Internet and Computer Use Policy

Oakland City - Columbia Township Public Library provides access to computers and computer-based resources for informational, educational, and recreational purposes. This policy governs the management of computers and computer data networks, including wireless service that are owned and administered by the library.

Access

On-site computers are provided for the use of all persons regardless of residency, so long as such use does not violate any laws or other legally binding prohibitions imposed upon the person, including, but not limited to, fines owed the library or violations of local library policies. Computer use is on a first-come, first-served basis. To promote equitable access to computer resources, the Library may utilize time management software. Staff may also take other measures to manage computer access including (but not restricted to) reserving terminals for individuals or groups with specific needs.

Free wireless access is available for all Library visitors with their own personal laptops and mobile devices. Usage of the Library's wireless network is entirely at the risk of the user.

Confidentiality

In keeping with the Library's general policies, information stored on computers is treated as confidential. The Library does not disclose information about an individual's use of computer resources unless compelled to do so by local, state, or federal law, or approved by the Director or their designee. Viewing information in the course of normal system maintenance does not constitute disclosure.

Information stored by a user on the Library's public computers will be removed by operating system procedures and software tools when the systems are turned off at the end of each day. However, no guarantees can be made in this regard and patrons should exercise caution when exposing any private information and contact staff if sensitive information is being entered during a session in order to allow for an earlier shut down. Patrons wishing to save their information should do so using an external source of storage, such as a flash drive.

Patron Responsibilities

Users should be aware of computer viruses and other destructive programs, and take steps to avoid being a victim or an unwitting distributor. Ultimate responsibility for resolution of problems related to the invasion of the user's privacy or loss of data rests with the user. The Library assumes no liability for loss or damage to the user's data or devices, nor for any personal damage or injury incurred as a result of using the Library's computing resources. This includes damage or injury sustained from invasion of the user's privacy.

Computing resources may only be used for legal purposes. Examples of illegal use include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Attempting to alter or damage computer equipment, software configurations, or files belonging to the Library, other users, or external networks
- Attempting unauthorized entry to the Library's network or external networks
- Intentional propagation of computer viruses, malware, etc.
- Violation of copyright or communications laws
- Violation of software license agreements
- Transmission of speech not protected by the First Amendment, such as libel and obscenity

Cooperative Responsibilities

The Library strives to balance the rights of users to access different information resources with the rights of users to work in a public environment free from harassing sounds and visuals. The Library asks all users to remain sensitive to the fact that they are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages, with a variety of information interests and needs. In order to ensure an efficient, productive computing environment, the Library insists on the practice of cooperative computing. This includes:

- Respecting the privacy of other users
- Avoiding having additional people at their workstation, with the exception of when the additional persons are necessary for assisting the user.
- Not using computer accounts, access codes, or network identification codes assigned to others
- Refraining from changing settings and icons on library resources.
- Refraining from overuse of connect time, information storage space, printing facilities, processing capacities, or bandwidth capacities
- Refraining from the use of sounds and visuals which might disrupt the ability of other Library patrons to use the Library and its resources. Users are welcome to bring their own earbuds or headphones in order to access sounds.

Sanctions

The Library relies on the cooperation of its users to efficiently and effectively provide shared resources and ensure community access to a wide range of information. If individuals violate these acceptable use rules in any way, their right to use networked resources may be suspended for a specified time. They will be notified of the length of and reason for the suspension. Individuals using Library computing resources for illegal purposes may also be subject to prosecution.

Internet Disclaimer

The internet is a global electronic network with no central control of its users or content. The internet contains a diverse range of information, some of which may be objectionable or offensive. The Library cannot protect users from offensive internet content. The library staff can offer advice and suggestions to help ensure effective internet searching, however, the library nor its staff assume responsibility regarding the accuracy of any information found on the website and cannot guarantee the accuracy or safety of any internet search or website.

Except for webpages produced internally, the Library does not control internet content and makes no general effort to limit internet access with exception of third-party content filters required to meet the needs of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Adults may request an override to the filter by contacting the Library Director when conducting legitimate research. However, when informed of a violation of the Library's Internet and Computer Use Policy, library staff will enforce the legal and cooperative responsibilities outlined above.

As with other materials, parents and guardians of minor children are responsible for supervising their children's use of internet resources at the Library. Library staff will not assume responsibility for supervising any minors Internet use.

The Library cannot ensure the availability nor the accuracy of external electronic resources. Like print materials, not all electronic sources provide accurate, complete, or current information. Users need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of information.

In accordance with Indiana Code (IC 36-12-1-12), the Library performs a public review of this Internet and Computer Use Policy annually.

This policy replaces previous Internet and Technology Use policy and the Internet Safety Policy. Approved at the November 9, 2022 Board of Trustees meeting.

Serving the community by providing informational and recreational opportunities in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.