

INTERNET POLICY

Public Access Practices and Policies

Computer use is not restricted by age, but the independent user must be able to:

- Read and follow instructions
- Use a computer keyboard and mouse appropriately
- Operate the computer independently and with some degree of computer literacy, as library staff assistance will be very limited

Privacy: The user should have no expectation of privacy when using the internet in a public place. Public display of pornography is a crime. Since the library is a public place, any display of pornographic material will result in cancellation of computer privileges and the possibility of being banned from the Library.

The Internet contains information that may be inaccurate, outdated, defamatory, abusive, threatening, sexually explicit, racially offensive, or potentially illegal. The library makes no guarantees, either expressed or implied, with respect to the quality or content of the information available on the Internet. Users are encouraged to be good information consumers by evaluating the validity of information accessed via the Internet and using judgment and caution. Vicksburg District Library is not responsible for information gained via the Internet and assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from its connections to the Internet. A reference librarian can help with internet searches.

The computers available for use by young adults or children have filters to prevent access to Internet sites which may contain information or graphics which have been judged to be unfit for minors. Determination of unfit content usually is made on the basis of the content being judged as violent, obscene or pornographic. However, the ability of these filters to block is limited.

It is still the responsibility of the parent or guardian, and not that of Vicksburg District Library or its staff, to be aware of the types of material which might be available and accessed by their children through Internet public access sessions at the library. This is the case with all other library materials and formats as well.

Guidelines for Internet Public Access

Illegal Use

- Copyright and License Violations
- Viewing Sexually Explicit Materials (Public Display of Pornography)
- Use of Others' Passwords
- Breaking into Unauthorized Files
- Damage or Destruction of Software, Data, Hardware or Wiring

Unethical Use

- Harassing or Overlooking Other Users
- Libeling or Slandering Others
- Representing Oneself as Someone Else
- Violation of Another User's Privacy
- Modifying Files, Passwords, Screens, Software or Hardware Connections
- Visits to Illicit Chat Rooms and Forums

Rules for Use

- Public access computers are offered on a first come, first served basis to residents and non-residents.
- The computers and their printers are available to the public during library hours up to 15 minutes before closing except when down for maintenance.
- User time is limited to 30 minutes when someone is waiting.
- The cost of printing is \$0.10 per page for black print and \$0.50 for color.
- The Internet may not be used for accessing sexually explicit or obscene material. Violators will be prohibited from further use.
- It is the user's responsibility not to represent oneself as someone else.

Rules for Gaming

The playing of video games on public computers is allowed. However, the following guidelines are to be followed:

- Any games played must not be sexually or violently explicit in nature.
- All computers must have speakers on silent. Use of headphones is highly encouraged.
- The volume of the headphones must be set at an appropriate volume (no one else in the vicinity should be able to hear what is playing on the headphones).
- Cell phones and microphones may not be used at the public computers. Should a patron need a microphone for recording purposes, please see a Librarian for appropriate accommodation.
- Vocal outbursts, yelling, cursing, and abusive language are prohibited. A patron in violation of this may be asked to leave for the day.
- Any talking must be at a reasonable volume as not to disturb other users in the area.
- Public computer equipment may not be slapped, slammed, abused, or vandalized during play. If computer equipment is found to be damaged, the patron may be required to financially replace it.