



Rapides Parish Library
Alexandria, Louisiana

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES ACCESS AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

I. Mission

“Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. Libraries and librarians protect and promote these rights regardless of the format or technology employed to create and disseminate information.”

(American Library Association statement on Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks)

The mission of the Rapides Parish Library is to promote lifelong learning, enhanced quality of life, and literacy through print, audiovisual and electronic resources. The Library staff ensures that all citizens receive the maximum value from available informational, educational, cultural and recreational resources.

The Library staff provides assistance with the use of library resources, collections, and materials, including a basic introduction to electronic resources.

II. Electronic Resources and Users’ Responsibility

All customers who qualify for a library card are required to have one in order to access the public PCs. Guests, who live outside our service area, and who are here temporarily, are provided with temporary access.

External Storage Devices: Privately owned external storage devices such as iPods MP3 players, flash drives or similar devices without executable files may be used. The Library is not responsible for damage or corruption of the customers’ files or devices.

Use of these resources carries with it a responsibility to evaluate the quality of the information accessed.

Parents, not the library, are responsible for the use of these resources by their children.

Lawful use of electronic resources is the individual’s responsibility.

III. Safety of Minors

The Rapides Parish Library is particularly concerned about the potential effect on minors that some images and communications on the Internet may have. The Library has therefore taken measures designed to restrict minors’ access to materials harmful to them, and prohibits unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors. The Library uses a technology protection measure that blocks and filters some sites on the Internet for the protection of minors. This technology may be disabled for adults, with the understanding



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that the Library's rules of Internet use must be followed. This policy seeks to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act signed into law December 21, 2000.

IV. Prohibited Uses

Customers may not use the workstations in the following ways:

- Illegal, unauthorized, unethical or commercial purposes
- Manipulation of internal hardware and/or software including downloading of any software.
- Transmission or downloading of any material in violation of state or federal laws.
- Sending, receiving, or displaying text or graphics which may reasonably be construed to be obscene or objectionable by local community standards.
- Copying or downloading of any material in violation of copyright law. (Downloading of software and files not in the public domain is a violation of copyright law and is expressly prohibited.)
- Gambling
- Sending, receiving or displaying text or graphics that may reasonably be construed to be hate speech, that is, having the potential to incite violence or prejudicial action against an individual or group.

Online use is a privilege and should be treated as such by all users of the system. Library staff has the right to determine the appropriateness of online use and can at any time require a customer to leave the workstation. The Library reserves the right to prohibit violators of these conditions of use from future access to the Library's computers and online services. In accordance with the Library's general policy, appeals of such loss should be addressed in writing to the Library Director. Perpetrators of malicious damage to the system will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

V. Limitations

- Time: Because of the limited number of workstations, time limits will be imposed when demand is high. When there are customers waiting, the limit will be thirty minutes, after which the user must give way to the next customer awaiting a turn. After two such uses, a third use is contingent on giving priority access to customers coming in for their first use of the day.
- Filters: Filtering software can limit access to potentially objectionable material. Reflecting community standards, filtering software has been installed on all workstations. In addition, Library staff, using selections criteria found in the Collection Development Policy, may select websites to block. However, the installation of filtering software and manual blocking by Library staff are not to be taken as a guarantee that objectionable material cannot be accessed.



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VI. Virus Warning

Although the Library uses a program that checks for viruses, there is no guarantee that files downloaded from the Internet will not contain a virus. The Library is not responsible for any damages that may arise from saving or downloading files to a privately owned external storage device.

VII. Costs

There is no charge for use of the workstations, nor to access the information therein. However, customers shall assume the printing costs.. Flash memory drives are available for purchase at the Library's cost.

VIII. Customer Rights

Electronic information technology is expanding and changing constantly. The Rapides Parish Library Board of Control encourages customers to make use of technology and welcomes comments and suggestions regarding policies governing use. Comments and suggestions may be made to the library staff or administration in person, over the telephone, or in writing.

Customers wishing to object formally to images, texts or other content of the Library's automated resources may fill out the "Citizen's Request for Review of Electronic Resources" form and submit it to a staff member.

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