

LIBRARY POLICY MANUAL

ADM-10 Internet, Wi-Fi, and Computer Use Date Issued: 6.20.01
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Policy

Rules of Conduct Regarding Internet, Wi-Fi, and Computer Use

Computer users are bound by local, Commonwealth, and Federal laws relating to copyright, security, obscenity, materials harmful to juveniles, and other laws regarding electronic media.

Commonwealth law prohibits the use of computers to: communicate threats (*Code of Virginia* Section 18.2-60); produce, publish, sell, or possess obscene items (*Code of Virginia* Section 18.2-274, 18.2-374.1); or, use of communication systems to facilitate certain offenses involving children (*Code of Virginia* 18.2-374.3).

Federal law requires the library to enforce a policy that protects against all access to obscenity and child pornography and that protects against access by minors to materials harmful to them and to disable technology protection measures concerning the use by an adult conducting bona fide research or other lawful purposes: 47 *United States Code* Sections 254 (h) (6) (B) (1) and (h) (6) (D).

Patrons are liable for prosecution if they violate Federal, State, or local laws. Library staff may assist in the apprehension and prosecution of people suspected of breaking these laws on library property. Suspected unlawful activities are reported to the Falls Church Police Department.

All library computers and the Wi-Fi network are filtered, which is required by the *Code of Virginia*. Removal of filtering on library equipment may be requested by the patron for use in valid research, per the *Code of Virginia*. Filtering cannot be removed from the Wi-Fi network. If a blocked site must be accessed for research while using the Wi-Fi network, the patron must use the library's computers so the filtering can be disabled.

I. Internet access and computer use rules:

1. Computers are available for public use on a first come, first served basis. Electronic queues are formed using a reservation and print management system if lines develop.
2. Patrons must use their valid Mary Riley Styles Public Library card or a guest card issued by a library staff member to gain access to a public computer. Use of another person's library card is not permitted. Visitors and/or patrons, who for whatever reason

are not eligible for a library card, may request the use of a guest card.

3. The library uses patron authentication, reservation, and print management software to promote fair and equitable public access to computer-based resources. Patrons are limited to 3 logins per day unless there are computers available, in which case additional logins are permitted until all computers are in use and a queue forms for computer use.

4. The library reserves the right to terminate a computer session should computer use result in disruption of library service or the machine needs to be serviced by City IT staff.

5. Patrons may use the library's Internet connection to access accounts obtained through commercial vendors as long as they do not require any alteration of the library's computer resources or files.

6. Patrons should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium, and that third-parties may be able to obtain information regarding patrons' activities. The library has neither a secure server nor encryption software to safeguard transmission of sensitive personal or financial information. However, the library does not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public **except** as required by law.

7. Computer users shall hold harmless the Mary Riley Styles Public Library for any liability or damage claim arising from use or misuse of Internet access, library computers, or any storage devices used with library equipment.

8. Earphones must be used with all programs with sound. Patrons must supply their own headphones with the exception of those using computers in the Youth Services room. Headphones are provided there.

9. No more than two patrons may use a computer workstation at one time in order to limit noise and crowding.

10. Patrons are charged for printing. All print jobs should be sent to the printers before the library closes or before their session ends. Warnings are provided on the computer screen at 10 minutes and 2 minutes before the session ends. Print jobs left in the print queue are automatically deleted after two (2) hours. All unclaimed prints are discarded at the end of each day. Patrons may not load or use their own paper, labels, envelopes, transparencies, or other materials in the public printers.

11. Computers in the Youth Services room are reserved for use by children, teens, and caregivers.

12. The following activities are also **strictly prohibited**:

- Loading personal software on library computers or downloading files to the hard drive of computer workstations or executing files or scripts on any library device;
- Propagating computer malware deliberately;

- Attempting to intentionally alter or damage computer equipment, software, or files belonging to the library, other users, or other networks.

II. Wireless (Wi-Fi) network use rules:

14. Individuals must comply with all state and federal laws and the MRSPL policies and procedures while using the wireless network.

