



Empower Generations Learner Internet Use Policy and Agreement
Board Approved: May 15, 2025

I. INTRODUCTION

The Internet is a place for the exchange of ideas and information. Accordingly, the Internet is an excellent educational tool that allows learners to access a wide variety of information to supplement academic study and research. Empower Generations provides learners with Internet access and email accounts to further their education and research. However, the access the Internet provides to computers and people across the world also provides access to materials that do not have educational value in a school setting. As such, learners may encounter information and ideas they may consider obscene, controversial, abusive, or otherwise offensive. Despite these risks, Empower Generations believes that the value of the educational information available on the Internet far outweighs the risk that learners may access information that is not consistent with educational goals and purposes.

Empower Generations has promulgated and adopted the Learner Internet Use Policy and Agreement (“Policy”) to ensure that learners' access to and use of the Internet is consistent with the educational goals and purposes of Empower Generations. This Policy sets forth learner responsibilities and duties when accessing and using the Internet through Empower Generations equipment and resource network, and when using email accounts maintained by Empower Generations. Empower Generations has deemed certain uses of the Internet inappropriate for an educational setting and therefore not appropriate for use with Empower Generations equipment and resource networks. Empower Generations stresses that an inappropriate use does not always mean that the use is in itself “bad” or illegal, but only that the use does not further the educational goals and purposes of Empower Generations.

In addition to the below identified policies, Empower Generations will use technology protection measures that protect against Internet access (by both minors and adults) to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or, with respect to use by minors, harmful to minors. These measures may include, but are not limited to, installing a blocking system to block specific internet sites, setting Internet browsers to block access to adult sites, using a filtering system that will filter all Internet traffic and report potential instances of misuse, and using a spam filter.

An authorized administrator, supervisor, or other employee may disable the technology protection measure concerned only during use by an adult to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Learners are reminded that their use of Empower Generations equipment and resource networks reflects upon Empower Generations, and Learners should guide their activities accordingly.

II. LEARNER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Use is Limited to an Educational Purpose

The Learner acknowledges that access to the Internet via Empower Generations equipment and resource networks is intended to serve and pursue educational goals and purposes. Learner use of the Internet is therefore limited to only those activities that further or enhance the delivery of education. The Learner recognizes that he or she has a duty to use Empower Generations equipment and resource networks only in a manner specified in the Policy.

a. Educational Purpose

“Educational purpose” means classroom activities, research in academic subjects, career or professional development activities, research in matters of civic importance or that further citizenship in a democratic society, Empower Generations approved personal research activities, or other purposes as defined by Empower Generations from time to time.

b. Inappropriate Use

An “inappropriate use” is one that is inconsistent with an educational purpose or that is in clear violation of the Empower Generations policy.

2. Plagiarism

Researching information and incorporating that information into a learner’s work is an acceptable educational use, but learners have an obligation to credit and acknowledge the source of information. Accordingly, the Learner acknowledges that plagiarism is inappropriate and unacceptable. Plagiarism means the copying of a phrase, a sentence, or a longer passage from a source written by someone else and claiming the written work as the learner’s original work. Learner agrees that when quoting from information obtained on the Internet or through AI, he or she will acknowledge the source through quotation or any academically accepted form of notation.

3. Copyright

Learner agrees that he or she will not use Empower Generations equipment or resource networks to download or print text, music, or pictures for the purpose of selling or giving the files to others unless specifically authorized by Empower Generations and the owner of the copyrighted material.

4. Communication

Learner agrees that he or she will use Empower Generations equipment or resource networks or Empower Generations email accounts in the following manner:

- a. Learner will not post on newsgroups or other message posting systems any communication containing profanity, racially disparaging remarks, or lewd and/or obscene language.
- b. Learner will not at any time use speech that is not appropriate for an educational setting. Examples of speech that is not appropriate for an educational setting include, but are not limited to, inflammatory language, profanity, personal attacks, harassment, threats to do personal harm or other criminal activity, and language that is intended to be racially derogatory.
- c. Learner will not make threats against others.
- d. Learner will not reveal personal information about others.
- e. Learner will not use email to send chain letters or "spam" email to a list of people or to an individual. Excessive email use may constitute grounds for suspecting misuse.
- f. Learner will not place illegal information on the Internet, nor will the Learner use the Internet in any way that violates federal, state, or local law.
- g. All communications will be polite and respectful of others.
- h. Learner will not give out to any other Internet user or post on the Internet his or her personal information, including name, address, telephone number, credit card information, and social security numbers, unless expressly authorized by Empower Generations in writing.
- i. Learner will not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone he or she has "met" on the computer network or Internet without a parent's written permission.
- j. Learner will not use Empower Generations equipment in a manner that jeopardizes the security of the resource networks or other networks on the Internet.

