

XIV. Internet Access Policy

The Balsam Lake Public Library (BLPL) provides free Internet access to library customers as an information, education, entertainment, and communication resource. This policy requires that the Internet will be used in a responsible manner consistent with these purposes, and in accordance with local, state and federal laws. Access may not be used for prohibited purposes. Such use which will result in permanent loss of Internet access privileges.

Prohibited uses include:

- Attempting to gain illegal or unauthorized access to remote computer systems (“hacking”).
- Damaging or altering the physical components or software of the library computers.
- Using the computer for any activities illegal under local, state, or federal law.
- Using access to the Internet or e-mail to send obscene, harassing, or illegal messages.
- Disclosing unauthorized personal identification information about minors.
- Violating copyright laws or software licensing agreements.
- Accessing pornographic or otherwise patently objectionable web sites as deemed by staff.
- Minors (under 18) accessing web sites or other sources containing materials legally harmful to minors.
- Counterfeiting.

BLPL Internet usage behavior standards also require the following:

- Internet access stations are NOT private, and equipment is in full view of staff and other customers.
- Library staff will permanently terminate Internet privileges of any customer logging on to pornographic web sites or sites which are patently objectionable.
- Users may not maintain e-mail accounts directly on library computers.
- Users must follow the scheduling of public terminals, and honor their time commitments. Consistent abuse of scheduling may result in loss of privileges.
- Public access computers are available only during library open hours.
- Users may not add software or otherwise alter settings or content of library computers.
- Minors (under 18) MUST have an Internet Access and Computer Use Agreement signed by a parent or legal guardian.
- The library will terminate the use privileges of any customer who violates the Internet Access and Computer Use Agreement.

The library reserves the right to:

- Schedule usage of public access computers, set time limits, control behavior, and otherwise organize access to public Internet stations.
- Have staff members visually and electronically monitor usage of Internet access stations to ensure compliance with the library Internet usage policy.
- Restrict or ban users who, in the judgment of library staff, are violating the terms of this policy.

BLPL does not use Internet filtering software and assumes no responsibility for the use of Internet resources by children. Subject to the above usage restrictions, it is the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or caregiver to determine appropriate Internet-based materials for specific children.

Library personnel do not have the ability to directly monitor minors' safe and secure usage of chat rooms, e-mail accounts, and other direct Internet communications methods. We urge parents who have concerns about their children's maturity or judgment to NOT sign permission for them to use the Internet unsupervised.

BLPL cannot select or control contents available on individual Internet sites. The Library takes no responsibility for the accuracy of specific information found on the Internet.

The library also provides public access computers for word processing and other computer tasks. While staff may be called upon to offer assistance to users, they will do so only within the limits of their other responsibilities.

PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTERS AND INTERNET ACCESS CONDITIONS OF USE

Behavior Rules

- Customers must have a current signed Internet Access and Computer Use Agreement on file at the Balsam Lake Public Library or an Internet agreement notation from another MORE library on their record.
- Minors must have a parent/guardian signature on the Agreement.
- Customers must present their own valid, unblocked MORE patron card to check out time on the computers.
- No more than two users at a time may be involved in using a machine. Both users must have Internet privileges. Quiet and orderly behavior is expected.
- Access to computers may be restricted if a user has been uncooperative or disruptive.
- Users assume responsibility for maintaining the computer in good order and damages through misuse or abuse. Charges for repair of equipment will be assessed to the person who registered to use the machine.
- Tampering or altering equipment settings will result in computers privileges being revoked.

- Users may not send any communications or perform any on-line interactions that are illegal under local, state or federal law. Users assume all legal liabilities for any actions they take.
- *Users may not access sites that are pornographic or patently offensive.* Public access computers are in full view of other customers and library staff. *The material on the screen is not private.* Viewing inappropriate material in public is a violation of library behavior rules, not a free speech question. *Users who violate this rule will lose Internet privileges permanently. No warnings or second chances.* Library staff will determine if on-screen material violates this rule.
- It is illegal for a minor to access a web site which is restricted to over age eighteen. Such an action will result in permanent cancellation of equipment privileges. *No warnings or second chances.*
- The library reserves the right to report any illegal activities performed on public access computers to the proper authorities.

Scheduling

- With rare exceptions (i.e., proctoring tests, college coursework), reservations will not be taken for computer time. Patrons will follow the access procedures determined by the library computer management software.

Software and Supplies

- Users may not introduce any software into library computers.
- Library software may not be copied or loaned. It is for in-house use only.
- Users may not save files to the hard-drive of library equipment. Any such files will be immediately deleted.
- Users must supply their own storage media.
- Users may supply their own printout paper only if approved by library staff. Mailing labels are not allowed.
- Users must reimburse the set charge per page for printing or copying, whether or not they provide their own paper.
- Users assume all liability for copying, printing or downloading materials that may be copyright protected.

WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

- Persons using the wireless connection agree to comply with all provisions of the current Balsam Lake Public Library Internet Access Policy.
- The library's wireless connection is unencrypted and unfiltered. Use of the wireless connection is done at the patron's own risk. By using this connection, patrons acknowledge that security error, hacking, intermittent loss of signal and network failures are inherent risks associated with any wireless service. For that reason, patrons expressly agree that they knowingly assume such risk, and further agree to hold the library harmless from any claim or loss arising out of, or related to, the use of the library's wireless internet access.
- The library accepts no responsibility for any software downloaded and/or installed, email opened, or sites accessed while patrons are on the wireless Internet connection. Any damage done to the patron's equipment or self from viruses, identity theft, spyware, plug-ins, or other Internet-borne programs is the sole responsibility of the patron, and the patron will hold the library harmless from any such damage.
- The library accepts no responsibility regarding the ability of patron-owned equipment to connect to the wireless network.
- The library accepts no responsibility for lost or stolen patron owned computers or associated equipment.
- Patrons accessing audio files must use headphones.
- Because of the liability involved, library staff is not allowed to handle patron-owned computer equipment.