15. **The library's wireless network is not secure.** Information sent from or to a user's laptop can be captured by anyone with a wireless device and the appropriate software, within three hundred feet. Cautious and informed wireless users should not transmit personal information and should take appropriate precautions when using this service.

16. Library staff can provide general information and handouts for connecting a user's device to the wireless network, but cannot troubleshoot problems or assist in making changes to the wireless device or assist in making changes to device settings and/or hardware configuration on a user's device. Staff may not handle personal electronic devices. **No guarantee can be provided that a user is able to make a wireless connection.**

17. Virus and security protection is the user's responsibility. All wireless users are advised to have up-to-date virus protection on their computers or wireless devices.

18. The library assumes no responsibility for damage, theft, or loss of any kind to a user's equipment, software, data files or other personal property brought into or used at the library.

19. Printing is not available over the library's wireless network. If users need to print, they can save the file to a disk or email files to their account, then login to a wired library workstation and send jobs to the public printer.

20. Earphones must be used with all programs with sound. Patrons must supply their own headphones.

The library reserves the right to set rules as needed to promote equitable computer and wireless network use and revise these rules as needed.

Violation of these library Internet, wireless network, and computer use rules will result in a warning. If the violation continues, loss of computer access and loss of library privileges will result. These sanctions may be imposed by the Library Director in proportion to the significance of the violation. Prosecution for violations of the law also may occur.

Code of Virginia

§ [42.1-36.1](#). Power and duty of library boards and certain governing bodies regarding acceptable Internet use policies.

A. On or before December 1, 1999, and biennially thereafter, (i) every library board established pursuant to § [42.1-35](#) or (ii) the governing body of any county, city, or town that, pursuant to § [42.1-36](#), has not established a library board pursuant to § [42.1-35](#), shall file with the Librarian of Virginia an acceptable use policy for the Internet. At a minimum, the policy shall contain provisions that (i) are designed to prohibit use by library employees and patrons of the library's computer equipment and communications services for sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading illegal material via the Internet, (ii) seek to prevent access by library patrons under the age of 18 to material that is harmful to juveniles, and (iii) establish appropriate measures to be taken against persons who violate the policy. For libraries established under § [42.1-33](#), the policy shall also require the selection, installation and activation of, on those computers that are accessible to the public and have Internet access, a technology protection measure to filter or block Internet access through such computers to child pornography as defined in § [18.2-374.1:1](#), obscenity as defined in § [18.2-372](#), and, with respect to minors, materials deemed harmful to juveniles as defined in § [18.2-390](#). Such policy shall provide that a person authorized by the library board shall disable or otherwise bypass the technology protection measure required by this section at the request of a patron to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

The library board or the governing body may include such other terms, conditions, and requirements in the library's policy as it deems appropriate, such as requiring written parental authorization for Internet use by juveniles or differentiating acceptable uses between elementary, middle, and high school students.

B. The library board or the governing body shall take such steps as it deems appropriate to implement and enforce the library's policy which may include, but are not limited to, (i) the use of software programs designed to block access by (a) library employees and patrons to illegal material or (b) library patrons under the age of 18 to material that is harmful to juveniles or (c) both; (ii) charging library employees to casually monitor patrons' Internet use; or (iii) installing privacy screens on computers that access the Internet. For libraries established under § [42.1-33](#), the library board or governing body shall direct such libraries to select and install on those computers that are accessible to the public and have Internet access a technology protection measure as required by the policy established pursuant to subsection A. No state funding shall be withheld and no other adverse action taken against a library by the Librarian of Virginia or any other official of state government when the technology protection measure fails, provided that such library promptly has taken reasonable steps to rectify and prevent such failures in the future.

C. On or before December 1, 2000, and biennially thereafter, the Librarian of Virginia shall submit a report to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education, the House Committee on Science and Technology, and the Senate Committee on Education and Health which summarizes the acceptable use policies filed with the Librarian pursuant to this section and the status thereof. (1999, c. 64; 2006, c. 474; 2007, cc. 470, 583.)