PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTERS, ACCEPTABLE USE OF

The library’s purpose in providing computers and Internet access is to expand and enhance the library’s research and information services. However, because there is no controlling authority over the quality or proliferation of Internet sites, the library cannot vouch for the accuracy, value, appropriateness, or continued availability of content found there. In using the Internet as a source of information, one may retrieve materials that are unreliable, unsuitable or offensive. Consequently, the library does not endorse any content found via the library’s Internet connection.

An Internet content filter will be employed on all library computers to block access to visual depictions deemed obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors. Additionally, the filter will be used to block categories of websites prohibited by this policy. Users are advised that no technology measures are failsafe. Conversely, such measures may block useful information from being retrieved. The library’s goal in employing such measures is to strike the best possible balance between the public need for information and the community expectation for the protection of minors, while advancing the library’s purpose in providing Internet access.

CONDITIONS FOR USING THE LIBRARY’S COMPUTERS AND INTERNET CONNECTION:

♦ Regular users must hold a valid library card from a member library of the Pettigrew Regional Library (PRL) system and must be in good standing. Visitors and temporary residents who are ineligible for a PRL card may request guest access.
♦ Each user must agree to this Acceptable Use Policy each time they log on. By clicking the Accept on the screen, each user agrees to use the library’s connection to the Internet only for purposes consistent with the library’s purpose in providing it.
♦ Parents (or legal guardians) of children under age 17 must accept responsibility for their children by signing a permission statement in person at the library before the child’s first use. In granting permission for the child’s use of the library’s Internet connection, the parent (guardian) accepts full responsibility for the child’s behavior and experiences while using the library’s computers.
♦ Users must have basic computer skills.
♦ Access generally will be restricted to one user per computer at a time. A maximum of two persons working together on a research project, or an adult and child may use a computer simultaneously.
♦ Users will be allotted a 60-minute block of time on the computer. Additional time may be allowed if no other person wishes to use the computer at the end of the user’s initial block of time. A daily limit of 2 hours per day per user may be imposed.
♦ Students enrolled in online educational courses may arrange for longer blocks of time to do their coursework if enough computers are available.

RULES:

In order to protect the library’s computers and users, certain activities are prohibited. These are described as follows:
MISUSE OF LIBRARY EQUIPMENT

Users will be denied use of the library’s **computers** if they:

- Engage in unauthorized access to files, passwords, or data belonging to the library or to others
- Alter, damage, or remove any hardware component, including mouse or headphones
- Change any settings, configurations, or files, or otherwise compromise normal use
- Attempt to use any applications other than those properly licensed to the library
- Download or save any files or applications to the computer’s hard disk
- Make any unauthorized copies of copyrighted material or licensed software
- Willfully propagate computer worms, viruses, or any other type of harmful files

MISUSE OF INTERNET ACCESS

Library staff have the authority to ask users to leave any web page, and close any message or attachment, that is commonly regarded as inappropriate in a public setting. Applying community standards to text and images, unacceptable content is that reasonably construed as obscene or profane, or as promoting violence or hatred. Users who fail to comply immediately with staff requests, or who must be asked repeatedly to leave inappropriate content, will be denied use of the library’s Internet connection thereafter.

Additionally, users will be denied access to the library’s **Internet connection** if they:

- Misrepresent themselves by access code, password, signature, or description
- Transmit any communication in violation of a United States or North Carolina law or regulation
- Harass, slander or libel another person via the Internet
- Incur costs linked to the library’s address
- Reveal personal identification information about any minor (including oneself) or about anyone other than oneself via e-mail or any other electronic communication
- Subscribe to or engage in any use that is inconsistent with the library’s stated purposes. Such unacceptable uses include but are not limited to:
  - Conducting business or commercial activities.
  - Meeting and messaging in chat rooms other than discussion boards for online classes or virtual reference services from recognized libraries
  - Subscribing to dating services or any service in which personal information is exchanged
  - Gambling or other unlawful online activities
  - Willful viewing of content which is considered harmful to minors as defined by North Carolina General Statute or United States Code

LIMITATIONS:

Library staff will gladly help users of the library’s computers to successfully use available electronic resources. However, the library staff will not be able to teach computer skills or to conduct lengthy searches on demand.
Pettigrew Regional Library
Service Policy

E-mail accounts will not be provided by the library. Users may access their own web-based e-mail accounts established with other providers.

Downloading is restricted to removable storage devices. Users are advised that files which have been downloaded from the Internet may contain viruses. The library reserves the right to deny use of a user’s removable storage device if it is infected or otherwise corrupt.

The library assumes no responsibility for users’ damages, loss of data, or loss of privacy resulting from the use of the library’s computers and Internet connections.

One or more computers may be designated as Public Access Catalog (PAC) only, to be used for less than 30 minutes and only to search the library catalog.

Educational games on library computers and Internet games are permitted, so long as the games do not contain elements considered inappropriate as described above. However, patrons playing games may be asked to relinquish their time to patrons needing to do research.

PRINTING:

Printing capability will be provided for each public workstation to the extent possible. Black-and-white printing will be the default option, but patrons needing color prints may request them. Charges for black-and-white printing and for color printing will be posted. Users are advised to use the “print preview” feature to avoid printing unwanted pages. Charges will be based on the number of sheets emerging from the printer.

UNRESTRICTED ACCESS:

Adult users (age 17 and above) may request temporary override of the filter if they encounter erroneous blocks to web pages that are likely to be allowable in terms of pertinent statutes and this policy.

PRIVACY:
Because the library is a public institution and the staff has responsibility for monitoring and facilitating use of public computers, users are not guaranteed privacy.

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