

Online Safety: A Federal Mandate

CIPA: The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires that K-12 schools and libraries in the United States use Internet filters and implement other measures to protect children from harmful online content as a condition for the receipt of certain federal funding. See <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act> for more information

COPPA: The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) details what a website operator must include in a privacy policy, when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent or guardian, and what responsibilities an operator has to protect children's privacy and safety online including restrictions on the marketing to those under 13. While children under 13 can legally give out personal information with their parents' permission, many websites altogether disallow underage children from using their services due to the amount of paperwork involved. For more information see <http://www.ftc.gov/privacy/coppafaqs.shtm>

FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. See <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html> for more info.

E-Rate: The program provides discounts to assist most schools and libraries in the United States (and U.S. territories) to obtain affordable telecommunications and Internet access. In 2008, the FCC put additional requirements on school systems who receive e-Rate funding including the fact that school systems must have a board policy to ensure CIPA compliance. In addition to the CIPA certifications required of schools, the ***Protecting the Children in the 21st Century Act*** requires the school, school board, local educational agency, or other authority with responsibility for administration of the school to certify that, "as part of its Internet safety policy, [it] is **educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response**. See <http://www.eratecentral.com/> for more info on E-Rate in general and this article from District Administration is another resource on the CIPA component - <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/protecting-children-21st-century>