Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Effective January 1, 2015, updated July 3, 2019

Free wireless Internet access is available at the Springfield Free Public Library for patrons to use on their own tablets, smartphones, laptop computers and other wireless devices. The library network does not require a password to authenticate.

The Library's wireless network is not secured. Information sent to and from a wireless device at the Library may be captured by anyone else with a wireless device and the appropriate software when using the Library's wireless network. The Library assumes no responsibility for the safety of a patron's equipment or for damage to wireless devices, wireless device configurations, security or files resulting from connecting to the Library's wireless access.

Due to the large number of different types of devices in use by members of the public, it may not be possible for Library staff to provide assistance for configuring a particular wireless device in order to enable it to connect to the Library's wireless network. The reference librarian will be available to help patrons locate the appropriate information either online or in print format to facilitate making a connection to the wireless network

By choosing to use this free service, patrons agree to abide by Library's Internet Acceptable Use Policy as set forth below:

I. Internet Acceptable Use Policy

This policy applies to patrons using library computers as well as to those who use their own electronic devices inside the library premises.

A. In accordance with the Library's mission to provide free, open and timely access to material, information and activities to meet the pursuits and interests of a diverse community, the Library shall provide Internet access for its patrons through computers or other appropriate devices as well as through the availability of an unsecured wireless network.

B. Users should be aware that they are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages and sensibilities. Users should refrain from the use of Internet visuals and sound which might disrupt the ability of other patrons (especially children) to use the Library. Users agree to follow the Library policies regarding computer use.

C. The Internet is an essential medium for obtaining and transmitting information of all types. Therefore, the Library provides free public access to the Internet as part of its mission. However, the Internet is an unregulated medium, and it also provides access to information that is inaccurate, illegal or that some may find offensive or disturbing. The Library may suggest on its website specific Internet sites that have potential interest for Library patrons, but the Library cannot control a patron's access to other Internet resources.

D. The Library upholds and affirms the right of every individual to have access to constitutionally protected materials on the Internet. However, the Library's support of this right does not constitute condoning illegal activity in the Library or through the Internet on Library computers.

E. Library staff will not monitor a patron's Internet use, except for length of use in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone.

F. Each user must accept responsibility for determining the appropriateness of the resources that he or she elects to access.

G. As with all Library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/guardians, not Library staff, to determine and monitor their minor child's use of the Internet. Minors are defined in this policy as children and young people under the age of 18 years. Parents/guardians are responsible for their minor child's use of the Library's resources, facilities, and computers.

H. Computers in the Youth Services Department are for use only by children and by adults who are accompanying their children on the computer. The library's general rules for computer use also apply in the Youth Services Department, with the addition of the following:

1. AWE computers are preloaded with educational software that is intended for use by children between the ages of 2 and 7; these computers are not connected to the Internet. When using these computers, direct parental supervision is required for children under the age of 5.

2. Computers with internet access in the children's room are filtered; their use is intended for children ages 6 and up. Parental supervision is required for children who need assistance in navigating the keyboard and/or mouse. Children of any age who interact with the computer in an inappropriate way, including banging or hitting the keyboard or monitor, will be told to vacate the computer.

   a. The primary purpose of the computers in the children's room is for homework assistance or other educational purposes. At the discretion of library staff, a child using a computer for gaming or other purely recreational purposes will be asked to vacate a computer so that it can be used by someone needing to use the computer for school work.

   b. When used for gaming or purely recreational purposes, computer use in Youth Services is limited to one patron per computer at a time. Clusters or patrons sitting or standing at one computer is not permitted.

I. No person shall use a Library Internet workstation or wireless device in a way that is inappropriate for an open public area shared by people of all ages and backgrounds or that disturbs or interferes with patrons, Library staff or operations of the Library.

J. 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. These include transmission of offensive, threatening or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; and displaying, sending, receiving, downloading or printing text, images or graphics of obscene material harmful to minors and defined by New Jersey Statutes Annotated 2C:34-3 and 2C:34-4;

2. Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property. These include engaging in defamation; uploading a computer virus, worm, "Trojan horse," or other malware programs; and participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to any other computers, networks, information systems or communications devices or resources;

3. Uses that jeopardize the security of access of the computer network or other networks on the Internet. These include disclosing or sharing the user's password with others; impersonating another user; using one's own software programs on the Library's computers; damaging, altering or degrading the Library's computer equipment, peripherals, software, configurations or settings;

4. Uses that compromise the safety and security of minors when using email, social media and other forms of direct electronic communications. These include giving others private information about oneself or others, such as credit card numbers and Social Security numbers, and arranging a face-to-face meeting with a person one has met on the computer network or Internet without the permission of a parent/guardian;

5. Uses that violate confidentiality of information. The New Jersey Confidentiality of Library Records Law, New Jersey Statutes Annotated 18A:73-43.2, prohibits the unauthorized disclosure, use or dissemination of personal information regarding Library users, including minors. Personally identifiable information about Library users may not be disclosed in any way except as provided in that law.

K. Library staff are authorized to terminate the Internet session of any patron who fails to comply with this policy, to take further action in accordance with the Library Code of Conduct, and to report illegal activity of which they become aware to the appropriate authorities for prosecution.

II. Rules for Computer Use

A. Use of public access Internet computers is limited to a sixty-minute session when other computer users are waiting.

I. Patrons who have a library card with a Springfield Free Public Library barcode and PIN may sign up for an initial two hour computer session plus one renewal session of two hours per day as long as there are no patrons who are waiting to use the computer

II. Patrons without a Springfield Free Public Library card may use a guest pass for a one hour computer session plus a one hour renewal per day as long as no one is waiting to use the computer.

III. Patrons must be at least 16 years of age in order to be issued a guest pass to log onto one of the Library's computers.

B. A non-network computer is available for quick access to the Library catalog for a maximum of 15 minutes per session.

C. Users may print one black and white page for free each day. Each additional page may be printed at the cost of $0.10 per page for black and white printouts and $0.25 per page for color printouts, to be paid at the print station coin machine located adjacent to the circulation desk.

D. Time permitting, Library staff may help with basic computer problems and help patrons find appropriate information on the Internet. Staff are not able to offer extensive training to users on demand. The Library offers one-on-one computer training by appointment only and computer training books and manuals are also available for use in the Library or to check out.

E. The Library's computers are set up for optimal use by one person. In all cases, because of limited space, a maximum of two people may sit and work together at any one computer workstation.

F. All computer users are expected to respect the privacy of all other Library patrons by observing the following prohibitions: modifying someone else's passwords, misrepresenting oneself as another user, trying to gain access to another's data or search history, or hovering over others using computers while waiting one's turn.

G. Users may not save their data or install their own software on the hard drives of Library computers. Users may supply their own flash or thumb drives.

H. The Library is not responsible for any damage to computer users' disks, data, hardware or software by any virus that may have been contracted on or through Library equipment. Although the Library has installed virus protection on its computers, it is still possible that a virus may appear, and therefore protection cannot be guaranteed.

I. The Library is not responsible for any damage to computer users' disks, data, hardware or software as a result of the malfunction of Library hardware or software.

J. Computer users are liable for damage to Library equipment caused by inappropriate or unauthorized use. Misuse of Library computers may result in suspension or loss of privilege to use the Library computers.

III. Responses 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 actions. Furthermore, a patron violates this policy if he or she permits another to use his or her account or password to access the computer network and Internet. Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures will result in suspension or loss of privilege to use the Library computers.

IV. Procedures

The Library staff working together with the Library Board of Trustees will develop such rules and procedures as are necessary to ensure the fair and reasonable use of Internet access.