



Internet and Computer Use Policy and Guidelines

Definition of Terms

The term “LSLC Member Libraries” refers to the thirteen Member Libraries of the Library System of Lancaster County, their branches, staff, and all public governing bodies associated in any way with their operations.

The terms “Library” or “Member Library” refers to any one of the thirteen independent Libraries that comprise the Library System of Lancaster.

The term “User” or “Patron” is defined as any person using or viewing in any way all computers, workstations or networks made available for use by the Library.

The term “Minor” refers to any individual under the age of 18 years.

The term “Staff” refers to Library employees

Goal

As part of the LSLC Member Libraries’ mission to meet the cultural, informational and educational needs of the communities, they serve, employing advances in technology in this Information Age, the LSLC Member Libraries offer public access to the resources of the Internet with equal access to that information for all individuals in the community.

Internet Access

The Internet is a global electronic network which enables the library to provide information to patrons beyond the library’s collection. It includes useful ideas, information, and opinions from around the world. However, the Internet is an unregulated medium. It provides access to information that may be inaccurate, illegal or that some may find offensive or disturbing. The LSLC Member Libraries cannot control a user’s access to all Internet resources.

Responsibilities of Library Staff and Users

Library staff will not be responsible for personally monitoring a user's Internet use, except for length of use in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone. The user, or the parent/guardian of a minor, is responsible for his or her Internet session at all times.

The Library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or that involves user behavior that violates the Library's policies.

As with all Library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/guardians, NOT Library staff, to determine and monitor their minor children's use of the Internet. (Minors are defined in this policy as

children and young people under the age of 18 years.) Parents are responsible for their minor children's use of the Library's resources and facilities. Parents who believe that their children cannot responsibly use the Library's Internet access are requested to monitor their children's Internet use.

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO COME IN WITH THEIR CHILDREN AND SUPERVISE INTERNET SESSIONS AT THE LIBRARY.

Disclaimers

While the LSLC Member Libraries endeavor to provide access to information of the highest quality, the LSLC Member Libraries specifically disclaim any warrant as to the information's accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness or fitness for a particular purpose.

The LSLC Member Libraries will have no liability for direct, indirect or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed through the LSLC Member Libraries' Internet service.

Software and information from any source, including the Internet, may contain computer viruses. The LSLC Member Libraries are not responsible for damage to users' disks or computers or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of a Library's computers.

Unacceptable Uses of Computers

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this policy are the following:

- 1. Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law.* Transmitting of offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading obscene materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, users should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.
- 2. Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property.* Engaging in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); uploading a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.
- 3. Uses that jeopardize the security of access of the computer network or other networks on the Internet.* Disclosing or sharing the user's password with others; impersonating another user; using one's own software programs on the library's computers; altering the Library's computer settings; damaging or modifying computer equipment or software.
- 4. Uses that are deemed "harmful to minors" or compromise the safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications:* Minors under age 17 may not give to others private information about themselves or others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers; arranging a face-to-face meeting with someone one has "met" on the computer network or Internet without a parent's permission.

The term "harmful to minors" is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 USC Section 254 [h][7]), as meaning any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that

- taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals;
- taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

5. *Uses that Violate Confidentiality of Information:* Unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information regarding Library users, including minors is prohibited. Personally identifiable information about users may not be disclosed or used in any way, except to law enforcement authorities as provided in the law. Users should be aware, however, that due to the technical difficulties involved in providing absolute security, transactions and files may become public.

The library prohibits displaying, downloading, or copying offensive or inappropriate messages, pictures, or explicit sexual material as defined in 18 PA.C.S.A. 5903

Ephrata Public Library Procedures for Computer Usage

Users must be 10 years or older and have a valid library card from the Library System of Lancaster County or another Access PA library and must have a zero balance on their account.

Visitors 18 years or older without a library card from the Library System of Lancaster County or another Access PA library can be issued guest passes. Photo ID must be shown at the circulation desk to verify age and a Lancaster County library account does not exist.

A Computer User Contract must be signed. If under 18, a parent or legal guardian must sign the Computer User Contract in the presence of library staff.

