

COMPUTER/INTERNET USE

In order to fulfill its mission to the citizens of Berkeley County, the Berkeley County Library System provides access to an extensive range of informational, educational, governmental, cultural and recreational resources, including those available through the Internet. The Library's goal in providing Internet and wireless access is to enhance its existing collections in size and depth and to give anyone who wishes to use the Internet the chance to do so.

The Internet enables access to a wealth of valuable and reliable information from a variety of sources. It also provides access to information that may be inaccurate, controversial, illegal, personally offensive to the viewer, or inappropriate for children. Individual users must exercise judgment in evaluating the validity and appropriateness of information retrieved via the Internet. The Berkeley County Library System has no control over the information accessed through the Internet by its customers and cannot be held liable for the content of any Internet site.

The Library upholds and affirms the right of each individual to have access to a wide variety of materials. The Library also affirms the right and responsibility of parents to determine and monitor their children's use of library materials and resources. In affirmation of these rights, the Library has established rules for Internet use.

As required by the "Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act (CIPA) and South Carolina Law (Filtering PROVISIO 72.95), the Library has implemented software filtering on all of its Internet-accessible computer terminals. In addition, children under the age of eighteen (18) must have a signed Internet Use permission from their parent, guardian or guarantor to access the Internet. Children ages ten (10) to seventeen (17) may use the Internet without adult supervision. Children under the age of ten (10) must have adult supervision when using the Internet.

The Library's Computer/Internet Use Policy and filtering software are designed to:

- Prevent access by minors to inappropriate or harmful materials on the Internet and the World Wide Web
- Provide for the safety and security of minors when they use electronic mail, chat rooms, social media and other forms of direct electronic communications
- Limit unauthorized access including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online. Library users are hereby advised that use of the Library's computers for hacking or any other unlawful activity is strictly prohibited.
- Limit the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of a minor's personal information.

Rules for Internet Use

The public must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, including laws governing the transmission and dissemination of information while accessing the Internet, and with all Library policies and procedures.

Users are expected to:

- Comply with the provisions of Berkeley County Library Internet Use Policy
- Use the Internet in a manner consistent with the library's Code of Conduct
- Respect the rights and privacy of other computer users

Users may not:

- Attempt to gain unauthorized access to the Library's network or computer systems or to any other network or computer system
- Distribute unsolicited advertising, referred to as SPAM
- Invade the privacy of others
- Make any attempt to damage computer equipment, modify library software or alter the computer desktop
- Engage in any activity that is harassing or defamatory
- View site(s) that create a hostile environment for other library users and staff

- Violate local, state, or federal laws and regulations
- Use the Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other rights of third parties

Violations may result in loss of access. Unlawful activities will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Public Users' Security

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. However, the Berkeley County Library will not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public except as required by law or necessary for the proper operation of the library.

Conditions of Use

Children under the age of eighteen (18) must have a signed Internet Use permission from their parent, guardian or guarantor to access the Internet.

Children ages ten (10) to seventeen (17) may use the Internet without adult supervision. Children under ten (10) must have adult supervision when using the Internet.

To address the issue of safety and security of minors, as well as the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, the Library urges minors and caregivers of minors to keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

- Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name, or telephone number. When you post messages on line use a nickname.
- Let parents or guardians decide whether personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information should be revealed.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone via the computer without a parent or guardian's approval.
- Never respond to messages that are suggestive, obscene, threatening, or make one uncomfortable.
- Have parents or guardians report an incident to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-843-5678 if one becomes aware of the transmission of child pornography.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are.
- Remember that everything one reads may not be true.

Computers are available on a "first come, first use" basis and/or may be reserved. A reservation is considered valid for ten (10) minutes after it was to commence. The computer will then be free to the next available user.

Computer users may download files to a disk, or other external device, such as a flash drive.

Library staff will assist users in a manner consistent with other library services. The availability of staff and the needs of other library users will affect the extent of assistance provided.

Computer use and printing must be completed ten (10) minutes before the library closes. The computers automatically shut down at this time.

One (1) or two (2) users may sit at one computer workstation. The person who registered to use the computer assumes responsibility for any computer user under his/her account. If two children (those under the age of 18) are sitting together at one computer, both must have on file a signed parental or guardian Internet use permission.

Adopted by the Berkeley County Library Board on December 11, 2007

Revised by the Berkeley County Library Board on May 15, 2012