Our Policies

THE LEE COUNTY LIBRARY

COMPUTER, INTERNET, AND WIRELESS ACCESS

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Purpose

The Lee County Library is committed to the use of technology as a means to expand and enhance services. As the community information center and a public agency, Lee County Library provides the opportunity for any citizen to use the Internet from the Library.

The Lee County Library provides wireless access for public Internet use. The Library provides wireless access as a service to expand access to Internet information resources, including PINES and GALILEO.

Responsibilities of Lee County Library

At present, the Internet is an unregulated and rapidly changing medium. It contains a wealth of diverse material that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, but it also contains materials that may be offensive, controversial, disturbing, illegal, harmful to minors, inaccurate, or incomplete. The Lee County Library does not monitor, control, or restrict anyone’s access to public library computers or to the range of information available within the limits of state and/or federal law. The Library has no control over information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Provision of Internet access by the Library does not constitute an endorsement of any particular information contained on the Internet and shall have no liability for direct, indirect, or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed on the Internet from library equipment. Users of Library computers and the Internet do so at their own risk. Therefore, users are encouraged to evaluate the validity of information obtained from the Internet.

Lee County Library upholds and affirms the right and responsibility of parents to determine and monitor their children’s use of library resources. Parents and guardians are encouraged to work closely with their children in the library and particularly on the Internet. Parents are expected to monitor and supervise their children’s use of the Internet in selecting material that is consistent with personal and family values and is appropriate for the age and understanding of their children. Minors who visit the library without a parent or guardian are responsible for their own decisions and behavior. The Library does not and cannot provide this monitoring or supervision.
Exercise Caution During Internet Use

Internet users are reminded that:

- Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information.

- Public Library computer terminals are neither private nor secure.

- Users should exercise extreme caution about revealing any personal identification information (e.g., name, address, telephone number, email address, social security number, age, or credit card number) over the Internet. Minors should NEVER disclose any personal identification information over the Internet.

Library employees are authorized to take prompt and appropriate actions to enforce the Rules of Conduct and/or to prohibit use by persons who fail to comply with the Computer, Internet, and Wireless Access Acceptable Use Policy.

Filtering

As required by the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA"), in order to remain eligible for certain federal funding, the Library uses Office of Public Library Service filtering software on all Internet connections. The filtering software used by the Library protects against access to visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography, and, in the case of persons under the age of 17 years, materials that are "harmful to minors." 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 Office of Public Library Service has attempted to select filtering software that best complies with CIPA while providing Library users with the broadest possible access to constitutionally protected speech and information. The Library cannot and does not guarantee that the filtering software will block all obscenity, child pornography, or materials that are harmful to minors. Nor can the Library guarantee that the filtering software will not restrict access to sites that may have legitimate research or other value. In order to help address the over blocking problem and to enhance users' access to constitutionally protected speech and information, the Library requests that all users, both adults and minors, contact the staff at Circulation Desk (or at such other contact point as the Library shall designate from time to time) to request unblocking of an incorrectly blocked site. In addition, any user who is 17 years of age or older may contact the staff at the Circulation Desk to disable the filtering software in order to obtain unfiltered Internet access for bona fide research or other lawful purpose.

Access by Minors

Parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding which library resources are appropriate for their own children. Parents or legal guardians should guide their children in use of the Internet and inform them about materials they should not use. While the Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine
their children's access to Library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet, the Library has taken certain measures designed to assist in the safe and effective use of these resources by all minors.

To address the issue of access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet, including material that is harmful to minors, the Library attempts to:

- Develop and maintain special Web sites for children and teens
- Develop and provide training programs on safe and effective Internet use
- Encourage staff to guide minors away from materials that may be inappropriate
- Distribute a publication entitled "A Safety Net for the Internet: A Parent's Guide"
- Maintain filtering software as described above

To address the issue of the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, as well as the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors, the Library provides training programs and also urges minors to keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

- Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name, or telephone number.
- Let parents or guardians decide whether personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information should be revealed.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone via the computer without parents' or guardians' approval.
- Never respond to messages that are suggestive, obscene, threatening, or that make one uncomfortable.
- Have parents or guardians report an incident to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-843-5678 if one becomes aware of the transmission of child pornography.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are.
- Remember that everything one reads may not be true.

To address the issue of unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online, minors and all other Library users are hereby advised that use of the Library's computers for hacking or any other unlawful activity is strictly prohibited.
Rules of Conduct for Use of Library Computers and Use of Wireless Connection

- Do not damage or destroy equipment, software, or data belonging to the library or to other users, including adding, altering, or deleting files on library workstation hard drives or other library computer equipment.

- Refrain from violating computer system or network integrity including attempts to bypass network security functions, obtain passwords, or alter configuration of library workstations in any way.

- Respect copyright laws and licensing agreements.

- Use of computer resources requires the user to possess a valid library card in his/ her name.

- Use of computers for illegal activity, to access illegal materials, to access child pornography, or to access materials which by local community standards would be considered obscene are strictly forbidden.

- Transmitting and/or receiving obscene materials and/or child pornography is a violation of law and is not permitted under any circumstances. Violation of this rule will subject a patron to criminal prosecution and result in immediate and permanent loss of library Internet access privileges.

- Users are warned that Internet access computers are not private, and that library personnel may access “tracing” files to maintain system integrity and to investigate suspected violations of law or policy.

- Any activity by a user that disturbs or distracts another user or staff member from his or her own library activity constitutes a violation of reasonable library behavior.

Library Regulations Concerning Wireless Connection

Library staff will provide general information on the settings necessary to access the Internet via wireless connection. If a user has problems accessing the Internet over the wireless connection, staff will only verify that the Library’s connection is operating normally. Staff will not perform troubleshooting on the patron’s wireless device nor will staff change settings on user devices.

The Library assumes no responsibility regarding the ability of patron owned equipment to connect to the wireless network.

The Library is not liable for the consequences of wireless network use in any way, including the transmission of computer viruses, loss of data or e-mail, security breaches of personal/private information, or harm resulting from the use of an unsecured server.
**Termination or Prohibition of Access**

Misuse of library computers and/or the wireless connection network will result in the loss of computer privileges, potential loss of library privileges, and possible prosecution. Such misuse includes, but is not limited to, using the computer and/or wireless connection for illegal activities, hacking into the library computer equipment or software, interfering with systems operations, integrity or security, gaining unauthorized access to another person’s files, sending harassing messages, altering or attempting to alter the library’s computer settings, and violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements.

The first violation of the Rules of Conduct for Use of Library Computers will result in a warning. The second violation will result in the loss of computer and/or wireless connection privileges for three months from the date of the violation at all Lee County Library locations. A third violation will result in permanent loss of computer and/or wireless connection privileges at all Lee County Library locations.

**Right of Appeal**

An Internet user whose access session has been terminated or whose Internet access has been suspended or prohibited shall have the right to appeal and/or request that Internet access privileges be reinstated. An appeal must be in writing and submitted to the Lee County Library System Director within five days of the termination or prohibition. Within ten days of receipt of the appeal, the Library System Director shall review the matter and notify the patron in writing of his/her decision. If the Library System Director’s decision is adverse to the patron, the patron may appeal in writing within five days to the Lee County Library System Board of Trustees, which shall thereafter consider the matter at its next regularly scheduled meeting, and issue its decision in writing within 30 days following that meeting. No further appeals shall be considered. Temporary or permanent denial of Internet privileges at any Lee County Library location will be effective at all Lee County Library facilities.

Revised by the Library Board of Trustees, Tuesday, November 13, 2007

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