- k. Learner will not engage in cyberbullying or cyberthreats. Cyberbullying involves bullying conduct that is created or transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer, smartphone, or pager, of a communication, including but not limited to, a message, text, sound, video or image.
- l. Cyber sexual bullying involves dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more effects described in (1) – (4) above. A photograph or other visual recording shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording or other electronic act. EC 48900
- m. Learner will not engage in social media bullying on any forum, including but not limited to, Internet websites with free registration and ease of registration, Internet websites offering peer-to-peer instant messaging (such as SnapChat, Tox, FireChat, Orbit, Bleep), internet websites offering comment forums (such as FaceBook, X, Reddit) and internet websites offering image or video posting platforms (such as YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitch, Imgur).

In instances of misuse or suspected misuse, in addition to any disciplinary actions appropriate, the Learner's parent or guardian may be granted access to the Learner's email files.

5. Illegal, Dangerous Activities and Hacking

Learner shall not use the Internet to perform any illegal act or to help others perform illegal acts. Illegal acts include, but are not limited to, any activities in violation of local, state, and federal law. Learner shall not access information designed to further criminal or dangerous activities. Such information includes, but is not limited to, information that, if acted upon, could cause damage, present a danger, or cause disruption to Empower Generations, other learners, or the community. Additionally, Learner shall not damage, debilitate, or disable computers, computer networks, or systems through the intentional or overuse of electronic distribution or the spreading of computer viruses or other harmful programs. Learner shall not engage in any unauthorized online access to other computers by means of hacking into other computers, download hacker tools such as port scanners and password crackers designed for use with Windows (or applicable operating systems), or use an Internet browser (or other WWW browsing tools) to evade restrictions on what programs Learner can run on Empower Generations' computers.

6. Obscene Materials

Learner acknowledges that obscene materials do not further an educational purpose. Accordingly, Learner shall not use the Internet to access, upload, download, distribute, or transmit obscene materials or images. Obscene materials include, but are not limited to, materials that offend generally accepted social standards. This includes access to or retrieval of any sexually explicit materials, and materials that are pornographic, abusive, or threatening. Learners are to exercise their best judgment when encountering sexually explicit or obscene materials. As a general rule, if the material could not be openly displayed in a classroom setting without violating generally accepted social standards, the material is obscene for purposes of this Policy and must not be accessed. Learner further agrees that he or she will not access any Internet site that requires the Learner to state that he or she is eighteen years of age or older as a condition of accessing the site.

7. Supervision and Learner Privacy

Learner acknowledges that computer equipment, Internet access networks, and email accounts are owned by Empower Generations and provided to learners for educational purposes. Empower Generations will provide staff to monitor and supervise all Learner access to computer equipment, Internet access networks, and email accounts. Empower Generations also reserves the right to access stored computer records to ensure compliance with this Policy. Learner is aware that communication over Empower Generations owned networks is not private and acknowledges that email and records of Internet activities will be accessed under, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- a. Routine system maintenance.
- b. General inspection or monitoring, with or without notice to Learner, if there is suspicion of inappropriate use.
- c. Specific review of individual files or monitoring of individual activity, with or without notice to Learner, if there is suspicion that Learner is engaging in inappropriate use.

8. Commercial Activities

Learner agrees that Learner will not use the Internet to buy or sell, or attempt to buy or sell, any service or product unless authorized by Empower Generations in writing.

9. Information About Others

Learner agrees that he or she will not make any statement or post (including video, audio, and photos) any communication on the Internet about another person that he or she knows or suspects to be untrue.

10. Vandalism or Theft

Learners are prohibited from engaging in any act of vandalism, theft, or unauthorized modification of Empower Generations equipment, software, or data. This includes, but is not limited to, damaging computer hardware, altering software configurations, deleting or stealing files, and unauthorized access to accounts or networks.

11. Violation of Policy

The Learner acknowledges that violation of this Policy can result in a loss of all Internet access and email privileges. If a Learner violates this Policy or in any other way uses Empower Generations equipment in a manner that is not consistent with educational use, the Learner will be promptly notified that he or she has violated the Policy. The Learner will be given the opportunity to explain why Empower Generations should deem the activity in question a use consistent with the educational purposes stated in this Policy. If Empower Generations deems that the use is inconsistent with the educational purposes stated in this Policy, Empower Generations may terminate the Learner's Internet and email privileges. However, because one of the educational purposes in providing Internet access is to teach learners to use the Internet appropriately, Empower Generations reserves the right to fashion penalties to specific concerns or specific violations, and Learner acknowledges that he or she may receive penalties less than full termination of Internet or email privileges. Such penalties may include, but are not limited to, restricted access to the Internet or supervised access to the Internet and email.

The Learner also acknowledges that Empower Generations will contact the proper legal authorities if Empower Generations concludes or suspects that the Learner's Internet activity is a violation of any law or otherwise constitutes an illegal activity.

12. Digital Citizenship

Digital citizenship at Empower Generations is a proactive and essential component of our educational program, with the core purpose of equipping learners with the vital skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the online world responsibly, ethically, and safely. Recognizing the pervasive nature of technology in today's society, Empower Generations is committed to providing age-appropriate digital citizenship education to our learners. To further support our learners and their families in fostering healthy digital habits and addressing any related challenges, we will ensure that relevant resources and support mechanisms are readily available as needed.