

# COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY



## POLICY STATEMENT

All registered borrowers of the Beaufort County Library (the Library) will have free and equal access to computer resources in the Library. The Library may establish time limits and sign-up procedures for the use of computer workstations.

The Library has adopted the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" and related interpretive statements. The Library does not restrict access to its services and resources based on age, race, religion, national origins, gender, or social or political points of view.

The Library supports and encourages parents to determine the proper use of Library resources, materials and services for their underage children. As with all other Library materials and resources, parents are ultimately responsible for their children's access to the internet. Any restriction of children to access the internet is the responsibility of their parent or legal guardian and not that of the Library Staff.

The Library complies with state and federal law mandating the use of filtering software in public libraries. Only adult users (ages 17 and older) may request the unfiltered computers provided by Proviso 72.95 of the 2001-2002 South Carolina Appropriations Act.

The Library cannot control the content of the internet and cannot be held responsible for its accuracy. The Library does not support or endorse the illegal use of the internet in any manner, including copyright infringement, access to or availability of obscenity or pornography.

Licensing agreements with providers of some online subscription databases limit remote access to these resources to registered borrowers of the Library.

## RULES OF USE

**Charges:** Printing charges are ten cents (\$.10) per page of copy. These charges shall include all printed pages.

**Express computers:** For the purpose of checking email, printing boarding passes, etc. customers will have access to PCs designated as "express" for fifteen minutes. Customers must relinquish use of the computer at the end of the 15 minutes; if a longer session is needed non-express stations can be reserved.

**Length of session:** Customers may use the internet terminals for one and one half (1 ½) hours per session. Staff may override if necessary. Customers must relinquish use of the computer to the next user immediately at the end of a session, without delays for print jobs or other unfinished computer functions.

Users who abandon machines for any length of time risk the chance of those computers being claimed by the next assigned user.

All sessions end without delay 10 (ten) minutes before the library closes.

**Sign-up procedures:** Customers agree to the Library's Computer and Internet Use Policy automatically by accessing the Library's computer network.

**Copyright:** U.S. Copyright law (Title 17, US Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials (including electronic mail, text, images, programs or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

**Violations:** Computer use will be managed in a manner consistent with the Library's Appropriate Behavior Policy. Users may not:

- Use a computer other than the assigned machine.
- Engage in any activity that is disruptive to other library users.
- Gain unauthorized access to the Library's network, or to any other network or computer system.
- Damage or attempt to damage computer equipment, peripherals (mouse, headphones, etc.) or software.
- Use personal software on Library computers, attempt to install software, alter, delete or add to computer files/settings/configurations in any way; store files in Library hard drives; or move computer equipment.
- Violate copyright or software licensing agreements.
- Violate federal, state, or local laws or regulations.
- Alter computer settings or run programs that use an excessive amount of bandwidth.

Violators of computer access and use policies may lose access and library privileges.

Violators of Beaufort County Library policies for the legal, ethical, and appropriate use of computing resources will be dealt with in a serious and appropriate manner. Illegal acts involving Library computing resources may also be subject to prosecution of the violator by local, state, or federal authorities.

When users under age seventeen (17) violate the conditions of this policy, the parents or legal guardians will receive a notice to discuss the infraction with Library staff.

All library staff has the authority to end any computer session and to instruct the user to cease and desist from further use of Library electronic resources.

**Limits on internet protocols:** The Library is not an internet vendor and will not provide email accounts and file traces, usenet access FTP. Only internet accessible email accounts can be accessed.

**Staff assistance:** Staff will assist with all computer resources and the internet as time allows.

**Privacy/Confidentiality:** While the Library upholds users' rights to privacy and confidentiality in their use of all library resources, the nature of electronic resources makes it impossible to guarantee these rights. Ultimate responsibility for resolution of problems related to the invasion of the users' privacy or loss of data rests with the user. The Library assumes no liability for loss or damage to the users' data or for any damage or injury arising from invasion of the users' privacy.

Users should be aware that any information left on Library computers may be accessed by other users. To protect privacy, customers must log out.

**Number of users at one computer station:** Because space is limited and increased noise from group conversations is disruptive to others, no more than two (2) people may gather at one workstation. Scheduled instructional sessions constitute exceptions to this rule.

For personal safety, children eight (8) years old and under must remain with an adult at all times in the building. The responsibility to accompany children eight (8) years of age and under supersedes the right of the user to access the internet and other computer resources.

**Library disclaimer about internet content:** Library staff cannot control or monitor websites that change rapidly and unpredictably. Some material on the internet may contain items that are illegal, inaccurate, defamatory, and potentially offensive and/or disturbing to some people. The Library is not accountable for changes of content within the unregulated sources to which we link, primary or secondary.

As with printed information, not all sources in the internet are accurate, complete or current. Users should evaluate internet sources just as printed publications, questioning the validity of the information provided.

The Library assumes no responsibility or liability for the effectiveness of the filtering software product that it has implemented in compliance with state law.

**Appeal process:** Customers may appeal the selection or availability of specific electronic resources owned and administered by the Library through the same procedure of due process for all materials formats as described in the Library's Collection Development Policy.

**Technical problems:** Customers may not be able to access the internet for a number of reasons beyond the control of Library staff.

**Laptops:** Customers may plug their own laptop computers into available electrical outlets in a Library's public service area providing the connection does not pose a safety hazard (for example, tripping over cords) or an obstacle (like cords blocking free movement) to others. Library staff will suggest appropriate outlets for use.

Personal laptops may not be connected to Library printers, phones and telecommunication jacks.

As with most wireless networks, the Library's wireless network is not secure. Users are encouraged to take appropriate precautions when using the wireless network.

Wifi users automatically agree to the Library's Computer and Internet Use Policy by accessing the Library's data network.

*Approved by the Library Board of Trustees November 14, 2012*

*Revised August 25, 2015*

*Revised/Updated and Approved October 11, 2017*