

Schuylkill Valley Community Library Computer/Internet Policy

The Schuylkill Valley Community Library follows the Internet Access Policy of the Berks County Public Library System (Appendix A). Please note the following additions.

- I. Disclaimer: The Schuylkill Valley Community Library is not responsible for the content, accuracy, or availability of information on the Internet. Information found on the Internet may be outdated, inaccurate, unreliable, or incomplete. Patrons need to exercise judgment and discretion in the use of information received from the Internet. The Board of Trustees and library employees assume no responsibility for damages of any type arising from the use of any information, software, or data obtained from the Internet. The Board and library employees are not responsible for damage to patron owned equipment including but not limited to laptops, tablets, gaming and other devices using the library's wireless Internet connection. This includes, but is not limited to, damage caused by configuration changes, viruses, spyware or other malicious code received via the library's wireless connection. The library is not responsible for insuring the privacy of any information on a patron's electronic device or data sent or received while using the library's wireless Internet connection.
- II. Terms of Use
 - A. Patrons must have a library card in good standing to use the library's Internet workstations.
 - B. Visitors and non-residents of Berks County may use Internet workstations with a library guest pass if they are here temporarily. Returning users will be instructed to apply for a library card.
 - C. Patrons may bring their own laptop computers or devices to access the internet via the library's wireless connection.
 - a. Library policies, including the Computer/Internet Access Policy, apply to these users. Patrons who fail to comply will be asked to end their session and leave the library.
 - b. Library staff may not provide any hands-on service to patron-owned laptops or other devices.
 - D. Patrons must observe time limits and other procedural guidelines set by this library for using the Internet terminals. Each patron may have a 30-minute block of time that may be renewed if no one else has signed up for time.
 - E. Patrons may not use the library's Internet workstations or the wireless internet to transmit threatening or harassing material or engage in any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment. Loud or disruptive behavior is prohibited.
 - F. Patrons are not permitted to bypass security measures or in any way interfere with library network service. Hacking (purposely violating computer or network security) or the dissemination of viruses, harmful computer code, hoaxes, or deceptions is prohibited. Violations of copyright or software licensing agreements are prohibited. The proper authorities will be notified of any violations.

- G. Patrons may not view, print, distribute, display, send or receive images or graphics of obscene (i.e. Explicit or graphic content, nudity, rape, murder) or pornographic materials or material that violates laws relating to child pornography while using the library workstations or library's wireless Internet connection.
 - H. Absolutely no changes may be made to any computer system. Patrons may not damage, alter, or degrade computer equipment, peripherals, software, or operating configurations. Patrons may not shut down computer workstations.
 - I. Misuse of the computer or Internet access will result in loss of computer privileges.
- III. Printing and Downloading
- A. Downloading is available to flash drives, which are available for purchase.
 - B. Patrons are responsible for everything they print. A cost-recovery fee for printouts will be charged.
- IV. Violations: The library staff reserves the right to terminate any computer session, including wireless Internet sessions at any time. Patrons violating this computer policy may lose their computer privileges. An official warning is given for the first offense; the second offense results in loss of computer privileges for 30 days; and the third offense results in permanent loss of computer privileges.
- V. **Children and the Internet** - The *Children's Internet Protection Act (pub. L. 106.554)* requires that a library receiving federal funds must "have in place a policy of Internet safety for minors that includes the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any computers with Internet access..." In compliance with this provision of federal law, SVCL has installed a filtering mechanism on all computers to protect young users from inappropriate material that is (1) obscene, (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors.

The term "harmful to minors" is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. Section 254(h)(7)) as any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depiction that:

- (1) Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- (2) Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts or lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- (3) Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value to minors.

Parents are reminded that filtering is not foolproof. It diminishes the likelihood that searchers will inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive, but does not completely eliminate that possibility. Filters may also block access to sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful. Parental supervision of young children searching the Internet is strongly advised.

The SVCL will have no liability for damages related to the operation of, or failure of, the filtering software or for its circumvention by users.

- VI. Staff Assistance: Library staff may offer basic instruction as time permits on how to navigate the Internet or how to use common products such as Microsoft Word. However, the time available for instruction may be limited and patrons must be willing to explore and search the Internet on their own.
- VII. Close of Day: The library staff closes down the Internet workstations ten (10) minutes before the library closes.

Stephanie Schreiber
Interim President

Kelly Ruth
Secretary

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Appendix A:

POLICY ON INTERNET ACCESS FOR BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Purpose

The public libraries of Berks County are committed to the promotion of lifelong learning. As part of that commitment, the libraries will provide public access to the diverse and unique resources available via the internet and the World Wide Web.

Children and the Internet

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Parents are reminded that filtering is not foolproof. It diminishes the likelihood that searchers will inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive, but does not completely eliminate that possibility. Filters may also block access to sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful. Parental supervision of young children searching the Internet is strongly advised.

Rights of Adults

Adults (those 17 and older) may request unfiltered access to the Internet for any purpose that does not violate the law or the libraries' policies. The filter on an individual library-owned computer will be disabled in response to such a request. Library staff may not disable the filter on patron-owned laptops or other wireless access devices.

Right to Privacy

All library users have the right to expect that their information-seeking activities in the library are private and confidential. No records are retained of Internet use by any identifiable minor or adult user.

Conditions and Terms of Use

1. Information available via the Internet may be protected by copyrights or trademarks; use of such information must not violate any copyright or trademark law.
2. Because the Internet allows access to ideas, information and commentary from sources around the world, the libraries cannot control its content. Therefore, individual users must accept responsibility for determining the validity and accuracy of information located on the Internet. The libraries are not responsible for any use made of information obtained from Internet resources.
3. The Internet and its available resources may contain material and ideas that are controversial and conflict with the personal beliefs or users. Parents or guardians, not library staff, are responsible for the information selected and/or accessed by their children.
4. Viewing of certain materials in the public library may be considered improper in time, place or manner. Libraries reserve the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or involves user behavior that violates library policy.
5. Patrons may not use public library Internet connections for any commercial or for-profit purpose.
6. A cost-recovery fee for print-outs may be charged.

Limitations

Some libraries do not provide access to subscription services, e-mail, or chat lines; use of such web-based services as "Hotmail" may be permitted at the discretion of the local library.

User Responsibilities

1. Users will sign an Internet use agreement; agreements for those under 18 years of age will require parent or guardian signature.
2. Users must observe time limits and other procedural guidelines set by individual libraries for use of the Internet terminals.
3. Users are responsible for damage to equipment beyond what occurs with normal usage; hardware and software may not be abused, modified, or destroyed.

Staff Assistance

Library staff have received training in Internet searching and are capable of offering basic instruction in how to navigate. However, due to limited staffing and time constraints, patrons are encouraged to take the initiative and explore on their own.

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