



Computer & Internet Acceptable Use Policy

For purposes of this policy, the terms "user" and "patron" shall include library employees, and minors are defined as children and young people under the age of 18 years, in compliance with the Pennsylvania Child Internet Protection Act (Act 197).

Mission

Highland Community Library's mission is to empower our community by providing opportunities to connect, discover, and thrive. In pursuit of that mission, the Library provides free and open access to resources beyond the physical collections housed at the Library.

Privacy and Access

The Internet offers access to a wealth of information that can be personally, professionally, and culturally enriching. But, because the Internet is a vast and unregulated global electronic network, it also enables access to ideas, information, images, and commentary beyond the confines of the Library's collection, mission, and collection development policies. Because of this access and because sites on the Internet change rapidly and unpredictably, the Library cannot protect users from materials which may be offensive, disturbing, or controversial.

While the Library endeavors to provide access to information of the highest quality, the Library specifically disclaims any warrant as to the information's accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness, or fitness for a particular purpose. Users are encouraged to exercise critical judgment in evaluating the validity of information accessed via the Internet. The Library assumes no liability for direct, indirect, or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed through the Library's Internet service.

Users must keep in mind that the computers are located in a public area and are neither private nor secure, and must utilize judgment and discretion when using a library computer. Users are cautioned that because privacy and security in an electronic environment cannot be guaranteed, all transactions, files, and communication are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use and, therefore, should be considered public.

Never reveal personal information (name, address, telephone number, school, etc.) about one's self or others in open forums such as chat rooms, bulletins, e-mail, etc. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to make family rules never to give out identifying information on the Internet.

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 for any damage or injury arising from invasion of the user's privacy.

Patron Responsibilities

All users must read and abide by the Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. All patrons are expected to use the Library's computing resources in a responsible and courteous manner, in accordance with the ethical standards of the Library.

Users of the Library's computing resources must comply fully with federal, state, and local laws, and Library rules and policies established for its use.

It is a felony offense in the state of Pennsylvania "to display or cause to display any explicit sexual material...on any...viewing screen in such a manner that the display is visible...in any establishment where minors, as part of the general public, may be exposed to view all or any part of such materials." (Title 18 Penna. Crime Code 5903). Therefore, viewing of such material in the Library will not be permitted. Violation of this provision will result in the immediate termination of Internet and computer use privileges.

Computers must be checked out at the Public Service Desk with a valid Cambria County Library System library card. Patrons may also request a guest pass if they do not have a library card. An individual has up to one hour on the public computers if others are waiting. Use of the computers is on a first-come, first-served basis.

No more than two people may use a workstation at one time. The patron who checked out the computer is responsible for operating it.

Patrons may not change workstations unless a problem arises with the computer. Please notify the library staff if a computer is not working properly.

Personal email accounts are available through services such as Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc. E-mail accounts are not provided by the Library.

Patrons may use their own USB flash drive to save or access projects or to download files from the Internet. Since software and information downloaded from any sources, including the Internet, may contain computer viruses, patrons are advised to utilize virus checking software on their home computers. The Library assumes no liability for damage to users' drives or computers or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the Library's computers.

The printing fee is \$.50 +tax per page for color printing and \$.25 +tax for black and white printing, payable at the Public Service Desk.

Computer and Internet use must be completed 10 minutes before the Library closes.

Library Staff Responsibilities

Library staff is available for a limited amount of assistance in using the Internet and the computers. Since the staff must assist other patrons as well, they cannot spend large amounts of time guiding patrons through the Internet or provide in-depth training concerning the Internet or personal computer use. However, if a user experiences a computer or printer malfunction, a staff member should be notified immediately.

Library staff cannot control the availability of information links which often change rapidly and unpredictably. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. Users need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of the information.

Library staff will not monitor a user's Internet use, except for length of use, in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone. The user, or the parent or guardian of a minor, is responsible for their Internet session at all times.

As with all library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/guardians, NOT the library staff, to determine and monitor their minor children's use of the Internet. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to discuss the use of the Internet with their children in relation to their family values and boundaries. Parents/Guardians who believe that their children cannot responsibly use the Library's Internet access are requested to monitor their children's Internet use.

