Internet Access Policy

The Sioux Center Public Library provides public access to the internet to fulfill its mission to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen our communities by bringing diverse people, information, and ideas together. The internet is a powerful reference tool, offering educational and other valuable information for all ages. Computers and internet access have become an integral part of how many library patrons and community members access, use, and share information every day. Access to the computers and the internet are considered essential library services and in accordance with the ALA's "Library Bill of Rights" shall be made available to people regardless of origin, age, background, or views.

This internet use policy has been established to provide fair and equitable access to the internet for all library users, to state the rights and responsibility of the library users, and to establish the rules governing computer and internet usage.

This policy governs both the use of library owned equipment (such as public access computers) and the use of patron owned equipment (such as phones, tablets, or laptops) on the library's public wifi. Use of the library's hardware, software, Internet service, wireless network, and electronic information resources is entirely at the risk of the user.

I. Internet Access and User Responsibility

A. Access to Library Computers & Wifi

Library computers: Library patrons must present a valid Sioux Center Public Library card, photo ID or verify phone or address to use the public access computers. A projected fine or a fine balance over $5.00 is evidence of an invalid card.

Cards are valid only for the patron to whom they have been issued. The only exception to this rule is if parents/legal guardians (not older siblings or other relatives) are physically present and give permission to a minor to use the parent/legal guardian's library card.

Guest passes are available for people who do not have a card, are temporarily in the area, and need a computer. They MUST fill out their name and phone number on the guest slip and show a photo I.D.

Patrons may use a computer and stay on for as long as desired unless someone else is waiting. If patrons are waiting, a 1-hour time limit will be imposed. If it is extremely busy, then a 30-minute time limit may be imposed by the librarian on duty.

Information can be printed from public access computers at a charge of $.15 per black/white side and $.50 per color per side. Color copies can be picked up at the circulation desk. Black and white copies are printed to the public printer.

Public Wifi: All library users have access to the public wifi. No library card is required. The wireless network is not encrypted. Users should be aware that any information sent or received could potentially be intercepted by another wireless user. The library assumes no responsibility for the safety of your device or data files.

B. Choosing and Evaluating Resources

As with all library materials, individuals must accept responsibility for evaluating the content of resources they view, read, or listen to.

C. Minors

Material is available on the internet that parents may feel is inappropriate for their children. Parents/guardians, NOT the library or its staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected or accessed by their children. The library respects the rights of parents to determine what is appropriate for their children to read, hear, or view, but the library cannot enforce those rules, which may be different for each family in our community. The library does not act *in loco parentis*. It cannot substitute its judgment for that of parents or enforce parent's decisions about their children's internet use.

Minors are encouraged not to give others private information about one's self or others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers; nor to arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone one has "met" on the computer network or Internet without a parent's permission.

D. Filters

A content filter is installed to meet the guidelines of the federal "Child Internet Protection Act." Though the library has a filter to prevent patrons from seeing pornographic websites, the board recognizes it is far from perfect and the library cannot be held responsible for Internet content. The Internet is a global entity with a highly diverse user population and library patrons use it at their own risk.

Patrons viewing pornography in an area visible to children will be asked to leave and may lose their Internet access privileges if it continues.[1] Disciplinary action is left up to the discretion of the director and staff.

E. Privacy & Security

The Internet is not a secure, private environment. Patrons handling financial transactions or other activities that require confidentiality do so at their own risk – the library is not responsible for incidents surrounding identity theft and other issues with personal information. In general, electronic communication is not absolutely secure and is subject to outside intervention.

Internet use is also subject to monitoring by network administrators in the usual performance of their duties. It is the library's practice not to maintain a history of our patron's computer use. The library will not retrieve any information, including web sites visited, passwords or credit card numbers, or any other information a patron has entered. The library assumes no responsibility for files saved to the hard drive of the computer or to flash drives.

F. Staff Assistance

Library staff cannot provide in-depth training concerning Internet access, computer jargon, or computer use, without an appointment or outside of a class. Staff may offer minimum searching suggestions and can answer some questions as time permits if it does not interfere with their other duties. The library cannot guarantee whether a particular VPN will work or not and cannot help troubleshoot it. Internet services are provided as-is, where-is.

II. Inappropriate Use of the Internet

A. Copyright Violations

The downloading or distribution of unauthorized copies of copyrighted materials, including, but not limited to motion pictures, images, files, or songs constitutes copyright infringement under the Copyright Act, Title 17 United States Code Section 106(3). This conduct may also violate the laws of other countries, international law, and/or treaty obligations. (Amendment April 14, 2011) Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, users should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.

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[1] Iowa Code 728.2 – Dissemination and exhibition of obscene materials to minors: Any person eighteen years of age or older, other than the parent or guardian of the minor, who knowingly disseminates or exhibits obscene material to a minor, including the exhibition of obscene material so that it can be observed by a minor on or off the premises where it is displayed, is guilty of a public offense and shall upon conviction be guilty as follows: 1. For a first offense, a serious misdemeanor. 2. For a second offense, an aggravated misdemeanor with a mandatory minimum term of confinement of one year. No portion of the mandatory minimum term of confinement imposed by this subsection shall be deferred or suspended. 3. For a third or subsequent offense, a class "D" felony with a mandatory minimum term of confinement of three years. No portion of the mandatory minimum term of confinement imposed by this subsection shall be deferred or suspended.

Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the Sioux Center Public Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

B. Behavior which Violates Local, State, Federal Laws or Encourages Others to Violate Said Laws.

Iowa law (Code of Iowa, Section 716A) prohibits damaging or destroying a computer or computer program, software, or system. Transmitting of offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading pornographic material or materials that encourage others to violate the law; downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials are prohibited. Unauthorized access is also prohibited. Persons attempting such action can be prosecuted.

C. Uses that Cause Harm to Others or Damage to Their Property.

Engaging in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); uploading a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb," ransomware, or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems. Compromising the safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications.

D. Uses that Jeopardize the Security of Access of the Computer Network or Other Networks on the Internet.

Disclosing or sharing the user's password with others; impersonating another user; using one's own software programs on the library's computers; altering the library's computer settings; damaging or modifying computer equipment or software; or downloading such massive amounts of data that you crash the network or otherwise breach the network integrity or security.

E. Behavior which Violates the Library's Patron Conduct Policy.

Uses that intrude upon the rights of others. Including, but not limited to invading the privacy of others, harassing other users or library staff, or disrupting library patrons.

III. Enforcement of this Policy

The library reserves the right to terminate the session, evict the patron, or suspend or terminate the library privileges of any one who engages in unacceptable use or whose computer or device use disrupts library service, or violates library policies or procedures. Disciplinary action will be determined by the director and staff. Offenses are to be recorded as an alert on a patron's card so that staff are aware. Serious and repeat offenders can be denied access to the library computers permanently or face legal action.

Approved by Library Board of Trustees 2/2013; Reapproved 5/2014; Reapproved 5/2015; Revised & Reapproved 10/2015; Revised & Reapproved 06/2016; Reapproved 5/2017; Amended and Reapproved 2/14/2018; Amended and Reapproved 5/2019; Amended and Reapproved 5/2020; Reapproved 5/2021; Amended and Reapproved 3/2022; Amended and Reapproved 5/2022; Reapproved 5/2023; Reapproved 5/2024; Reapproved 5/2025; Reapproved 5/2026; Revised & Reapproved 11/2026