

Calhoun County Public Library System

Internet Use Policy

As part of its mission to provide a broad range of information in a variety of formats, the Calhoun County Public Library System provides access to the Internet. Staff will conduct Internet searches on behalf of patrons when warranted as part of the library's reference and information services. Computers are also available for patrons who wish to conduct their own searches or use other Internet resources.

The library is responsible only for the information provided on its own Web site. Access points and links to information resources on the library's home page are selected by library staff and are checked regularly to ensure that they remain valid and consistent with the roles of the library. The library cannot monitor or control information accessed via the Internet. The library cannot guarantee that information on the Internet is accurate. If requested, staff will assist patrons in conducting searches and offer guidance on evaluating sources and verifying information.

Library staff will assist patrons with searches and suggest search strategies, but can provide limited assistance in teaching patrons how to use the Internet. The library will occasionally offer short introductory classes to familiarize patrons with the basics of Internet searching. Videotapes, DVDs, books, and other learning resources are also available for patron use.

The library director will determine the Internet functions that are enabled, but generally they will be limited to those that assist patrons in locating and obtaining information. When it is technically possible to do so, files may be downloaded to portable storage devices or printed to designated printers. Patrons who download files are responsible for verifying that the files are free of computer viruses. Charges for printing will be established on a cost-recovery basis by the Calhoun County Library Board. By logging on to the Internet, patrons agree to abide by the library policy on public use of computers.

Parents or guardians are responsible for Internet use by their children. The library will make available to parents information related to safe Internet practices and computers in the children's room point to age-appropriate web sites. Staff is available to assist children who are conducting searches. In accordance with federal CIPA regulations, all library public workstations use filtering software. Adults who need unfiltered access for any lawful purpose may use workstations that are labeled as unfiltered or may request access from a staff member, which will be granted on a per individual search basis. Parents are reminded that filtering software can be circumvented by experienced computer users; therefore, they should monitor their child's use of the Internet.

Patrons, including minors, who access the Internet in the library, may not display text or graphics defined by federal or state law as obscenity or pornography. In addition, minors are prohibited from accessing materials considered to be "harmful to minors." Library employees are authorized to take appropriate actions to enforce the rules of conduct and to prohibit use of computers by individuals who fail to comply with the Internet Safety Policy as stated or implied herein.

Deliberate and continued display of some materials that are not obscene or pornographic may still constitute sexual harassment. Actions that violate federal, state, or local laws will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. Repeated actions that create a disturbance or that may be considered sexual harassment may result in the loss of some or all library privileges. U.S. copyright law governs unauthorized use or distribution of copyrighted materials. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials, except as permitted by the fair-use regulation without permission of the copyright owner.

While the use of chat rooms, social networking sites, wikis, blogs, and other Internet functions are not prohibited, the Library neither encourages nor offers technical support for their use. Patrons should be aware that the anonymity of some functions might also provide cover for individuals with criminal intentions. Users, including minors, are warned that other individuals may obtain unauthorized access to personal information and/or may misrepresent themselves. Users, including minors, are advised not to share personal identification information to unknown or otherwise unverified sources via electronic communication.

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