Library staff reserves the right to

- select the computer for the user;
- limit computer use to one hour during busy times;
- limit the number of patrons (2) at a computer workstation;
- terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or that involves user behavior that violates the Library's policies.

CIPA Compliance

The Library's Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy complies with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), PL 106-554, 114 Stat. 3763A-335.

CIPA requires all computer terminals to utilize technology protection measures or filtering software. Under CIPA, Congress mandated that the filtering software must protect against access through library computers of certain material that is obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. The U.S. Supreme Court in 2003 upheld this requirement as constitutional under the First Amendment.

The Library has installed filtering software on all library computers with Internet access, and will enforce the operation of same during any use of those computers, to prevent minors from accessing visual depictions that are (1) obscene (defined in 18 USC 1460), (2) child pornography (defined in 18 USC 2256), or (3) harmful to minors (defined in PL 106-554, 114 Stat. 2763A-335).

Nonetheless, Congress and the Supreme Court have both recognized that filtering software is inherently unreliable and can over-block or under-block access on the worldwide web. When over-blocking occurs, library patrons can be denied access to sites with educational value and appropriate information. When under-blocking occurs, library patrons, including children, can be afforded access to sites that contain illegal, obscene, or sexually explicit material. The Library assumes no liability for any consequences caused by over- or under-blocking of material by the filtering software.

Under CIPA, technology protection measures may be disabled by a library staff member, as necessary, for bona fide research or other lawful purposes by adults aged 18 or older; library staff may also override the filter for minors (age 17 or younger) in the event that the filter erroneously blocks access to a site.

The Library, having installed and enforced the operation of filtering software in compliance with CIPA, assumes no liability for damages related to the operation of, or failure of, the filtering software, or for its circumvention by users.

The Library has certified its compliance with the requirements of CIPA to the District Center Library (Cambria County Library) and to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries in Harrisburg.

Unacceptable Uses of Computers

Computing resources may only be used for legal purposes by the public (including minors under age 18) and staff. Examples of unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law:* Transmitting offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading any material that is obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors; downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, users should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.
- *Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property:* Libeling or slandering any person; sending "spam;" uploading a worm, virus, "Trojan horse," "time bomb," 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.

- *Uses that jeopardize the security of access of the Library's computer network or other networks on the Internet:* Disclosing or sharing accounts or user passwords with others; impersonating another user; turning the equipment on or off; using one's own software programs on the Library's computers; altering the Library's computer settings; saving files to the hard drive; damaging or modifying the Library's computer equipment or software.
- *Uses that compromise the safety and security of minors when using chat rooms, bulletins, e-mail, and other forms of direct electronic communications:* Giving others private information about a minor under age 18, such as name, address, telephone number, school, social security number, and credit card numbers; arranging a face-to-face meeting with someone one has "met" on the computer network or Internet. *Also applicable to minors under age 18:* Giving others private information about one's self or others, such as name, address, telephone number, school, social security number, and credit card numbers; arranging a face-to-face meeting with someone one has "met" on the computer network or Internet without a parent's permission.
- *Uses that violate confidentiality of personal information regarding minors:* Title 24 Penna. Library Code, PL 325 428 enforces the confidentiality of "records...which contain the names or other personally identifying details" regarding library users. Personally identifiable information about users may not be disclosed, used, or disseminated in any way, except to law enforcement authorities as provided in the law.

Response to Violations

The user's access to the Library's computers and Internet service is a privilege, not a right. Violation of the Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy will result in the loss of the privilege to use these resources. (Staff will be subject to normal disciplinary procedures as well.) Any illegal activity involving the Library's computing resources may also be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

Public Notice and Hearing

In compliance with the requirements of CIPA, reasonable public notice was provided prior to a public hearing held on March 15, 2005, to address the Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy and the technology protection measures.

*Policy approved by the Highland Community Library Board of Directors on August 18, 1999
Revised and updated on February 14, 2005 & March 1, 2022
(This policy is subject to change at the Library's discretion.)*



By signing this agreement, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to the terms of Highland Community Library's Computer & Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Staff initials _____