

# Dorchester County Library Computer Internet Policy

The Dorchester County Library (the Library) in its role as a community resource provides free Internet access to library card holders through public access computers and wireless access. The Library cannot control the content of the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its accuracy. Library staff will assist users in a manner consistent with other library services. The availability of staff and the needs of other patrons may affect the extent of assistance provided.

Patrons using the technology resources of the Library are expected to comply with copyright law. The U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principals of “fair use”. Subject to fair use, users may neither reproduce copyrighted materials (text, images, programs, or data) nor distribute such materials by any means including electronic mail without explicit written permission of the copyright holder. Responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user. The Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

The Library also complies with state and federal law and the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) which addresses concerns about children’s access to obscene or harmful Internet content and mandates the use of filtering software in public libraries. In compliance with CIPA, the Library designates three distinct levels of access.

1. “Unfiltered” Internet Access – This level is for adults over the age of 18.
2. “Minimum Filtered” Internet Access – This level is filtered to eliminate the majority of obscene or pornographic web sites, keeping in mind that no software filter is totally effective. It is for children ages 13 – 17.
3. “Maximum Filtered” – This level is filtered to eliminate the majority of the following categories of web sites, keeping in mind that no software is totally effective. Categories of web sites blocked are Alcohol, Anarchy, Banner Ads, Chat, Criminal Skills, Cults, Drugs, Gambling, Hate & Discrimination, Obscene/Tasteless, Personals/Dating, R-Rated, Pornography, Web based e-mail, Web based newsgroups. It is for children under age 13.

The Library supports and encourages parents to determine the appropriate use of library technology resources for their underage children. Parents are responsible for their children’s access to the Internet. Children under the age of nine (9) years must be supervised by a parent, legal guardian, or sibling over the age of fifteen (15) years.

If a user feels that a particular site should be blocked, the user may request the Library to consider blocking said site. The user can make his/her request by completing a Patron Request for Review of Internet Material. The Library staff will examine the site in question and make the determination if that site should remain blocked or unblocked according to library policy.

Printers are linked to each public access computer. Printing costs and available methods for payment are posted in each library facility. Users may not bring their own paper for use in library printers.

In providing computers for public use, the Library reserves the right to

- Create sign-up procedures for use of computer workstations;
- Establish time/change time limits on patron use;
- Earmark some workstations for specific purposes; and
- Set restrictions without prior notice.

All patrons are expected to use library computers in a responsible manner and to follow the Library's basic rules and regulations.

### **Wireless Access**

The public may use personal laptops or wireless devices in any part of the Library open to the public or grounds provided no obstacle or safety hazard is created. Personal wireless devices may plug into specifically designated electrical outlets, if available; however, the Library is not liable for any damage created by power loss, surges or brownouts. Accessing and using the library's wireless network is considered an individual's acceptance of, and agreement to, the Computer Internet Policy. Wireless users are subject to federal, state, or local laws regulating Internet use. Use of personal wireless devices to display or disseminate graphic pornography, sexually explicit or sexually suggestive material is inappropriate for a public or open environment and is prohibited. Violations of this policy and related procedures may result in the loss of library privileges. Illegal use may result in criminal prosecution.

Information downloaded from the Internet may contain a virus. The Library is not responsible for damage to a patron's device nor for the loss of any data, damage, or liability that may occur from the use of the Library's wireless network.

The sending of any information, including name, address, and credit card numbers via the Internet is at the sole risk of the user.

Wireless printing is now available for wireless devices. Printing costs and available methods for payment are posted in each library facility.

### **Violation of Policy**

Failure to use the internet appropriately and responsibly as defined under this policy, and/or failure to comply with this or other Library rules may result in the suspension of library privileges. Illegal use of library computers may result in criminal prosecution.

Library staff will ask violators of the Library's Computer Internet Policy to exit sites. This is a First Warning. Staff will add a note to the patron's account in Evergreen. Failure to comply with Library staff requests or confrontation will result in police

assistance being requested. If a user subsequently has to be told a second time, the user will be asked to leave the Library for the remainder of the day. Staff will enter a note in Evergreen, make the user inactive in SAM and send an email to IT to include the patron account information. IT will reactivate the patron account the following day in SAM. If a user fails to comply a third time, the user loses their Internet privileges for a period of six (6) months. Staff will make a note in Evergreen, make the user inactive in SAM and send an email to IT. If the user continues to violate the policy for a fourth time, the patron's internet privileges will be suspended indefinitely.

## Conditions of Use

Dorchester County residents must have a current library card to use a computer. Patrons who possess a library card agree to use it only for personal access and not loan or give the card to another individual. Non-residents may receive a temporary visitor's pass after showing a driver's license or photo ID. Visitor passes are also available for children when a parent or guardian is present. Filtering levels for children's passes are assigned according to the age of the child. Ages 0 – 12, maximum filtering; ages 13 – 18, minimum filtering.

- All users must agree to abide by the rules set forth in the Library's Computer Internet Policy.
- Use of computers is on a "first come, first serve" basis.
- Library staff can assign users to specific workstations as needed.
- All users must observe the designated time limits and restrictions for each computer.
- Computers designated as "Children Only" may not be used by adults unless directly supervising a child.
- Users may access only one computer at a time. With staff approval, up to two people may be seated at a single computer.
- The sending of any information, including name, address, and credit card numbers via the internet is at the sole risk of the user.

## Rules and Regulations

- Library computers are to be used for legal purposes only.
- Users may not invade the privacy of others at any time or in any way.
- Use of library computers to display or disseminate graphic pornography, sexually explicit or sexually suggestive material is prohibited.
- Users may not misrepresent themselves or the Library by using computer accounts, access codes, numbers, passwords, signatures, network identification, or other information assigned to others.
- The Library will not compromise its computer network security, attempting to gain unauthorized access to or cause disruption of the library's network system is prohibited.
- Library computers will not be used for commercial and/or personal profit business activities.

- It is a violation of the Library's policy for a person to instruct or demonstrate to another person how to by-pass the filtering software installed on public access computers.
- Users who commit violations may lose their internet, computer, and/or library privileges. Illegal use may result in criminal prosecution.
- Only library staff may reboot, restart, or log on to the Library's computers. Library staff has the authority to end an internet session.

## **Procedures**

The Library Director is responsible for establishing and administering procedures to carry out this policy.