

## COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

### PURPOSE

The fundamental mission of the Fairhope Public Library (hereafter called the Library) is to provide free and open access to informational, educational, recreational, and cultural resources to serve the diverse needs of Library patrons of all ages and backgrounds. The Library recognizes the vital role of technology in fulfilling that mission.

The Library provides free computer access, including access to the Internet, the Library catalog, electronic databases, Microsoft Office, other software applications and games. The Library also provides free wireless access to the Internet (Wi-Fi) for users who have their own computers or equipment outfitted for wireless connectivity.

### GENERAL RULES FOR USING COMPUTERS AND WIRELESS ACCESS AT THE LIBRARY

***The following rules apply to users of all ages who are using a Library-owned computer or their own electronic device in the Library, on the Library grounds or by accessing the Library wireless network:***

The Library strives to balance the rights of users to access all types of informational resources with the rights of users and employees to work in a public setting free from disruptive sounds and visuals. The public areas of the Library are shared with Library users and employees of all ages. Individuals are expected to respect others when accessing information or images.

The Library will put forth its best effort to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.

Patrons who use Library computers or their own electronic devices in the Library or its grounds or who connect to the Library Wi-Fi are required to abide by the Library's Computer and Internet Use Policy as well as any additional rules and/or time limits which are posted in the Library or its website. Use of any computer, electronic device or wireless connection at the Library constitutes acceptance of the policy and related procedures.

Anyone who engages in unacceptable use, whose computer use disrupts Library service, or who violates Library policies or procedures may have their Library and/or computer privileges suspended or terminated, or may be asked to leave the Library. The Library reserves the right to terminate computer or Internet access at any time and without notice.

Computers and the Internet network at the Library may only be used for lawful purposes.

- Transmission, viewing or printing of any material in violation of any federal, state or municipal statute or regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to copyright material, threatening, obscene or pornographic material, and material protected by trade secret.
- Dissemination of obscene material or material which is harmful to minors is a misdemeanor in the state of Alabama as stated in Alabama Code 13a-12-200.3 and 13a-12-200.
- Dissemination or public display of obscene matter containing a visual depiction of a person less than 17 years of age involved in any act of sexual conduct is a Class B felony in the State of Alabama as stated in Alabama Code 13a-12-191.
- Engaging in any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment is prohibited.
- Users will respect copyright laws and licensing agreements. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials without the explicit permission of the copyright holder, except as permitted by the principles of fair use. Responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the users. The Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

Downloading or uploading large amounts of data or streaming video may result in reduced bandwidth across the network, slowing Internet access for everyone. Users may be requested to stop downloads/uploads if circumstances warrant it. Users are cautioned that the Library's Internet connection is not secure. Users are warned that personal information included in all transactions and communications may be subject to unauthorized access by third parties. The Library will not be responsible for personal information that is compromised or for negative consequences resulting from security issues, viruses or hacking.



## Fairhope Public Library Policies

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Wireless users are responsible for connecting their devices to the Library's wireless network and the Library cannot guarantee that a user's hardware will work with the Library's wireless connection. Library employees cannot adjust users' equipment or troubleshoot connection problems other than verifying that the Library's wireless network is running.

Tabletop electrical outlets are available in the reference area. Users may not plug into outlets where cords may create a hazard for other users. The Library is not responsible for any damages or malfunction of personal laptops or other equipment brought to the Library and users are responsible for keeping their equipment with them at all times.

Printing is available by logging on to the Library's public access computers (see Rules for Use of Library-Owned Computer Workstations).

Users are asked to keep distracting noise to a minimum:

- Users may not cluster around computers in a manner that creates an obstruction or creates noise that distracts others.
- Cell phone should be set to silent while in the Library. Cell phone conversations must not disturb employees or other users.
- Users must use their own headphones when listening to audio content on computers, and must keep the volume low enough to not disturb others.

### **INFORMATION REGARDING INTERNET ACCESS**

#### **UNACCEPTABLE USE OF INTERNET**

Access to and use of the Library Internet is a privilege. Internet access should be used in a responsible and ethical manner consistent with the educational and informational purposes for which it is provided.