Users are guaranteed 180 minutes (3 hours) of computer usage each day

Session lengths will be 90 minutes (1 ½ hours). If there is an open computer users will have the option to extend their session by 15 minutes. Users are limited to two extensions per session. Extensions will be subtracted from the user's daily 180 minute limit.

Computer users must be able to employ the computer on their own.

Computers are limited to one user per computer.

Users will refrain from using cell phones at the public computers, as well as any sounds or visuals which might be disruptive to others.

Users are responsible for each page they print. The cost per page is \$.15 for black & white and \$.40 for color regardless of mistakes.

Users may not download materials onto the computer's hard drive or attempt to add, modify or remove any system element.

Users may download only that information which is legal to copy.

Users may not alter or attach equipment to the library's hardware or alter, add or attempt to alter programs or device settings

Users may not systematically employ library computers for commercial activity.

Users are responsible for any damages they do to the library computers or software.

Users must leave a computer workstation immediately when asked by a library staff member.

Misuse of computers or Internet access will result in the loss of computer privileges. A letter will be sent to parents or guardians of minors regarding any revocation of privileges, and signed permission form will be included.

Ephrata Public Library Laptop Procedures

Patrons aged 13 or older with a Lancaster County library card are eligible to use Ephrata Public Library laptops. Visitors are not eligible to use laptops.

All patrons must have a zero balance on their library account and sign the library's Computer User Contract. Patrons under the age of 18 will require a parent or legal guardian signature on the Computer User Contract.

To use a laptop, patrons must show their library card or photo ID at the circulation desk. Laptops will be checked out onto the patron's account. Laptops must remain inside the library.

Laptop session lengths will be 90 minutes (1 ½ hours).

Failure to return the laptop or laptops returned damaged will result in a charge to the patron's account of \$600.

Response to Violations

The patron's access to the Library's computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. A patron violates this policy by his or her own action. Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures will result in the forfeiture of the patron's access to computers at **any of the Member Libraries of the Library System of Lancaster County**. The first offense will result in a loss of computer privileges for one month. The second offense will result in a loss of computer privileges for six months. After the third offense, the patron will lose all computer privileges indefinitely. Decisions regarding the appropriate response to violations will be made by the Director of the Member Library at which the offense occurred, or by his/her designate. Appeals should be made in writing and submitted to the Member Library Director's attention.

Policy on Copyrighted Material

U.S. Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials except when permitted by "fair use" principles. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including text, images, programs, e-mail or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Responsibility for the consequences of copyright infringement lies solely with the user, as the LSLC Member Libraries expressly disclaim any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.



EPHRATA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Computer User Contract

550 South Reading Road • Ephrata, PA 17522

Name _____

Library Card Number _____

Address _____

Are you 18 years of age or older? YES NO If no, give date of birth _____

I have read, understand and agree to comply with the Ephrata Public Library Internet Computer Usage Policy and Disclaimer. I further understand any infraction of the agreement will result in the loss of my computer privileges. I agree to hold the Ephrata Public Library and its representatives harmless for any and all loss, problem, or damage resulting from my use of Library computers or internet access. Further, I agree to indemnify the Ephrata Public Library for any loss or liability that I may incur as a result of any violation of the Computer Usage Policy (stated or unstated) by me.

Signature _____ Date _____

Staff Witness _____ Date _____

If the user is under the age of 18 a parent or legal guardian must sign below

By signing below I give permission for my child to use the Library computers and/or access the internet. If my child has completed fifth grade I understand by signing this agreement they may use the computers, under the agreement as stated here and on the computer user contract, without my immediate supervision.

My child has / has not completed fifth grade

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Staff Witness _____ Date _____

Ephrata Public Library prohibits "displaying, downloading or copying offensive or inappropriate messages, pictures or explicit sexual material as defined in 19 Pa. C.S.A. § 5903."

U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, US Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of "fair use." Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including electronic mail, text images, programs, or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user.

I understand that should I violate any portion of the Computer Usage Policy and Disclaimer either explicitly or implicitly I shall lose all computing privileges at the Ephrata Public Library.