revised March 24, 2003

In March of 2001, Florida public libraries were surveyed to identify the approaches taken by local communities in dealing with the issue of display or access of obscene images on library public access Internet computers and a report was prepared presenting the results. That report was updated in 2002 and the results of a March 2003 update are presented here.

To provide an overview of practices in Florida communities, the responses from library systems with countywide responsibility for serving each of Florida's 67 counties are summarized here. This summary does not address services provided by municipal libraries unless those libraries are part of county systems or cooperative systems. In Pinellas County, policies and practices vary among the 13 libraries comprising the Pinellas Public Library Cooperative. For the purpose of this summary, for Palm Beach County, the policies and practices of the Palm Beach County Library System are presented while the approaches used by individual members of the Libraries of the Palm Beaches and municipalities vary.

Key Findings

~~62~~ Libraries serving 62 of 67 Florida Counties prohibit display of obscene images or images offensive to others.

~~33~~ Libraries serving 33 counties filter some computers. 24 filter all computers and 9 others filter some or those used by minors.

~~67~~ All have locally adopted Internet Use Policies.

Policies Prohibit Display of Obscene Content

Policies prohibit display of obscene images (inc. reporting Pinellas libraries)	57 Counties
Policies prohibit display of images offensive to others	5
Policies prohibit children or minors from accessing obscene images	2
Policies do not prohibit display of obscene images	3
Total	67

Use of Filtering Software or Technology

Filter access to obscene images on all computers	24 Counties
Do not filter access	33
Filter some computers (children's computers or offer public choice of filtered or unfiltered access)	9
County cooperative system (Pinellas) with independent administration with some filtering and some not	1
Total	67

Library Internet Policies

Have Public Access Internet Policies	All 67 Counties
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Filtering & Internet Policies In Florida County Libraries

County/Library <i>Members of multicounty systems grouped together</i>	Filters? / Product	Policy ?	Prohibit Display of Obscene Content?
1. Alachua	Users choose filtered or unfiltered access FIRN	Yes	No - Display of child pornography is prohibited
2. Brevard	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
3. Broward	No	Yes	No – Children's area computers are limited to pre-selected sites. Accessing child pornography is prohibited
<i>Charlotte-Glades Library System</i>			
4. Charlotte	No	Yes	Yes
5. Glades	No	Yes	Yes
6. Citrus	No	Yes	Yes
7. Clay	Children's computers Cybersitter	Yes	Children prohibited from accessing obscene content
8. Collier	Yes	Yes	Yes
9. Columbia	No	Yes	Yes
10. Dade	Most	Yes	Discourages users from

County/Library <i>Members of multicounty systems grouped together</i>	Filters? / Product	Policy ?	Prohibit Display of Obscene Content?
	computers filtered Cyber-patrol		displaying images offensive to others
11. Flagler	Children's computer Cybersitter	Yes	Prohibits display of images objectionable to others
12. Gadsden	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Heartland Library Cooperative</i>			
13. DeSoto	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
14. Hardee	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
15. Highlands	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
16. Okeechobee	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
17. Hendry	Yes FIRN	Yes	Yes
18. Hernando	Yes WebSense	Yes	Prohibits display of images objectionable to others
19. Hillsborough	Yes Websense	Yes	Yes
20. Indian River	Yes Smart Filter	Yes	Yes
21. Jacksonville	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
22. Lake	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
23. Lee	No	Yes	Yes
24. Leon	No	Yes	Yes Prohibits display of pornography or sexually explicit images
25. Levy	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
26. Manatee	Yes NetSpective	Yes	Yes
27. Marion	Yes Lab computers	Yes	Yes

County/Library <i>Members of multicounty systems grouped together</i>	Filters? / Product	Policy ?	Prohibit Display of Obscene Content?
	& 1 at each site unfiltered WebSense		
28. Martin	No	Yes	Prohibits display of images objectionable to others
29. Monroe	Yes RSACI	Yes	Yes
30. Nassau	Yes N2H2	Yes	Yes
<i>New River Library Cooperative</i>			
31. Baker	Yes Cyber-patrol	Yes	Yes
32. Bradford	Yes FIRN	Yes	Yes
33. Union	Yes FIRN	Yes	Yes
<i>Northwest Regional Library</i>			
34. Bay	No	Yes	Yes
35. Gulf	No	Yes	Yes
36. Liberty	No	Yes	Yes
37. Okaloosa	No	Yes	Yes
38. Orange	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
39. Osceola	Children's computers Cyber-patrol	Yes	Yes
40. Palm Beach	All computers filtered, adults may request unfiltered access	Yes	Yes
<i>Panhandle Public Library Cooperative</i>			
41. Calhoun	No	Yes	Yes
42. Holmes	No	Yes	Yes
43. Washington	No	Yes	Yes
44. Jackson	No	Yes	Yes

County/Library <i>Members of multicounty systems grouped together</i>	Filters? / Product	Policy ?	Prohibit Display of Obscene Content?
45. Pasco	No	Yes	Yes
46. Pinellas (Pinellas Public Library Cooperative)	Some libraries filter	Yes	Yes – All reporting libraries
47. Polk (11 members of the Polk Library Cooperative filter)	Yes Various products	Yes	Yes
48. Putnam	No	Yes	Yes
49. St. Johns	No	Yes	Yes
50. St. Lucie	Children's computers Cyber-patrol	Yes	Yes
51. Sarasota	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
52. Seminole	Yes WebSense	Yes	Yes
53. Sumter	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Suwannee River Regional</i>			
54. Hamilton	No	Yes	Yes
55. Madison	No	Yes	Yes
56. Suwannee	No	Yes	Yes
57. Taylor	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Three Rivers Regional Library</i>			
58. Gilchrist	No	Yes	Yes
59. Dixie	No	Yes	Yes
60. Lafayette	No	Yes	Yes
61. Volusia	Children's computers WebSense	Yes	No
62. Walton	Yes Cyber-sitter	Yes	Yes
<i>West Florida Regional Library</i>			
63. Escambia	No	Yes	Yes
64. Santa Rosa	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Wilderness Coast Public Libraries</i>			
65. Franklin	No	Yes	Prohibits display of images objectionable to others
66. Jefferson	No	Yes	Prohibits display of images objectionable to others
67. Wakulla	No	Yes	Yes

