

### Background

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-rate program – a program that makes certain communications technology more affordable for eligible schools and libraries. In early 2001, the FCC issued rules implementing CIPA. More recently, Congress enacted additional protections for children using the Internet.

### What CIPA Requires

- Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-rate program unless they certify that they have an Internet safety policy and technology protection measures in place. An Internet safety policy must include technology protection measures to block or filter Internet access to pictures that are: (a) are obscene, (b) child pornography, or (c) harmful to minors (for computers that are accessed by minors).
- Schools and libraries must also certify that, as part of their Internet safety policy, they are educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including cyberbullying awareness and response and interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms.
- Schools subject to CIPA are required to adopt and enforce a policy to monitor online activities of minors.
- Schools and libraries subject to CIPA are required to adopt and implement a policy addressing: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet; (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by

### What CIPA Requires (cont'd.)

minors online; (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and (e) restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them.

Schools and libraries are required to certify that they have their safety policies and technology in place before receiving E-rate funding.

- CIPA does not affect E-rate funding for schools and libraries receiving discounts only for telecommunications, such as telephone service.
- An authorized person may disable the blocking or filtering measure during any use by an adult to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- CIPA does not require the tracking of Internet use by minors or adults.

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### For More Information

For more information about CIPA or to apply for Universal Service, contact the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) at [www.sl.universalservice.org](http://www.sl.universalservice.org). SLD also operates a client service bureau to answer questions at 1-888-203-8100 or via e-mail through the SLD Web site. For information about other telecommunications issues, visit the FCC's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau Web site at [www.fcc.gov/cgb](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb), or contact the FCC's Consumer Center by e-mailing [fccinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:fccinfo@fcc.gov); calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY; faxing 1-866-418-0232; or writing to:

Federal Communications Commission  
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554.

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