Unacceptable use includes, but is not limited to, the following purposeful, illegal and/or criminal activities:

- Using the Internet for any illegal or criminal purpose that violates local, state, or federal laws including, but not limited to, committing fraud, hacking, or engaging in communications which are libelous or slanderous.
- Viewing child pornography.
- Deliberately displaying obscene and or pornographic images.
- Violating copyright law or software licenses.
- Compromising the privacy of other users.
- Attempting to gain unauthorized entry to the Library's network or to cause degradation of system performance.
- Attempting to install, delete, or modify Library software.
- Attempting to download, install or run any programs on Library computers, which were not installed by Library employees.
- Disrupting the intended use of the Library ~~Internet~~ computers and Internet network.

***Inappropriate or illegal conduct will not be tolerated. It will result in forfeiture of Internet and/or Library use and possible legal prosecution.***

#### **INTERNET FILTERING**

The Library complies with all federal, state, and municipal laws governing the use of computers in libraries, including the guidelines established by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

As required by CIPA, in order to remain eligible for certain federal funding, the Library has implemented commercial filtering software on all of its Internet-accessible computer terminals.

The filtering software protects against access to visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography, and in the case of persons under the age of 18 years, materials that are "harmful to minors." The Library's wireless network is filtered for adults.

Users should be aware, however, that all currently available filtering software results in a degree of both "under-blocking" (i.e., permitting access to certain material that falls within the foregoing categories) and "over-blocking" (i.e., denying access to certain

constitutionally protected material that does not fall within the foregoing categories). The Library cannot and does not guarantee that the filtering software will block all obscenity, pornography, or materials that are harmful to minors. Nor can the Library guarantee that the filtering software will allow access to all sites that may have legitimate research or other value. An authorized employee may disable the blocking or filtering measure to enable access to websites for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

As with all Library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/legal guardians/adult caregivers, not Library employees, to determine and monitor minor children's use of the Internet and use of Library resources and facilities.

### CHILDREN'S USE OF THE INTERNET

The Library is aware of parental and governmental concerns about child safety on the Internet. The Library and accordingly has put in place policies and procedures to ensure children have an enriching and safe online experience. The Library maintains a teen and a children's webpage on its website and has designated preschool, children's and teen computers.

Parents, guardians and caregivers are encouraged to work with their children to develop acceptable rules for Internet use. It is their responsibility to set standards and guidelines and to decide which Library resources and websites are appropriate for their children. The Library has neither the right nor the responsibility to act in place of a parent, guardian, or caregiver, and assumes no responsibility for the use of the Internet by minors.

The following suggestions for parents, guardians and caregivers are for their children's safety while accessing the Internet:

- Establish your own family rules and guidelines for Internet use.
- Teach your children never to give out their names, addresses, phone numbers or other personal, identifying or family information.
- Get to know the sites your children use by viewing them.
- Encourage discussion about all sites including those that make your children feel uncomfortable.
- Make sure your children never arrange a face-to-face or telephone meeting with another Internet user, regardless of how "nice" or "friendly" the user may seem.
- Teach your children never to respond to messages or bulletin board items that are suggestive, obscene, belligerent, threatening or make them feel uncomfortable.
- If you or your children become aware of the transmission, use or viewing of child pornography while online, immediately report it to the **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children by calling 1-800-843-5678** and if in the Library, report it to Library employees.

Parents are encouraged to read "Child Safety on the Information Highway," on the Internet at [www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com).

### RULES FOR USE OF LIBRARY-OWNED COMPUTER WORKSTATIONS:

*The following rules apply to patrons who are using Library-owned computers:*

1. To ensure fair access for all users, the Library has installed software to manage computer reservations, time limits and printing. This system requires users to enter a valid Library card number from any Baldwin County Library or a visitor's pass number to access a computer.
2. Visitors may obtain a daily visitor's pass by showing a photo ID. Baldwin County residents who wish to access Library computers on a regular basis must obtain a Library card.
3. Any block on a user's Library card results in a denial of computer access. If access is denied, users must clear issues on their Library accounts before using a Library computer.
4. Because age-appropriate filters for the Internet are in place, users must furnish their birthdates.
5. Youth under age 18 may access the Internet with their Library card, or by obtaining a visitor's pass. Ages 12 and under requires signed permission by an adult caregiver.
6. Users may not represent themselves as another person or use another person's Library card to access Library computers. Violations may result in loss of computer privileges.

