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COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

Shenandoah Public Library

The Shenandoah Public Library purchases and installs computers and Internet access to provide a service to our community, to teach our community how to use them, and to use the vast resources available in this format. Just as libraries do not verify or endorse the viewpoints of written material in their collections, neither do they verify electronic information. Selection policies which serve to govern a library's purchase of written materials do not apply to material accessed electronically. It is the responsibility of the user and of the parent, guardian, or caregiver to minors to determine what is appropriate.

To best utilize and preserve the computer hardware, the following general guidelines are to be observed:

1. Use of the computer is on a "first come, first served" reservation basis. Time blocks available (1-hour or 1/2 hour) will be displayed on a sign-up sheet. Persons using the computers need to sign in before choosing a workstation.
2. Basic instructions will be available, but patrons are expected to bring an assistant if needed. Library staff may not be able to assist in all applications or to provide technical support.
3. Patrons agree not to make changes to setup and configuration of the computer software or hardware.
4. The library staff reserves the right to terminate a person's use of the computer.
5. Patrons are responsible for damage to equipment or to library materials and will be billed for full repair/replacement.
6. The library is not responsible for damage to personal materials.
7. Computer printouts are .15¢ a page.
8. Patrons may use their own external storage devices. The library reserves the right to ask a patron to remove any device.
9. **Patrons agree to observe all copyright laws and agree not to duplicate any computer program or documentation provided by the library which is not in the public domain.**
10. Using one of the Internet workstations means patrons respect the privacy of others. The Library respects the patrons' privacy by erasing all computer use and reservation records at the end of the day.
11. Patrons do not use the Internet for unauthorized or illegal purposes (spamming, hacking, copyright infringement).
12. Children, see Appendix.
13. Wireless Access:
 - a. Patrons to the library have unsecured access to the Internet.
 - b. Patrons bringing their computer requiring an outlet, may plug into any **unused** outlet in the public area.
 - c. See a staff member for instructions on printing via the wireless network.
 - d. Wireless users follow Internet guidelines for hardwired computers.

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Fundamental Rules for the Internet

1. Sign up when you arrive.
2. Librarians are not available to help you. If you need help, bring a grown-up with you.
3. If you break or damage the computer, you will have to pay for it.
4. It costs 15¢ for each printed page.
5. Things on the Internet are protected by laws. Do not copy things without permission.
6. If you do not follow the rules, you will be asked to leave the computer.

Appendix

Children's Internet Use Policy

Access, use, or dissemination of information via the Internet in the Library is the responsibility of the user. In the case of minors, it is a joint responsibility of the user and the parent or guardian.

The Public Library, unlike schools, does not serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent). Librarians cannot act in the place of parents in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. The responsibility for what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents or guardians. The following are recommended guidelines for parents and guardians to ensure that children have positive online experiences whether at home or in the library:

- Use the Internet as a family. Join your children in Internet exploration.
- Explore the wide range of available information and tell your children about sites you consider inappropriate for them.
- Encourage children to use library databases and counsel them to avoid sites you consider unsuitable.
- Provide guidelines for your children to limit screen time.
- Instruct children NEVER to give out personal information (name, address, password, telephone number, credit card number) online.
- Teach children to be good online consumers. As with print information, consider the source, date, and accuracy of online information.

The Library will make information available to help parents and guardians in their efforts to exercise their rights and responsibilities regarding their own children's use of electronic resources.

The Library does not select the material on the Internet and has no means or statutory authority to assure that only constitutionally protected material is available on the Internet. That authority to determine what is illegal (obscene) content rests with the Page County Attorney or the Iowa Attorney General.

(Sec. 728.6, Code of Iowa).

Access to Digital Resources and Services

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Introduction

The fundamental mission of libraries is to provide access to information, regardless of content or format, to everyone. Digital resources and services, or resources and services made primarily available online or on digital devices, are integral to libraries' mission in the twenty-first century. Libraries are important points of access to many digital resources and services, including, but not limited to, computers, the Internet, and digital resources and tools. In order to provide access to digital resources and services while upholding the *Library Bill of Rights*, libraries must consider intellectual freedom principles and issues of equity to ensure that access to information is enhanced, not restricted, by digital technology.

Libraries should regularly review issues arising from digital creation, distribution, retrieval, and archiving of information. Any review of these issues should consider users' First Amendment rights, rights to privacy, and the core values of librarianship as expressed in the *Library Bill of Rights* and the *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association*. Many people lack access or the capability to use or create digital resources effectively. There is a need for places where people can access, use, or create information without impediment. It is the responsibility of libraries to provide access to digital resources and services and to mitigate all barriers, whether they are economic, educational, or political. The provision of access does not imply sponsorship or endorsement by the library. Libraries should resist all attempts by individuals, governments, and private entities to censor or limit access to digital resources or services.

In making decisions about how to offer access to digital resources, services, tools, physical equipment, and networks, each library should consider intellectual freedom principles and issues of equity in the context of its mission, goals, objectives, cooperative agreements, and the needs of the entire community it serves.

The Rights of Users

All library policies, procedures, or regulations relating to digital resources and services should be scrutinized for potential violations of user rights. User policies should be developed according to the policies and guidelines established by the American Library Association.¹

Users' access to digital resources and services should not be restricted or denied for expressing, receiving, creating, or participating in constitutionally protected speech. If access is restricted or denied for behavioral or other reasons, users should be provided due process, including, but not limited to, formal notice and a means of appeal.

