



COMPUTER USE POLICY

Adopted by Trustees December 1, 1997
Revised by Trustees August 10, 1998
Revised by Trustees January 6, 2000
Revised by Trustees February 7, 2000
Revised by Trustees September 20, 2001
Revised by Trustees December 1, 2003
Revised by Trustees December 1, 2003
Revised by Trustees July 9, 2007

To fulfill its mission to enrich and sustain the lives of the people of York County by providing library services that meet their informational, recreational, and lifelong learning needs, the York County Library provides access to an extensive range of resources including those available through the Internet and other electronic reference databases. The York County Library has established this policy to ensure responsible and appropriate use of public access computers within the Library's facilities.

The Internet, as an information resource, enables the Library to provide information beyond the confines of its own collection. It allows access to ideas, information, and commentary from around the globe. Currently, however, it is an unregulated medium. As such, it offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, but, at the same time, it also enables access to material that may be inaccurate, controversial, personally offensive to the viewer, illegal, or inappropriate for children. Individual users must exercise judgment in evaluating the validity and appropriateness of information retrieved via the Internet and must assume personal responsibility for its use. The York County Library cannot be held liable for the content of any Internet site.

The Internet also has valuable informational resources for children and youth, who are expected to abide by this policy. The York County Library affirms the responsibility of parents to determine the appropriateness of all library resources for their children. Parents are strongly encouraged to supervise their children's library use, as Library staff cannot assume this responsibility. Specific conditions for the use of computers by children are outlined below under Rules of Use.

RULES OF USE

To comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), all publicly accessible Internet terminals are filtered. Adults may request that a terminal be unfiltered for bona fide research or other lawful purpose. The Library will comply with this request within a reasonable length of time. Adults who regularly use sites that are customarily blocked may ask staff members to add these sites to an acceptable override list. Under no circumstances will a terminal be unfiltered to allow an adult to access sites deemed obscene, depict child pornography, or be harmful to minors.

Library staff will assist computer users in a manner consistent with other Library services. The availability of staff and needs of other Library users will necessarily affect the extent of assistance in computer use.

All users of electronic information resources are expected to use these resources in a responsible manner, consistent with the educational, informational, and recreational purposes for which they are provided and to follow the Library's basic rules and regulations.

There may be Internet resources which are inappropriate to a library setting. Because the Library is a public place, Library staff has the authority to end an Internet session.

Through signature, all users must agree to and abide by the terms of this Computer Use Policy. A parent, guardian, or legal care giver, through signature, is responsible for the access of children and young people under the age of 18. Further, in order to use the computer for Internet access, children under 10 years of age must be accompanied by an adult who is 18 years of age or older and who, through signature, has agreed to the terms of this Policy and who remains with the child while using the computer. Unaccompanied children may use the Child Profile which does not provide Internet access.

Children under the age of 18 years who arrive at the Library without a library card in hand may have their computer use status verified in the customer database. If access was denied by the parent/guardian, the child may not use a computer. If access is permitted, the child may use the computer. If access is not indicated, the child may use a profile that does not provide Internet access.

If the demand warrants or circumstances permit, the Library may designate certain computers for the use of children only. The use of an unfiltered Internet accessible terminal shall be restricted to use by adults 18 years of age and older. The Library reserves the right to request proof of age.

Each user may use library computers up to a maximum of three hours per day.

Each user signing in prior to one hour before the library's closing is entitled to 1 hour of computer time. This time may be extended up to a total of 3 hours per day until such time as all workstations are in use and another customer requests time on the computer. The user who has been at the computer the longest over the 1 hour time limit will be given a 5 minute notice to relinquish the workstation.

The Library may use sign-up sheets or a reservation system if demand warrants.

Patrons wishing to use library computers must present either a valid York County Library card in good standing, an out-of-county resident library card in good standing, or an Internet-only guest card. Library cards in good standing are defined as cards for which no fines exceed \$10.00, for which fines under \$10.00 are less than 90 days old, and for which there are no other blocks limiting library use.

Internet-only guest cards are available to out-of-county residents who wish only to use library computers to access Internet and do not wish borrowing privileges. There will be a one-time charge of \$2.00 for a card. If a card is lost and must be replaced, there will be a \$2.00 replacement charge per card.

Only one person may use a workstation at a time. If two people need to work on a joint project, they may do so but only with the permission of Library staff. Both users must agree to the Library's Internet policy.

Customers will be required to use headsets when they are using applications with sound effects. Headsets are provided. Alcohol wipes will be available at the sign-in desk for customers to clean the headsets.

The Library does not provide individual e-mail accounts; however, users may send or receive e-mail using the Library's workstations.

Internet transactions involving the use of credit cards are conducted strictly at the risk of the customer.

Computer users may not:

Damage or attempt to damage equipment.

Alter or attempt to alter software configurations.

Instruct or demonstrate to another person how to by-pass web filtering technology.

Attempt to gain unauthorized access to or cause disruption of the Library's computer system or any other computer system.

Violate copyright laws or software licensing agreements.

Install their own software programs on computer workstations.

Bookmark specific sites with Library equipment.

Display or send obscene (as defined by South Carolina Code of Laws 16-15-305) images, messages, or files.

Violate local, state, or federal laws or regulations.

Engage in any activity which is deliberately and maliciously harassing, threatening, discriminatory on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, or age, offensive, libelous, or slanderous.

Violations of this policy may result in loss of Internet access and/or other Library privileges, up to and including no trespass orders issued by local law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction in the community in which the library facility is located. Unlawful acts are subject to prosecution by local, state, and federal authorities.

Loss of Internet access and/or other Library privileges will be based on a progressive scale as follows:

The first violation of Library policies will result in loss of privileges for one month.

The second violation of Library policies will result in the loss of privileges for six months.

The third violation of Library policies will result in the loss of privileges for one year.

The fourth violation of Library policies will result in the loss of privileges on an indefinite basis, at the discretion of the Library Director.