

## **Houston County Public Library System**

Approved by HOUPL Board of Trustees 2015 Mar 12, updated 2019 Aug 8

### **COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY**

This policy applies to all users of the Houston County Public Library System computers or networks. In agreement with CIPA Regulations, all Library Internet access computers use filtering software to access the Internet. Adults 18 or older who need unfiltered access for any lawful purpose may request it from a staff member. Unfiltered access will be granted on a per-search basis.

#### **Responsibilities of Users**

Users are expected to obey all local, state and federal laws and the restrictions described in this policy. Accessing the Internet at the Library assumes compliance with the Library's Internet policy.

Supervision of a child's access to the Internet is ultimately the responsibility of the parent or guardian; the Library does not have the right or responsibility to act *in loco parentis* (on behalf of the parent/guardian). However, in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA ~ Public Law 106-554), the Library does filter Internet access for both minors (persons under the age of 18) and adults to certain visual depictions that are (1) obscene (as defined in Title 18, U.S. Code), or (2) child pornography (as defined in Title 18, U.S. Code), or, with respect to use of computers with Internet access by minors, and (3) harmful to minors. Furthermore, all customers must abide by section 16-12-80 (b) of the Official Code of Georgia, unless dissemination of the material is permitted, as provided in Section 16-12-80. The Library is compliant with state policies which prohibit the intentional or knowing display of such materials, while being reckless about whether a person, and especially a minor, is present who will be offended or alarmed by the display.

U.S. copyright law (Title 17, U.S. 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. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from any such use.

Users are warned that Wi-Fi and Internet access provided by the Library are unsecured. By using the Library's Internet access, including Wi-Fi, users release and discharge the Library System and its staff from any liability which might arise from the use of the service, as well as liability in relation to defamatory or offensive material or any breach of copyright which may occur as a result of use.

## COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY

HOUPL assumes no responsibility for any damage, direct or indirect, that users or anyone else may suffer through access to the Internet at any of our libraries. All computer and Internet users agree to hold the Library, including the HOUPL Board of Trustees and staff, harmless from any claims, losses, damages, obligations or liabilities relating to use.

### Rules Governing Use

Computers in the children's area do not have Internet access and do not require a library card. All sessions of the children's computers are limited to 30 minutes. Parents or caregivers must remain in the children's area of the library while their child (under the age of 12) is on the computer. Parents of children under the age of 4 must remain at the computer with their child.

All users of the Internet access computers will have a minimum use of one (1) hour with the exception of short-term use computers.

All computers automatically shut down 15 minutes before the library closes.

***Unacceptable behavior may result in being banned / barred from the computer / library.***

These actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Viewing, storing or printing files, messages or images which are offensive to others
- Pursuing illegal activities online
- Using profanity or obscene language
- Disruptive behavior (i.e. very loud conversation or computer volume)
- Violating copyright laws regarding software, music, images, etc.
- Modifying any computer settings which may degrade or disrupt system performance
- Damaging equipment, software, data or other people's property.

### Responsibilities of the Library

Use of the Internet access computers is on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Library may impose time limits at any time in order to ensure equitable access.

Limited technical assistance will be provided based on staff availability and expertise.

Library staff has the authority to end a computer session at any time.

Storage devices may be available for purchase and can only be used in public Internet access computers.