

Washington County Public Library Internet Policy

Please turn off the ringer on your cell! Cell phone use in the computer lab is prohibited. If you need to use your cell, you may step out into the breezeway at the front entrance.

In response to advances in technology, the Washington County Public Library has developed resources and services to meet the information, educational, recreational, cultural and family literacy needs of the community. It is within this context that the library offers free public access to the Internet and other technological resources. Computers are primarily provided for research, word processing and educational purposes as well as for patron leisure.

Individuals wishing to use WCPL computers must be a registered patron and have a signed computer use agreement form on file. Patrons must be 19 or older to sign the CUA. Patron's 18 and under must have a parent/guardian's signature. A picture ID is required to sign this form. An adult who is responsible for a child's actions in the library must accompany patrons under 12. The computers are not toys and children will not be allowed to "play" with them. Parents of minor children must assume responsibility and are encouraged to take an active role in their child's use of the library's computers and materials.

Patrons must check out a one-hour computer session from the circulation desk in order to obtain access to computers. Excessive overdue books must be returned and fines and fees must be settled from a patron's account prior to computer use. Computer sessions may be extended as long as computers are available. If lab is full, a waiting list will be started on a first come first serve basis and patrons waiting will be granted access as sessions time out and computers become available. Only one person is allowed to work at each computer: only one computer per person.

The Internet offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages. It is however, an unregulated medium with a highly diverse user population. The library cannot successfully control and monitor all of the vast amounts of material accessible via the Internet. It is possible that individuals might access information they find personally offensive or disturbing. Individual users must accept responsibility for determining the suitability of content for themselves and their children.

Sources on the Internet do not always provide accurate, complete or current information. As with any material provided by the library, the users must take responsibility in questioning the validity of the information found. The library staff may suggest scholarly sources in alternative formats of information on a subject of interest.

The computer equipment and software must be used as installed in the lab. Users are not permitted to delete or modify installed hardware or software. Users are also not permitted to add any new hardware or software to the computers or change/add backgrounds, wallpapers, or screensavers. Patrons will be held responsible for any action that vandalizes, damages or destroys any property of the library.

Users may not disrupt or interfere with other computer or network users, services or equipment. Intentional disruption of the operation of computer systems and networks may be a violation of law and users may be held responsible.

Although library staff is available to offer searching suggestions and answer some questions, they cannot provide in-depth training on Internet and personal computer use. Because of scheduling, staff knowledge about the Internet may not always be available.

Saving files to the computers hard drive is prohibited. Users wishing to save a file must provide their own CD, thumb drive or other storage media. Users may not use the library's computers to make unauthorized entry into any other computer or network.

Print outs of documents may be made at a rate of .15 per page, .10 when patrons provide paper. Patrons are responsible for paying for all print outs they make, including those with only a few sentences or markings. Patrons are encouraged to use a print preview or ask for assistance to avoid printing unwanted pages.

Do not leave materials or personal belonging at computers. The library is not responsible for materials left unattended.

Users may not represent themselves as another person nor use the Internet access to transmit obscene, threatening, or harassing materials.

Users must respect the legal protections to data and software provided by copyright and license law.

In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), filtering is installed and enforced at the library. Filtering limits the amount of obscene or pornographic materials available on the Internet; however be aware that no filtering technology is completely effective. Therefore the library will have no liability for damages related to the operation of, or failure of, the filtering technology installed, or for its circumvention by patrons.

Dissemination or public display of obscene matter is a misdemeanor in the state of Alabama. - Alabama Law 13a-12-200.3

Dissemination or public display of obscene matter containing visual reproduction of persons less than 17 years of age involved in obscene acts is a Class B felony in the State of Alabama. 13a-12-191

Violators will be reported to the police department.

iMac Computers – Connecting Military Families – Governor Bob Riley provided 107 libraries across the state with iMac computers with the intentions of better connecting military families to family members deployed abroad. The iMacs are equipped with built-in cameras and microphones. WCPL was the recipient of 2 iMac computers. In order to gain access to these computers, a patron must possess a library card and show identification. The computers may be reserved in advance for up to a 2-hour block of time. When this session is up, you must sign out at the front desk; if no other patrons are waiting you may sign in for another block of time. The computers may also be used for patrons who are participating in a distance learning educational program. Video conferencing may only be used for its intended purpose. Using video conferencing for uses other than its intended purpose will result in termination of computer use privileges. All rules regarding Internet use apply.

The library reserves the right to terminate a computer session at any time.