

Martin Public Library

Technology Use Policy and Guidelines

Introduction

The Martin Public Library is pleased to offer use of the Internet as part of the library's mission of providing free and open access to materials and services to enhance the information and learning opportunities for the citizens of the Martin area. The Board of Trustees has established the Internet use policy to ensure appropriate and effective use of this resource. This policy will be reviewed and updated annually and included in the minutes of the board meeting. The library's computer system provides the opportunity to integrate resources from around the world with the library's other resources. This policy applies to all use of the library's wired or wireless Internet service, whether privately-owned or Library-provided devices are operated.

In order to offer quality Internet service to all of our patrons, potential users must agree to follow the policy guidelines outlined below.

Computers are available to patrons on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no charge for the computer; however, to make the service available to as many patrons as possible, a time limit for usage will be imposed. That time limit is 60 minutes, with this exception. If there is at least one computer available, your time can be extended with staff permission. The staff reserves the right to ask you to leave the workstation if you have been on the computer longer than an hour and all computers are in use. Library-owned devices and free unsecured wireless Internet access are available for public use.

Library staff is available for general assistance in using the computer. However, staff is not expected to train patrons in the use of application programs. Tutorial manuals and classes will be provided when available.

A printer is available. Copies will cost \$.15 per sheet for black and white and \$.50 for color and must be paid for at the end of the session, except students given the first 5 pages free for educational research.

Responsibility

As with all library resources, the library affirms the right and responsibility of parents and guardians to determine and monitor their children's use of the Internet.

The same standards of intellectual freedom, privacy and confidentiality endorsed by the Martin Public Library for traditional resources and services also apply to electronic media, including usage of the Internet.

The library has a policy of open access to all parts of its collections, including access to the Internet, and usage is not restricted by age. There is no age limit for use of any materials provided on the Internet.

Parents or legal guardians who believe that their children cannot responsibly use the library's Internet access are requested to monitor their children's Internet use and must assume responsibility for their children's use of the library's Internet service.

Prior to being granted access to the Internet, a parent or legal guardian must sign the Internet Use Agreement for children under 18 years of age. Public access computers located in the Children's Room are to be used by children under the age of thirteen. Anyone thirteen years of age and older may use these computers only if accompanied by a child.

Access to the Internet is available to all patrons; however, this service may be restricted at any time for use not consistent with the guidelines.

Customers handling financial transactions or other activities that require confidentiality do so at their own risk. The Internet is not a private environment and security of electronic communication cannot be guaranteed.

All users must check out the computer at the circulation desk, just as you would check out a book. When finished, the user must check the computer back in by telling the staff at the circulation desk that they are finished.

Disclaimer

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 world. Information access through the Internet is not warranted by the library to be accurate, authoritative, factual, or complete. It is the patron's responsibility to verify the accuracy of any materials found on the Internet.

Internet resources may contain material of a controversial nature. Selection policies that serve to govern the library's purchase of materials are not applicable to protect users from offensive information. The user, parent, or legal guardian is responsible for determining what is appropriate. The Martin Public Library does not monitor or have control over content on the Internet. Therefore, library patrons are advised to exercise critical judgement when using information from the Internet. The library assumes no responsibility for any damage, direct or indirect, arising from the use of its connection to the Internet.

Expectations

Users should be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic informational resources can be a violation of local, state, and federal laws and can lead to prosecution. The user will be held responsible for his/her actions using the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the policies below, which include generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The library does not monitor an individual's use of any sites except for length of use in order to ensure equal opportunity to access for everyone, or when material displayed on the screen is not appropriate in a public environment and user responsibilities are violated.

The library does not retain browser history or personal information entered into websites or applications. Customer computer use and reservation records are not permanently retained. The library will not reveal the information sources or services individual users consult unless required by law or court order.

In general, the library will treat information on computers as confidential. Requests for disclosure of information regarding an individual's use will be honored only if approved by the library director, when authorized by the owners of the information, or when required by local, state, and federal law.

Guidelines for Acceptable Use

In accordance with the Tennessee Code Title 39, Chapter 17, Part 9, sending, receiving, or displaying text or graphics, which may be reasonably construed as obscene by community standards, is prohibited, regardless of age. Any patron violating this guideline will be asked to immediately leave the workstation, and any further Internet access will be denied.