7. Library computers are available on a first come, first served basis. When all computers are in use, reservations may be made for the next available computer.
8. Users may not view obscene or pornographic sites or view images of a prurient nature. If this type of image is accessed inadvertently, please turn off the monitor and notify the Library employees immediately so that the filter can be adjusted. Deliberate access will result in loss of computer privileges.
9. The Library's computers do not allow users to retain documents or personal files on the hard drive. All files are automatically deleted whenever the computers are shut down. Users may only temporarily save files to the desktop. Users should save their data and files using CDs, USB flash drives or other personal storage media or by emailing the files to themselves. The Library is not responsible for loss of data that may occur when the computers shut down, or damage to CDs/flash-drives resulting from the information downloaded, computer malfunction, or viral infection. Users are responsible for removing their temporary files from the computer before logging out.
10. All public workstations will shut down 10 minutes before the Library closes each day.
11. Users may not download or use their own software programs on Library computers without Library employee permission.
12. Users may not unplug, remove, modify or damage computer equipment or software in any way. Users may not attempt to reconfigure the system or interfere with the current system set-up.
13. Users will be held financially responsible for any damage they do to Library hardware, software, data, furniture or equipment.
14. If a user believes that a free program will be of general benefit or use to other Library users, then a request for program installation may be submitted. The Library will evaluate the program and if it is deemed to be safe, of general benefit, and does not conflict with other programs, then that program will be added to all public access computers as time and employees permit.
15. In the interests of serving all users, the Library sets time limits on all workstations. The Library reserves the right to change the time limits at any time without notice. Time may be extended beyond the daily limit if several computers are available. Users must provide their Library card to have their time extended. Without a Library card, time may be extended once if the user shows photo ID. After that, the Library card must be shown or a new Library card obtained. Visitors must show photo ID to have daily passes issued.
16. Only employees are authorized to turn computers on and off. Users should end their computer session only and not turn off the computer when finished.
17. Computer stations are designed for one-person use. No more than one person may work at one computer at any given time in the adult computer area unless given special permission.
18. The adult area computers are designed for adult use (age 18 and older). Children and teens are encouraged to use their own designated computer areas. At no time may a person under 18 use an adult card to access computers unless the adult cardholder is sitting with him or her.
19. Library employees cannot provide extensive instructions to individual computer users. However, employees will provide assistance to patrons with questions about programs and equipment as time and knowledge permit.
20. The Library does not offer e-mail accounts. Users may access their own web-based e-mail accounts.
21. Printing is available using the Library's print management system from the public-access computers at the cost of \$0.20/page for black and white, and \$0.50/page for color for users with Library cards. When using a visitor pass all printing costs \$0.50/page. No printing is available from laptops. Patrons must ask for employee assistance when using their own paper for printing. The Library is not responsible for unwanted pages or incorrectly formatted printouts.

### DISCLAIMER

The Library does not endorse the viewpoints or vouch for the accuracy of information obtained through the Internet. The Library cannot control or monitor material which may be accessible from Internet sources, nor is the Library responsible for changes in content of the sources to which it links, or for the content of sources accessed through the secondary links.

Library patrons use the Internet at their own risk. Individual users must accept responsibility for determining which electronic resource they will access and the relative value of the content. Since the Internet is not secure, each user accepts personal and financial responsibility for information transmitted or received. In the case of minors, it is a joint responsibility of the user and the parent, guardian, or caregiver. The Library, unlike schools, does not serve in place of a parent. Library employees cannot act in place of

parents by supervising children as they explore the Internet. The responsibility of what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents, guardians, or caregivers.

Each user agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Fairhope Public Library, the Board of Trustees, Director, Employees and the City of Fairhope from any claims resulting from his or her use of the Internet at the Library.

### WIRELESS ACCESS

***The following rules apply to users of all ages who access the Library wireless network:***

Users who connect to the Library wireless network are required to abide by the Library's Computer and Internet Use Policy as well as any additional rules and/or time limits which are posted in the Library or its website. The use of the Library's wireless network constitutes acceptance of the policy and related procedures.

Anyone who engages in unacceptable use, whose computer use disrupts Library service, or who violates Library policies or procedures may have their Library and/or Internet access privileges suspended or terminated or may face legal prosecution. The Library reserves the right to terminate Internet access at any time and without notice.

The Internet network at the Library may only be used for lawful purposes.

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