

SECTION VIII

LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY

Internet Safety and Acceptable Use

The Hoover Public Library provides free and open access to ideas and information through the Internet. Though unregulated and sometimes providing access to information that is illegal, inaccurate and sometimes offensive, the Internet is an essential medium for obtaining and transferring information of all types.

The Library will identify on its web site specific Internet sites that have potential interest for Library users. However, the Library cannot control a user's access to other Internet resources.

The host site for our Internet access is the Jefferson County Library Cooperative (JCLC.) JCLC is the countywide, non-profit organization dedicated to providing Internet access and many other services to 41 public libraries around Jefferson County. The Library filters public and staff computers for child pornography, obscenity and material deemed "harmful to minors" by the Children's Internet Protection Act, but no filtering service is completely effective. Adult patrons have the legal right to ask staff to unblock filtered sites. If a staff member determines that a site violates Library policy, the patron will be asked to leave the site. Patrons under the age of 18 must have their parent/guardian's permission to bypass the filter. Parents/ Guardians must remain with the child while the filter is disabled. The Library does not allow endorse, support or condone the use of its equipment for materials that violate generally accepted community standards. All users of the Hoover Public Library assume responsibility for using computer workstations in an ethical and legal manner in accordance with Library policy and local, state and federal laws.

The Library also provides filtered Internet access through the library's wireless network, the Hoover Hot Spot.

The Library is not responsible for a patron's Internet use. The user, or the parent/legal guardian of a minor, is responsible for his or her own session at all times.

The Library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or that involves user behavior that violates Library policy.

As with all Library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parent/legal guardian, not Library staff, to determine and monitor their minor children's use of the Internet. The parent/legal guardian is responsible for their minor children's use of Library resources and facilities.

Acceptable Use

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this policy are the following:

1. Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law. Transmitting of offensive or harassing messages, offering for sale or use any substance or use of which is prohibited by law, or transmitting or downloading child pornography. Other specific uses that violate Alabama State Law include:
 - ◆ Dissemination or public display of obscene matter is a misdemeanor in Alabama. Code of Alabama 13A-12-200.3.
 - ◆ Dissemination or public display of obscene matter containing visual reproduction of person less than 17 years of age involved in obscene acts is a Class B felony in Alabama. Code of Alabama 13A-12-191.
 - ◆ Violation of the above State ordinances 13A-12-200.3 and 13A-12-191 may subject you to loss of library privileges or criminal prosecution.
 - ◆ Copies obtained from the Internet may be subject to copyright law. Violation of the law may subject you to an action for damages and/or an injunction.
2. Uses in the public viewing area of minors that are deemed obscene. The Supreme Court has established a three-pronged test to determine whether a work is obscene:
 - ◆ Whether the “average person, applying contemporary community standards would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest”
 - ◆ Whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law, and
 - ◆ Whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.
3. Uses in the public viewing area of minors that are deemed “harmful to minors.” CIPA defines “material that is harmful to minors” as any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depiction that:
 - ◆ taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
 - ◆ depicts, describes, or represents in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors;

- ◆ an actual, simulated or perverted sexual act, sexual contact, actual or a lewd exhibition of the genitals;
 - ◆ taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.
4. Uses that cause harm to others or damage to property. Engaging in defamation; uploading virus or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access.
 5. Uses that jeopardize the security of the computer network or other networks on the Internet. Disclosing or sharing the user's library card password with others; impersonating another user; using one's own software programs on the Library's computers unless otherwise designated; altering the Library's computer settings; connecting equipment (i.e. laptops, PCs, wireless access points) to the wired network; damaging or modifying computer equipment or software.
 6. Uses that compromise the safety and security of minors when using e-mail and other forms of direct electronic communications. Minors may not disseminate private information about themselves or others. This includes giving out credit card and Social Security numbers and arranging without the permission of a parent/legal guardian any face-to-face meetings with others they have "met" on the computer network or Internet.

Internet Safety

All users are advised that access to the electronic network may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for children. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the computer network and Internet. A parent/legal guardian must take responsibility for their children's use of the computer network and Internet.

Minors using the computer network or Internet should not reveal personal information. They should never give out a home address or telephone number, real last name, or any other information to people who might try to locate them. Children should not arrange face-to-face meetings with people they have "met" on the Internet. Regardless of age, users should never agree to meet people they have communicated with on the Internet in a secluded place or private setting.

It is a violation of this Policy to use the public library computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, child pornography, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited. It is also a violation to use the Internet in a public viewing area of minors to access sites that are obscene or "harmful to minors," as defined by CIPA.

