

Internet & Computer Use Policy

Policy Created: 1/2016

Policy Revised: 3/2019; 2/2022

Purpose/Objective

The Internet is an unregulated global network that provides information beyond the library's collection. The West Liberty Public Library provides unfiltered, wireless/wired access and public use technology devices to augment the community's educational and recreational resources.

Responsibility of the Library

The availability of information does not constitute endorsement of the content by the West Liberty Public Library. WLPL expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through the Internet or any consequences thereof. The library has no means or statutory authority to assure that the public accesses only constitutionally protected material. The power to determine what is obscene rests with the City attorney (Sec. 728.6, Code of Iowa), not with the Library staff. Public libraries are exempted under Sec. 728.7, Code of Iowa.

As stated in the American Library Association's Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software, "...the use of filtering software to block access to constitutionally protected speech violates the Library Bill of Rights." West Liberty Public Library does not impose blocking or filtering software to limit access to Internet sites. However, library staff will assist children and parents by identifying websites that provide age-appropriate searching.

Responsibility of Patrons

1. Library users access technology and electronic devices with a library account. Out-of-town guests and temporary users may be required to present a valid photo ID.
2. Printers may be available for patron use. Library users will be charged fair and reasonable prices for printing from personal and public technology devices.
3. Internet resources and computer access through the library are provided equally. Children have access to the same resources as adults. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for deciding what resources are appropriate for their children. Library technology users may not incur any costs to the West Liberty Public Library through access to fee-for-service information providers, shopping online, or any other Internet use.
4. Technology users may safely share personal information on the Internet. This includes but is not limited to email, instant messaging, online purchasing, social media sites, and commercial sites. The Library is not responsible for the security of personal information shared on or with non-library sites.
5. The Internet is not a secure, private environment. Technology users handling financial transactions or other confidential activities do so at their own risk. Electronic communication is not absolutely secure and is subject to outside intervention. It may also be subject to monitoring by library technology staff in the usual performance of their duties. Library users should log off any personal online accounts after using library technology.

Rules Governing the Use of Library Computers

1. The West Liberty Public Library cautions against giving personal information. Patrons assume all risk and liability when divulging confidential information. The library will not be responsible for charges, damages, or injuries resulting from such use.
2. The library does not restrict the number of people per computer but reserves the right to break up any group large enough to disrupt the safe and comfortable environment.
3. Use will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. Persons may be limited to 30 minutes - 1 hour depending on demand.

Misuse includes but is not limited to:

1. Viewing or downloading materials that violate federal, state, or local laws or regulations, including those regarding copyright, or accessing, viewing, and distributing obscenity or child pornography
2. Hacking into the library computer system or any other computer system
3. Mishandling, damaging, or attempting to damage computer equipment or software; tampering with computer set-up
4. Interfering with system operations, integrity, or security
5. Attempting to gain access to another person's files or authorization codes
6. Displaying or printing materials that violate laws & policies on sexual harassment
7. Engaging in any activity that is offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment
8. Violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements or the policies of the individual websites that you view
9. Any other violation of library policies

Ethical Use

Staff reserves the right to end an Internet session if there is the suggestion of misconduct, misuse, or illegal use of either personal or library technology devices accessing the library's wireless service and under the West Liberty Public Library Public Code of Behavior Policy. Violations of the Internet & Computer Use Policy will be dealt with following the West Liberty Public Library Public Code of Behavior Policy.

Illegal acts involving library computers or personal devices accessing the library's wireless service may also be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities. It is against the law to violate copyright or engage in child pornography as outlined by Iowa Code, chapter 728.2

Staff Assistance

Library staff may be able to answer basic computer questions. Library users may also request individual training or attend technology-related computer classes offered by library staff. [liability with handling tech]

Due to liability, the staff does not repair personal computers or devices. Additionally, staff will not check personal systems for viruses or malware nor evaluate technology devices for damage.