



Sunnyvale

Review Federal Government Programs that Direct Libraries to Provide Filtering for Internet Access

Michelle Perera
May 16, 2023



What is Filtering on Internet Access Computers?

- Internet filters are software that prevents users of a computer from accessing certain websites. They are predominantly used to block content considered inappropriate for specific users.

What is the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)?

- Enacted by Congress in 2000
- CIPA imposes certain filtering requirements on computers purchased with federal discounts/grants in schools and libraries.
- Must block or filter content that could be harmful to minors

California Public Libraries – CIPA Compliance

	CIPA Compliant	Not CIPA Compliant
FY 2012/13	87 (48%)	94 (52%)
FY 2015/16	95 (52%)	86 (48%)
FY 2021/22	112 (61%)	72 (39%)

- Sunnyvale Public Library does not use filters.
- As of FY 21/22 FY, no Santa Clara County Libraries use filters.

What Federal Money is Available to Libraries?

- Federal grants to libraries available through the Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS)
- Federal pass through funds – money given to the California State Library from the IMLS to be made available to California libraries through a grant program (LSTA – Library Services & Technology Act).
- E-rate funding for reduced telecommunications costs for eligible libraries

Funding Impact on Sunnyvale

- Can apply for Federal grants to libraries available through IMLS but NOT for computers/devices/access to Internet.
- Can apply for California State Library LSTA grants but NOT for computers. (California State Library receives \$15.9 million annually and grants a portion of that annually). Sunnyvale has received approximately \$100,000 in last year.
- During pandemic, \$7.5 billion was available through ARPA funds for internet access and devices. Sunnyvale was not able to take advantage of that. That money is no longer available.
- E-rate funding for reduced telecommunications costs for eligible libraries

Benefits / Challenges of Filtering

Why Should We Filter?

- Access to federal grants funding
- Increased security on library computers (block unwanted sites)
- Reduced staff intervention when patron is looking at illegal or inappropriate content

Why Shouldn't We Filter?

- American Library Association opposed on basis of First Amendment Rights
- Individuals should make own decisions about content they view (no patron complaints)
- CIPA related document retention
- Potential filtering of useful websites



Questions?