Personally identifiable information concerning users should not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without the permission of a parent/legal guardian of a minor child. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet.

While the Library endeavors to provide access to information of the highest quality, the Library specifically disclaims any warrant as to the information's accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness or fitness for a particular purpose.

The Library will have no liability for direct, indirect or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed through the Library's Internet service. The Library, having installed filtering technology, will have no liability for damages related to the operation, failure, or user circumvention of the filter.

Since software and information downloaded from any sources, including the Internet, may contain computer viruses, users are advised to utilize virus-checking software on their home computers. The Library is not responsible for damage to disks or computers or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the Library's computers.

Failure to Comply

Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures may result in the forfeiture of the user's right to access Library computers or ultimately to the Library for a specified amount of time. First offense will result in an official warning. Second offense will result in complete loss of computer privileges at the Library for six months. Any further offenses result will result in an immediate one-year loss of computer privileges. Patrons may appeal penalties to the Library Board whose decision is final.

Public Computers: Guidelines for Use

The Hoover Public Library offers computers to access the Internet, the Library catalog, online databases, educational games and Microsoft Office products. The Library recognizes that technology is vital to its patrons for educational, recreational and business purposes. The Library has established the following guidelines to ensure the equitable and fair use of its computers:

1. All patrons must abide by the Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy.
2. Information may be saved to formatted diskettes, CD Roms and Flash Drives.
3. The Library is not responsible for damage to any personal storage device resulting from the information downloaded, computer malfunction or viral infection. Patrons are prohibited from saving files to the computer's hard drive. Files are automatically erased from the computer when the user logs out.
4. Information may be printed through the library's EZ Print System. Patrons must purchase an EZ Print card in order to use the system.

5. The Library has installed time limits on public computers to ensure equitable use. Patrons must use their library card to access computers. Patrons who can not obtain a library card may request a PC card. Patrons may not use a second card in order to prolong their allotted time on the computers.
6. Staff will provide assistance to patrons as time and knowledge permits.
7. Patrons providing their own paper are still responsible for purchasing copies through the EZ Print System. Patrons must ask for assistance when using their own paper.
8. The Adaptive Technology PC is available for visually impaired patrons.
9. Internet access is available in the Technology Hub for sending and receiving documents. Internet surfing is prohibited in the Hub.
10. One PC in the Technology Hub is set aside for patrons to load their own software. Patrons are responsible for the installation and use of all software; staff assistance is limited to the functioning of the PC.
11. Computers in the Technology Hub will be logged off if unattended for over 10 minutes.
12. The Library is not responsible for lost work in the Technology Hub.
13. Patrons may not alter any of the Library's computer equipment.
14. Patrons may not abuse Library computers and equipment.
15. The Hoover Public Library Training Center is available for the use of Library-sponsored programs only.
16. Scanners are available for patron use.

Hoover Hot Spot: Guidelines for Use

Free, filtered wireless Internet access is available at the Hoover Public Library. Patrons can use their personal laptops or other wireless devices to access the wireless network. Laptops and wireless network cards are available for checkout to patrons with a valid JCLC library card and a government-issued photo I.D. Library laptops are for in-library use only.

1. Wireless devices must be 802.11b or 802.11g compliant. Patrons must check with the manufacturer of their wireless device to determine compatibility.
2. The Hoover Hot Spot is a filtered network in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). This filter applies to library owned as well as patron owned wireless devices.
3. By choosing this free service, patrons agree to abide by the Library's Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy. This policy states the limitations of the Library's Internet access and patron responsibilities for using that access.

4. The Hoover Hot Spot is not a secure network. Users should be aware that information sent to and from a wireless device with a wireless device and the appropriate software may be captured and viewed by other users.
5. Use of the Hoover Hot Spot is at the patron's own risk. The Library assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment or for laptop computer or other wireless device configurations, security or data files resulting from connection to the Library's wireless network.
6. Library staff will provide limited technical assistance, but can not guarantee that users can make a successful connection to the wireless network.
7. The Library wireless network is accessible throughout the 80,000 square foot building. However, users may encounter "dead" spots where wireless reception is limited.
8. Patrons who check out a library laptop or wireless network card must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Patron's account must be in good standing and current (i.e. no fines over \$5 and not expired).
 - b. Patrons must leave their driver's license or other government-issued photo ID with the Technology Hub Attendant for the duration of the laptop loan period.
 - c. Patrons under 16 who do not have a driver's license must have their parent's permission to checkout a laptop. Parent must provide a library card AND driver's license or other government-issued photo ID.
 - d. Patrons may check out only one laptop or wireless access card at one time.