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Information retrieved, utilized, or created digitally is constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court of competent jurisdiction. These rights extend to minors as well as adults.² Libraries should use technology to enhance, not deny, digital access. Users have the right to be free of unreasonable limitations or conditions set by libraries, librarians, system administrators, vendors, network service providers, or others. Contracts, agreements, and licenses entered into by libraries on behalf of their users should not violate this right. Libraries should provide library users the training and assistance necessary to find, evaluate, use, and create information effectively.

All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use.³ The library should uphold these rights by policy, procedure, and practice in accordance with Article VII of the *Library Bill of Rights*. The library should regularly maintain its systems and networks in order to protect users' rights to privacy and confidentiality. As libraries increasingly provide access to digital resources through third-party vendors, libraries have a responsibility to hold vendors accountable for protecting patrons' privacy.

Equity of Access

The digital environment provides expanding opportunities for everyone to participate in the information society, but individuals may face serious barriers to access. These barriers, often referred to as the digital divide, may include a lack of infrastructure for Internet connectivity, lack of tools (hardware or software), and lack of skills, knowledge, or means necessary to access digital resources.⁴ Libraries should be cognizant of the digital divide and work to minimize it as they provide access to digital resources for their communities.

Digital resources, services, training, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library should be readily and equitably accessible to all library users. American Library Association policies oppose the charging of user fees for the provision of information services by libraries that receive support from public funds.⁵ Libraries should develop policies concerning access to digital resources. These policies should be consistent with ALA's policies and guidelines. When new digital resources are provided to library users, libraries have an obligation to provide equitable training opportunities to library users and workers in using those new resources. Training should also address privacy and security issues that accompany the use of digital resources and services.

Information Resources and Access

Libraries, acting within their mission and objectives, should support access to information on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of each user, regardless of the user's age or the content of the material. In order to preserve the cultural record and to prevent the loss of information, libraries may need to expand their selection or collection-development policies to ensure preservation, in appropriate formats, of information obtained digitally.

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Libraries have an obligation to provide access to government information available in digital format.

Providing connections to global information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing materials for a library collection. Some information accessed digitally may not meet a library's selection or collection-development policy. It is, therefore, left to each user to determine what is appropriate. Libraries and library workers should not deny or limit access to digital resources because of their allegedly controversial content or because of a library worker's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation. Furthermore, libraries and library workers should not deny access to digital resources solely on the grounds that they are perceived to lack value. Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of digital resources should provide guidance to their own children.

Publicly funded libraries have a legal obligation to provide access to constitutionally protected information. Federal, state, county, municipal, local, or library governing bodies sometimes require the use of Internet filters or other technological measures that block access to constitutionally protected information, contrary to the *Library Bill of Rights*.⁴ If a library uses a technological measure that blocks access to information, it should be set at the least restrictive level in order to minimize the blocking of constitutionally protected speech.

Adults retain the right to access all constitutionally protected information and to ask for the technological measure to be disabled in a timely and confidential manner. Minors also retain the right to access constitutionally protected information and, at a minimum, have the right to ask the library or librarian to provide access to erroneously blocked information in a timely and confidential manner. In order to ensure user privacy and confidentiality, records of these requests should not contain personally identifiable information. Libraries and librarians have an obligation to inform users of these rights and to provide the means to exercise these rights.⁷

Digital resources and services allow libraries to significantly expand the scope of information available to users. Like all resources and services provided by the library, provision of access to digital resources and services should follow the principles outlined in the *Library Bill of Rights* to ensure equitable access regardless of content or platform.

⁴ "[Guidelines for Library Policies](#)," approved June 28, 1994 by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee; revised January 19, 2005; March 29, 2014 *under previous name* "Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities"; June 24, 2019.

⁷ *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969); *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico*, 457 U.S.

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853, (1982); *American Amusement Machine Association v. Teri Kendrick*, 244 F.3d 954 (7th Cir. 2001); *cert.denied*, 534 U.S. 994 (2001).

³ "[Privacy: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*](#)," adopted June 19, 2002, by the ALA Council; amended on July 1, 2014; June 24, 2019.

⁴ Martin Hilbert, "The End Justifies the Definition: The Manifold Outlooks on the Digital Divide and Their Practical Usefulness for Policy-Making," *Telecommunications Policy* 35, no. 8 (2011): 715-736. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.telpol.2011.06.012>

⁵ "[Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*](#)," adopted June 30, 1993, by the ALA Council and amended June 25, 2019.

⁶ "[Internet Filtering: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*](#)," adopted June 30, 2015, by the ALA Council.

⁷ "If some libraries do not have the capacity to unblock specific Web sites or to disable the filter or if it is shown that an adult user's election to view constitutionally protected Internet material is burdened in some other substantial way, that would be the subject for an as-applied challenge, not the facial challenge made in this case." *United States, et al. v. American Library Association*, 539 U.S. 194 (2003) (Justice Kennedy, concurring).

Adopted January 24, 1996 by the ALA Council; amended January 19, 2005; July 15, 2009 *under previous name* "Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks"; and June 25, 2019.