

Computer Usage Policy

To fulfill its mission to enrich and sustain the lives of the people of Sumter County by providing library services that meet their informational, recreational, and lifelong learning needs, the Sumter County Library System provides access to an extensive range of resources including those available through the Internet. The Sumter County Library System 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 Sumter 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 Sumter County Library affirms the responsibility of parents/guardians 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 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 an adult be allowed access to sites deemed obscene or 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.

By signature of a **Limitation of Liability Form** (see addenda), all users must agree to and abide by the terms of this Computer Use Policy and the Computer Use Rules and Procedures

(see addenda). 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 12 years of age and under 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.

The Library reserves the right to limit, refuse, and/or ban any patron from using library equipment and computers. Patrons wishing to use library computers must present either a valid Sumter County Library card in good standing or a non-resident library card in good standing. 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.

Guest passes are available to out-of-county residents who wish only to use library computers and do not wish borrowing privileges. Active duty military **that do not have a Sumter County Library card** may use the computers by showing their Military I.D. card. **Guest passes are good for a period of thirty (30) days. They may be renewed once for an additional thirty (30) days. After that, a Library Card must be obtained for further computer use.**

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 permission of Library staff. Other exceptions include a parent/guardian accompanied by a child or those who require special assistance.

Customers will be required to use headsets when they are using applications with sound effects. Patrons may bring their own headphones or purchase a set for a fee if available. Headphones are available free of use **only** for children aged 12 and under using the computers designated solely for children's use.

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:

1. Damage or attempt to damage equipment.
2. Alter or attempt to alter software configurations.
3. Instruct or demonstrate to another person how to by-pass web filtering technology.
4. Attempt to gain unauthorized access to or cause disruption of the Library's computer system or any other computer system.
5. Violate copyright laws or software licensing agreements.
6. Install their own software on computer workstations.
7. Bookmark specific sites with Library equipment.

8. Display or send obscene (as defined by South Carolina Code of Laws 16-15-305) images, messages, or files.
9. Violate local, state, or federal laws or regulations.
10. Engage in any activity which is deliberately and maliciously harassing, threatening, and discriminatory on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, or age, offensive, libelous, or slanderous.
11. Engage in any activity that is disruptive to other library users
12. Engage in any form of harassment over the Internet, commonly referred to as cyber bullying. Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, or threatening another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Website postings, including blogs.

Internet use will be managed in a manner consistent with the Library's Code of Conduct.

Violations of this policy may result in loss of Internet access, use of computers, 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, computer usage, and/or other Sumter County Library System privileges will be based on a progressive scale as follows:

1. First time offenders will be asked to cease using the computer entirely for the remainder of the day.
2. Second time offenders will be banned from using the computers for a period of one month.
3. Third time offenders will be banned permanently from using computers.

Procedures

- 1. Computers are available on a "first-come, first served" basis. Reservations will not be taken in advance. Users should check in at the appropriate station.**
- 2. Usage is limited to 30 minute blocks, with a maximum allowable time of two hours.**
- 3. There is a charge of 15 cents per page for all materials printed whether intentional or not. Preview your print job before submitting.**
- 4. Library staff may be able to offer limited technical assistance, but cannot address or resolve every issue connected with use of computers or the internet.**

- 5. Technical problems outside the control of library staff may result in the suspension of service. Users should periodically save any work. The Library is not responsible for any work lost during the use of computer workstations.**