

Electronic Resources Use Policy

Mission

"Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. These rights extend to minors as well as adults. Libraries and librarians exist to facilitate these rights by selecting, producing, providing access to, identifying, retrieving, organizing, providing instruction in the use of, and preserving recorded expression regardless of the format or technology" (American Library Association Statement on Electronic Information, Services, and Networks).

As part of its mission, the St. Charles Parish Library provides the people of the parish with free and easy access to recorded information within the limits of space and budget. This includes access to various electronic resources, such as the Internet, online library catalogs, and online databases. Access to these resources is provided according to the same policy guidelines that govern print and audio-visual resources.

Acceptable Use

The Library provides computer hardware, software and an Internet connection to serve the informational, educational, and recreational needs of parish residents. Patrons may access any Internet resources within the limitations of the hardware and software provided by the library and within the limits of this Use Policy. Manipulation of internal hardware and/or software, including uploading and/or installing of any software, is prohibited.

Resources available through the Library are subject to various legal restrictions. Library resources must be used in accordance with federal, state, and local laws. Applicable areas of legislation may include, but are not restricted to, copyright and obscenity. Users should assume that any material encountered on the Internet is copyrighted, unless the resource contains a message explicitly stating that the material is in the public domain. It is the responsibility of the individual user, not the library, to insure that his/her actions are not in violation of any applicable law.

While the Library's role includes provision of information and resources that support local business and commercial ventures, library resources may not be utilized to promote a specific vendor or commercial establishment.

As with other materials and equipment, the Library's electronic resources are limited. Where necessary, the Library will use advance scheduling, time limitations, and/or priority allocations to insure that all patrons have equal access to these resources. The library reserves the right to block high bandwidth resources or to use tools such as bandwidth throttling during peak Internet usage times to ensure that all users have fair and equitable access to the library's online resources.

Workstation use is a privilege and should be treated as such by all users of the system. The Library staff has the right to determine the appropriateness of workstation use according to this

Use Policy, and may deny or restrict use by individuals who violate these criteria. Appeals of such loss should be addressed in writing to the Library Director. Perpetrators of malicious damage to the system will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

According to this policy, unacceptable uses of Internet workstations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Commercial activities, such as fundraising and marketing of products or services
- Manipulation of, or unauthorized access to, internal hardware and software
- Transmission or reception of any material in violation of federal, state, or local laws, such as:
 - Sending, receiving, or displaying text or graphics considered obscene or, for minors, materials harmful to minors
 - Copying or downloading of any material in violation of copyright law

Due to a limited amount of bandwidth availability, patrons should limit their connectivity to the library's wireless network to one device at any given time.

Fines and Fees

There is no charge for the use of workstations and public Internet connections. Where Library workstations provide expendable resources such as ribbons, paper, discs, etc., users may be charged fees to help offset the cost of the supplies. Patrons who purchase services, goods, or information from an online vendor, are responsible for negotiating the amount and transfer of payment directly with the vendor. Patrons who damage library resources (equipment, discs, etc.) will be charged for replacement or repair.

User's Responsibility

As with print and audio-visual materials, the user should be aware that some information may be inaccurate, outdated, or offensive. Use of these resources carries with it a responsibility to evaluate the quality of the information accessed. Where resources are used by minors, the parent or guardian, not the library, is responsible for the evaluation of resources encountered.

Due to the occasional inconsistency of electronic resources, the library system or the systems to which the Library connects may be unavailable from time to time. Users are cautioned not to rely on last-minute availability.

As with other library materials, staff members are available to assist patrons in the use of electronic resources. Due to the vast and unpredictable nature of Internet resources however, users should not hold staff members accountable for the operation or knowledge of resources beyond the scope of their training.

Computer viruses and other programs which may damage hardware or software may be transferred from system to system through network connections (such as the Internet) or through electronic media such as flash drives or discs. The library is not responsible for any damage that may result from the use of electronic resources and users are hereby cautioned to use virus-checking programs.

Personal information such as addresses, credit card numbers, social security numbers, etc., may be intercepted and misused if transferred electronically. The library is not responsible for damages that may result from information transferred by the user.

Use by Minors

Where resources are used by minors, the parent or guardian, not the library, is responsible for monitoring that use. Some of the safety and security issues parents should be aware of are:

1. Some information may be inaccurate, outdated, offensive, or inappropriate for minors.
2. Safety and security is a primary concern when using e-mail or other forms of direct electronic communication.
3. Personal information such as addresses, credit card numbers, social security numbers, etc., may be intercepted and misused if transferred electronically.
4. Resources must be used in accordance with federal, state, and local laws. This includes, but is not restricted to, copyright, obscenity, hacking, fraud, and access by minors to materials harmful to minors.

Wireless Access

The Library provides wireless access which allows users to connect their laptops or other mobile devices to the Internet without having to plug into a network port. Wireless access is filtered in accordance with CIPA regulations. Patrons utilizing the library's wireless network must abide by all of the use guidelines defined in this policy. Due to a limited amount of bandwidth availability patrons should limit their connectivity to the library's wireless network to one device at any given time.

(To be posted at all Internet workstations)

Patrons using these Internet workstations should be aware of the St. Charles Parish Library's Electronic Resources Use Policy, which is available for review. The Library staff has the right to determine the appropriateness of workstation use according to this Policy. The following passage is an excerpt from the policy:

“... unacceptable uses of Internet workstations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Commercial activities, such as fundraising and marketing of products or services
- Manipulation of, or unauthorized access to, internal hardware and software
- Transmission or reception of any material in violation of federal, state, or local laws, such as:
 - Sending, receiving, or displaying text or graphics considered obscene or, for minors, materials harmful to minors
 - Copying or downloading of any material in violation of copyright law”

Due to a limited amount of bandwidth availability, patrons should limit their connectivity to the library's wireless network to one device at any given time.

Users violating these guidelines will be advised of the policy and asked to comply. Users who continue to violate these guidelines will have their computer sessions terminated. The library

reserves the right to prohibit violators from future access to Internet workstations. Illegal acts may subject violators to prosecution by federal, state, or local authorities.

Adopted August 18, 1998
Amended August 20, 2002
Amended November 21, 2006
Amended March 15, 2011
Amended January 17, 2012