



PLV Statement on Internet Access

Public Libraries Victoria (PLV) is a collaborative and advocacy organisation and the peak body for Victorian public library managers, comprising representatives of every public library service in the state. Public libraries in Victoria are vital community hubs that provide access to a wide range of content and foster learning, creativity and imagination. Public libraries are delivered to their local communities by municipal councils; and to people with blindness and low vision by Vision Australia.

In accordance with Victorian State Government funding agreements, councils and regional library corporations undertake a range of activities to support and meet the information needs of their communities, including *Providing free access to the Internet for information resources*.

PLV recommends all public library services develop an internet use policy to safeguard the principles of free access and to guide and support use by patrons of public access computers.

PLV supports the Australian Library and Information Association's Statement on online content regulation:

Libraries and information services facilitate and promote public access to the widest variety of information, reflecting the plurality and diversity of society. The selection and availability of library materials and services, including online content and services, is governed by professional considerations and not by political, moral and religious views.

Libraries and information services support the right of all users to unhindered access to information of their choice regardless of format. Access to electronic information resources should not be restricted except as required by law and this basic right should not be eroded in the development of regulatory measures for online information.

Users are assisted with the necessary skills and a suitable environment in which to use their chosen information sources and services freely and confidently. Each user's right to privacy and confidentiality is protected with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted.

In addition to the many valuable resources available on the internet, some are incorrect, misleading and may be offensive. Libraries and information services proactively promote and facilitate responsible access to quality networked information for all their users, including children and young people. They enable library users to learn to use the internet and electronic information efficiently and effectively. (Amended 2002)

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