

Computer and Internet Use Policy

The Internet as an information source enables Hardin County Public Library staff and users to find a wide array of information from sources not available any other way. It allows access to ideas, information, and commentary from around the globe. It is, however, an unregulated medium with a highly diverse user population. It is possible that individual users might access information they personally find offensive or disturbing. **Individual users must accept responsibility for determining the suitability of the content for themselves and their children. No pictures should be viewed, downloaded, or sent that can be construed as offensive to other library users.**

INTERNET USE RULES AND RESTRICTIONS:

Individuals are expected to use the Internet in a responsible manner. Restrictions include the following:

1. Users may not attempt in any way to alter, damage, abuse, or sabotage computer equipment or software, alter configurations, or install any software.
2. Users are liable for costs arising from malicious damage to Library equipment and software.
3. Users may not use any Library terminal for illegal or criminal purposes, including but not limited to hacking, misrepresentation, harassment, or slander.
4. Users may not violate software licensing agreements or the copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code).
5. Users may not use Library terminals for any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment.
6. Users may not use the Library terminals in violation of any existing obscenity or pornography laws.
7. Users may not disregard time limits on the use of a Library terminal.
8. Any restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the sole responsibility of the parent or legal guardian, NOT the Library or its staff.
9. Access to and participation in chat rooms are strictly forbidden.
10. Users are not allowed to directly connect a laptop or personal device to the library's network.

USER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Choosing Sources

Sources of information on the Internet do not always provide accurate, complete, or current information. Some materials accessible through the Internet may be inaccurate, incomplete, outdated, biased, inappropriate, or offensive. As with any material provided by the Library, the user must take responsibility in questioning the validity of the information found. Users are cautioned to access and evaluate materials online as they would a printed source. The Library does not vouch for or endorse viewpoints or information found on the Internet just as it does not do so for printed materials in the collection.

Children's Use of the Internet

Parents or guardians, NOT the Library or its staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected and/or accessed by children. Parents and only parents may restrict their children from access to the Internet. Parents are advised to supervise their children's Internet use as the Internet is unregulated and contains some information resources that are sexually explicit or which they may find personally offensive and inappropriate. Users under the age of eighteen (18) must have written parental approval to use the Internet computers. Children under the age of eight (8) may not use the Internet computers at any time unless supervised by a parent or guardian.

Filtering

HCPL is using a Technology Protection Measure in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act on all computers. However, filters are imperfect and HCPL is not responsible for any failure of the filter. On occasion, legitimate sites are blocked. Please see library staff if you need to view a blocked site for research or other lawful purpose.

Parents or Legal Guardians will be responsible for the following:

1. Monitoring their child's access to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World WideWeb. The library cannot control sites that children may select on the Internet, and staff cannot act in place of a parent to do so;
2. Supervise the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail and other forms of direct electronic communications (chatting is not allowed);
3. Prevent unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information;
4. Prevent minor's unauthorized access, including "hacking", and other unlawful activities while online;
5. Avoid minor's access to materials harmful to them by monitoring all internet use.

Time Limitations

Each user may use the Internet computers for one hour only. If no one else is waiting, additional time may be requested. Time limits may be reduced to one-half hour depending upon the number of people waiting to use the computers. All Internet and other computer sessions must be completed fifteen (15) minutes prior to the Library's posted closing time. Patrons will be encouraged to begin completing their internet session thirty (30) minutes prior to closing.

Courtesy to Others

Individuals should use the Internet in a courteous, reasonable, and responsible manner. When using the Library's terminals, please do not violate the time limitations especially if others are waiting. Also, please remember that the Library is a public place; use discretion in viewing text or graphics that may be offensive to others. No more than two people may use one computer workstation and each person must be seated in their own chair. Talking must be kept to a minimum to avoid disrupting other computer users. You may listen to music through headsets but are not allowed to sing and dance at the computer station.

Assistance from the Staff

1. Library staff will assist individuals in the use of the Library's Home page, offer basic use of items linked to our website, and offer basic use of electronic databases to which we subscribe.
2. While staff are happy to assist you in searching for information or in choosing websites for your children, the Library staff's availability to help users with basic computer use is limited. Additionally, Library staff may not have knowledge of all Library computer programs, nor will they be familiar with how to use all websites. Library staff will be glad to assist you as they are able and time permitting, but users must have basic computer skills.
3. Users with disabilities should contact the staff if they have special needs.

Printing and Downloading

1. The Hardin County Public Library only allows downloading to flash drives and cds. We do not allow material to be stored on Library hard drives.
2. Printing must be completed within the posted time limits. Printing charges are \$.15 per page. Persons refusing to pay printing charges may have printing privileges revoked.

Virus Protection

Although the Library uses virus detection software on Library computers and manually upgrades the software each day we are open, this will not completely protect you from the chance of getting a virus. The Hardin County Public Library is not responsible for damage to a user's computer or for any loss of data, damage, or liability that may occur from use of the Library's computers in storing data on a portable drive or device.

Warnings

1. The Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the reproduction, distribution, public performance, and public display of copyrighted materials. Responsibility for possible copyright infringement lies solely with the user and the Library disclaims any responsibility or liability resulting there from.
2. Displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures could be in violation of Federal and State obscenity laws.
3. The user agrees to hold the Library harmless from any claims, losses, damages, obligations, or liabilities relating to the use of information obtained from the Library's electronic information system.
4. Activities that disrupt the Library or its network are prohibited and may result in the loss of access.
5. The Hardin County Public Library staff reserves the right and the authority to end an individual's access to the Internet at the Hardin County Public Library if that individual is seen to be violating any of the policies or guidelines pertaining to Internet access at the Library.
6. The Hardin County Public Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to modify the Internet Use Policy and/or Internet Use Rules at any time.

Use of the Library computers implies acceptance of this policy.

Adopted 2/3/98

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