Users must accept all U. S. copyright laws and licensing agreement pertaining to software, files, and other resources obtained via the Internet.

Saving images or files from the Internet to the computer's hard drive is prohibited permanently. Patrons may bring in a jump drive to download files to be saved. Unknown files will be purged from the computer periodically. Any patron violating this guideline will be asked to immediately leave the workstation, and any further Internet access will be denied.

All federal, state, and local laws remain in effect. This includes, but is not limited to laws governing copyrights, gambling, and display of pornographic materials. Any patron violating this guideline will be asked to immediately leave the workstation, and any further Internet access will be denied. The patron may also be subject to criminal prosecution.

The library will conform to all local, state, and federal laws regarding minors' access to materials harmful to minors.

All Internet users should avoid disclosing personal information over the Internet to preserve their own personal safety. Library Internet users are prohibited by law from disclosing, using, and disseminating personal information regarding minors without written authorization of the parent or legal guardian of the minors involved.

Engaging in any of the following activities is a violation of this policy: libeling or slandering others, uploading a worm, virus, or other harmful form of programming or vandalism, participating in hacking activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.

Customers are urged to respect the sensibilities of others when accessing images that may reasonably be offensive to someone else. Privacy while using the Internet in the library cannot be guaranteed. There exists a possibility of inadvertent viewing by others.

Security for wireless devices rests solely with the owner. Library staff members may provide guidance for accessing library materials and services with privately-owned devices, but they do not provide technical support.

Internet users are prohibited from using the library computers to compromise the safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications. Such use includes but is not limited to giving others private information about oneself or others or arranging a face-to-face meeting with someone one has met on the Internet without a parent or legal guardian's permission.

Guidelines for Unacceptable Use

Unacceptable uses include but are not limited to the following:

- Use of the resources for any purpose that violates federal, state, or local laws
- Harassment of others
- Libeling or slandering others
- Destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the library or other users
- Disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications, including excessive use of the Library's Internet capacity
- Infringement upon the rights and privacy of others
- Unauthorized use of computer accounts or access codes
- Unauthorized copying of copyright-protected material
- Use of Internet by a child whose parent/guardian has not signed the Internet User Agreement for children (under 17 years of age)
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information regarding minors
- Downloading external applications to the hard drive of the public access computers.
- Intentional interference with or circumvention of normal operation of Library technology

Children's Internet Protection Act

The library uses filtering software for all PCs in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, to prevent access to visual depictions that are: obscene, child pornography, or "harmful to minors."

Minors are children or young people under the age of 18. The term "harmful to minors" is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 USC Section 254 [h] [7]), as meaning any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals
- Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

Filtering software is not foolproof. Filters often block access to sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful. If a patron over 18 does not find what they need, a request can be made to a librarian to unblock the filtered site.

Virus Warning

Although the library uses a program that checks for viruses, there is no guarantee that files downloaded from the Internet will not contain a virus. The library is not responsible for any damage that may arise from saving or downloading files to a jump drive.

Violations

The user's access to the library's computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. Misuse of the library's computers will result in the loss of computer privileges, and possible criminal prosecution.

Laptop Use

Laptops may be loaned to patrons, **age 18 and over**, in good standing, —no fines, no overdue items, etc.—who have a current Library Card for in-house use only.

The **User must sign an agreement of liability** for the cost of repair or replacement in the event of loss due to theft, damage, negligence, or misuse. This agreement will be noted in the patron's computer information and the patron will receive a copy of his/her signed agreement. **LAPTOPS MAY NOT BE LEFT UNATTENDED FOR ANY PERIOD OF TIME.**

Laptops are circulated first come, first served for 1 hour each day.

No advance bookings will be taken.

Laptops may not be taken from the library. They are for in-house use only.

Wireless printing is available for laptop users.

Laptops will be barcoded and circulated with battery only—no mouse, no power cords, etc.

Laptops are due 30 minutes before closing time.

ANY MALFUNCTION MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY

USERS MUST ABIDE BY ALL LIBRARY INTERNET POLICIES. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE POLICIES MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES.