

## **Southern Peaks Public Library Electronic Resources & Internet Use Policy**

### **Background/Philosophy**

The mission statement of Southern Peaks Public Library states, in part, "we offer a broad range of library materials and information services as part of a larger library community with whom we share resources." The Library provides Internet computers for public use as an integral part of this mission. Any person, regardless of age or residency, may have free access to the electronic resources. This is on a first-come, first served as controlled by the PC management software. The services we offer include Internet access for research, genealogical work, personal recreation and communication, word processing and other data management programs. These are provided because not everyone in our community has or can afford these functions in their homes or businesses. The Library attempts to "level the playing field" by providing library users free access to these valuable information resources.

### **Library Disclaimers**

#### **1. Internet Customer Usage Statement**

The Internet offers access to many valuable local, national, and international sources of information containing a wide variety of material and opinions from various points of view. Not all sources provide information that is accurate, complete or current, and Library users should cast a cautious and critical eye on any and all data they discover.

Some information accessed through the Internet may be considered offensive or inappropriate for certain age groups. While the Southern Peaks Public Library is sensitive to the concerns of customers about Internet content, no one, including the Library, can control the information available on the Internet. As such, the Library cannot be held responsible for its content and each individual is responsible for his or her own use of the Internet. As with other library materials, supervision or restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

Because Internet terminals are open to the public, users should be cautious about accessing sensitive data, such as private documents or personal financial information. The Library will not be held liable for Internet usage or access. The job of the library is access, not endorsement.

Finally, utilization of Library Internet access for illegal, criminal, or other unauthorized purposes will not be tolerated, and may result in the loss of library privileges and/or criminal prosecution or other legal action.

## **2. External Link Disclaimer**

The Southern Peaks Public Library provides links to external websites as a convenience to our patrons and for informational purposes only. These links do not constitute an endorsement or favoring by the Library or by the City of Alamosa of any of the products, services, or opinions represented by the external Websites. Use of any information contained in these Websites is voluntary on the part of the individual accessing them. While the Library does its best to select sites that will be most useful for our customers, the Southern Peaks Public Library bears no responsibility for the accuracy, legality, or content of external websites or for that of subsequent links. Users should contact the external website with questions or concerns regarding its content.

### **Responsibilities of the Library as a Provider of Internet Access**

The Library will provide basic instruction to help patrons access Internet resources. Library staff, however, cannot provide in-depth training on using the Internet or programs provided on each computer.

Consistent with its mission and service roles, the Library has developed a website and provides guides to Internet resources of particular usefulness and interest to the community. However, the Library is not responsible for the accuracy of information on the Internet. The Library shall have no liability for any loss or any direct, indirect, or consequential damages arising out of any use of its connection to the Internet.

In keeping with existing library policies, the Library will protect patron rights to privacy and confidentiality. The Library strives to keep any communications on its computer network confidential. However, users should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information regarding users' activities. The Library cannot guarantee the security or confidentiality of transactions conducted over the Internet. Library staff, Library Board members, other City personnel, and members of City Council are not responsible for any loss incurred by a user of the Library's computer or telecommunications equipment.

As required by law, the Library uses a filter to prevent access, as a minimum, to sexually explicit images through both the wired or wireless networks. Users must recognize that the technology is imperfect and that it is not possible to block everything that might be considered objectionable.

As part of normal system maintenance, Library staff and network administrators do have the ability to monitor system activity, but the Library does not reveal information about a patron's use of its computer resources except as required by law or necessary for Library operation.

### **Responsibilities of Internet Users**

Libraries rely on the cooperation of their users in order to efficiently provide shared resources, and ensure community access to a diversity of information. The Southern Peaks Public Library strives to balance the rights of users to access a wide range of information resources with the rights of users to work in a public environment free from harassing sounds and visuals. The Library asks that all of its library users remain sensitive to the fact that they are working in a public space shared by people of all ages, with a variety of information interests and needs.

Users of the Library's Internet resources are expected to use them in a legal and ethical manner and must comply with all applicable laws. Misuse of the computer or Internet access will result in the loss of the patron's computer privileges. Individuals using the Library's computer resources for illegal purposes may also be subject to prosecution.

### **Unacceptable Use of Electronic Resources**

Any of the following actions may result in the loss of library privileges and/or criminal prosecution or other legal action. In general, the Library expects patron behavior to be law-abiding and civil. Unacceptable use of the Library's electronic resources includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Use of the Library's electronic resources for illegal or criminal purposes (example: viewing child pornography).
2. Violation of the legal protections provided by copyright (Title 17 U.S. Code which prohibits unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of fair use) and licenses to programs or data.
3. Use of Library resources to attempt infiltration of a computer or computing system and/or damage or alter the software or hardware components of a local or remote computer or computing system - uploading any harmful form of programming, vandalism or "hacking".
4. Seeking information on, obtaining copies of, or modifying files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users. Users shall not represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized to do so by that user.
5. Falsification of one's age, or other data, to gain access to Internet sites.
6. Use of public Internet access workstations beyond time limits established by the Library. This time limit may change without notice, dependent on service demands.

7. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and/or dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.
8. Interference with the use or enjoyment of Library resources by others.
9. Disruption of the normal flow of Library operations.
10. The display of visual material that is sexual in nature or that might be considered immediately offensive to others, specifically the viewing of pornography.

The Library has the ability and reserves the right to monitor web sessions in order to ensure system security and adherence of rules. Library staff may review these sessions anonymously and remotely. All transactions will be considered confidential, except in those cases where illegal activity is observed, in which case Internet connections may be terminated and information may be made available to the local law enforcement agency in accordance with the provisions of C.R.S. 24-90-119.

### **Wireless Access Use Policy**

Southern Peaks Public Library offers free wireless access to Library patrons for use with personal notebooks, laptops, and other mobile Internet devices. This access point, also known as a hot spot or WiFi, is an unsecured portal to the Library's Internet service, provided at users own risk and accessible during regular Library hours. While the Library strives to provide a quality wireless system it cannot guarantee the signal quality, bandwidth availability, or general Internet site availability at any time.

All wireless users are expected to act in a lawful and respectful manner, and are required to conform to the conditions of the Library's "Electronic Resources & Internet Use Policy".

Although the Library makes every effort to provide secure access to the Internet, users are at risk for loss or theft of information and should take appropriate cautions with personal information while using the wireless access. Information being transmitted could potentially be intercepted by another wireless user.

- Do not transmit sensitive information (credit card numbers, passwords, account information) while using wireless access.
- Wireless devices must be configured with protection using current virus definitions.

Use of the Library's wireless network is entirely at the risk of the user. The Library is not responsible for any information that is compromised or lost through use of its wireless access. This includes damage or loss due to:

- Electrical surges;
- Breaches of security by viruses or hacking; or
- Disruptions to wireless service.

Library staff can provide general information or handouts for connecting your device to the wireless network. Staff cannot provide you technical assistance in configuring your portal device or troubleshooting wireless access problems. The Library does not guarantee that your device will work with the Library's wireless access. Printed guidelines for some devices are available through the manufacturer.

Printing access is not available through the wireless connection. Standard computer stations are available for use with public printers.

### **Access by Minors to Internet Resources**

The Library will make all reasonable effort to limit access by minors to Internet resources that are obscene or illegal. As specified by state and federal laws (HB 04-1004 Internet Protection in Public Libraries, C.R.S. 24-90-601 thru 606, and Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Pub. L. No. 106-554), the Library has installed a technology protection measure (TPM) in the form of a filter on all public Internet-capable computers. This required measure is designed to block or filter internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors, except that it may not block scientific or medically accurate information regarding sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, or reproductive health.

This TPM may be temporarily disabled on all PCs except for those located in and near the children's area IAW C.R.S 24-90-604. The following computers will not have their TPM turned off for any reason: 9, 13-21, and Email-only.

The TPM may be temporarily disabled on the remaining PCs under the following circumstances:

- For use by an adult upon his or her request.
- For use by a minor for bona fide research or other lawful purposes, so long as the use is supervised by an administrator, supervisor, parent, guardian, or other person authorized by the Library to supervise such use. *(NOTE: Library staff will NOT take on the role of supervisor. The Library will only allow a parent or guardian to be a supervisor in this situation.)*
- For use by a minor where a parent or guardian has given prior approval by filling out an "Internet Consent Form". *(See attachment)*

Users should be aware of the limitations of Internet filtering software. While designed to restrict access to Internet content that could be deemed inappropriate, these systems are no substitute for individual judgment and/or parental involvement and oversight. Filters may block sites which have legitimate research value, as well as allowing some content through which parents might find objectionable.

In addition to blocking access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors as required by law, the following Internet content may also be subject to active filtering:

- Destructive
- Sexual
- Commerce
- Communications & Technology (to include social networking)
- Leisure

A complete list of categories currently being filtered is available upon request at the Circulation Desk.

The Library will actively use the TPM to place additional blocks as deemed necessary to control user abuse of the Library's electronic resources. The Library's TPM has the capability to:

- Block access to Web sites based on domain, URL pattern, or content category
- Block downloads based on file type
- Block applications that access the Internet, including IM, music services, and software updaters

Any patron may recommend having a website reviewed by Library staff as to whether or not it should be considered for blocking or removed from blocking by filling out a "Website Review Form". (*See attachment*) Library staff will normally complete the review process within 2 business days (Saturday and Sunday excluded).

### **Parental Responsibility**

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. Parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding what library resources are appropriate for their children. Some Internet information may be inappropriate for children. Parents or legal guardians should guide their children in using the Internet and inform them as to what is or is not appropriate to access. Parents should spend time online with their children to discuss the wealth of information available and how it should be used. As with other Library materials, supervision or restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

Parents are encouraged to read and follow these tips for "Internet-wise" parents:

- Take time to learn about the Internet.
- Take individual or group Internet classes, which are always available to families.
- Explore cyberspace with your children.

- Provide clear guidelines - let your children know if there are subjects that are off limits.
- Learn how to evaluate the Internet - read books and magazines.
- Teach your children safety rules for dealing with strangers online when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of electronic communication:
  - Never give out personal information (name, address, phone number, etc.).
  - Never arrange via a computer to meet someone.
  - Never respond to messages that are threatening or suggestive, remembering that people online may not be who they say they are.
- Ask a librarian - librarians have always been expert at selecting materials for children.

### **Public Access Guidelines for Workstation Usage**

#### Accessing Workstations:

- Before using any computer, users must ask for a PIN # ticket or if no computers are available, sign in with the library staff.
- Computers may be used for a 60 minute time period. If, at the end of that time, no one is scheduled to use the computer, the current user may ask for another PIN # ticket.
- No more than 2 people will be permitted at a workstation at a time, as long as they are quiet.
- The library staff reserves the right to terminate a person's use of the computer for any reason.
- Food is not allowed around the computers. All drink containers must have a tight lid to avoid spilling.

#### Computer Programs:

- Only library software may be used.
- Information may not be saved/downloaded to the library's computers. All files must be downloaded onto a patron's flash drive or CD. CDs and flash drives are available for purchase at the front desk.
- The Library uses virus-checking software. However, this is not a guarantee of complete virus protection.
- Users are not permitted to install, delete, or modify library hardware or software.
- Changes may not be made to the setup or configuration of the software, hardware, or printers.

#### Printing:

- All printing (including that from the Internet and library software programs) is 10¢ per side for black and white and 25¢ for color.
- Users must pay for all pages from the printer regardless of content.

#### Staff Assistance:

- The library staff cannot provide in-depth computer training, but will attempt to answer basic questions or help users locate resources on the Internet.
- Patrons are expected to be knowledgeable in basic computer operations. Library staff is unable to offer individualized instruction and cannot assist users with downloading or email problems.

### **Enforcement and Consequences**

No one, minor or adult, has the right to use public property to commit crimes. At the same time, no policy can ensure that crimes will never be committed. If customers are found to be accessing materials that may be, at the discretion of the Library, obscene or illegal, they will be first be asked to immediately exit the site. Non-compliance will result in the individual's ejection from the library facility and possible being barred from future use of the Library's electronic resources.

By accessing and beginning your Internet session through the Library's system, it is understood that you have read and accepted the terms as stated in this policy.