Public Use of Computers Policy - OLD

December 3, 2008

Purpose

The Manitowoc Public Library provides computers and access to the Internet for use by the public. The Library installs on these computers a collection of commonly-used software suitable for patrons of varied ages and levels of skill in computer use. In addition to computer hardware and software, the Library also provides access to the Internet by patrons who want to use their own equipment. The purpose of this policy is to define basic levels of service, methods of access, and conditions of use of the Library's public computer services. Please see also the policy entitled "Internet Services."

Selection of Hardware and Software

Computers for public use are provided as funding and space allows and will reflect as much as possible changes in technology. Computers for public use are so designated and are made available in the Reference Area on the 1st floor and upstairs in Youth Services. Public access to non-designated computers (i.e., those placed in the Library for staff use) shall not be available.

Access to the Library's connection to the Internet is provided as funding allows and will reflect as much as possible changes in technology.

Software is selected by the Library's staff to address differing age, interest, and literacy levels. Selections are made in accordance with the Library's collection development policies.

Computers devoted to specific software (e.g. computer catalog, BadgerLink, ProQuest, WISCAT, etc.) are made available to the public for those purposes only. The computer associated with the microform reader/printer is designated for microform use only.

Access to the Internet and Public Computers

Public use computers and access to the Internet are provided for patrons to use in any legitimate recreational or informational manner as outlined in the Library's Acceptable Use Policy. Please see the Library's policy entitled "Internet Services." The relative value of legitimate use by patrons of the Library's computer resources will not be debated or determined by the Library or its staff. Instead, time limits will be used to allocate resources.

The Manitowoc Public Library (MPL) and the Lester Pubic Library (LPL) share a computer management module for public use computers. This module provides time limit, reservations, and print management of public use computers in the Manitowoc

Public Library with the exception of the educational game computers in the Youth Department and computers designated for specialized use.

- Computers are designated for hourly use, short-term use, specialized use, staff use, or children's educational game use at the Director's discretion.
- A maximum of two (2) hours of use is allowed per person per day. This total usage may accrue at one or more hourly and/or short-term use computers in MPL and/or LPL.
- Persons using the public use computers must be in good standing with the Library. In other words, their fees and fines are below the $10.00 threshold for delinquency, and they are in compliance with the Library's acceptable use statement and other public behavior policies.
- Visitors to the area may also use the public use computers provided they show current identification and agree to comply with the Library's acceptable use statement and other public behavior policies. See additional requirements under User Identification, below.
- Of the two hour maximum use, one (1) hour may be reserved ahead of time each day. Time reservations may be made up to one week in advance and may be made over the phone, via email, or in person. Cancellations may also be made over the phone, via email, or in person. When and if technology and funding permit, remote reservations over the Internet will also be accepted.
- Reservations on public use computers will be held for five (5) minutes past the scheduled beginning time, after which the computer will be available for other patrons to use. The Youth Department will hold reservations for educational game computers for 5 minutes past the scheduled beginning time.
- One-half (1/2) hour of use per day is permitted on Youth's educational game computers.
- Staff at the Reference and Youth Desks may extend the daily maximum limit at their discretion, provided there an adequate number of computers open for others to use.
- Public use computers generally may be used any time the library is open up to fifteen minutes before closing. Youth game computers may not be used during Youth programs (story times, etc.) except through special arrangements with the Youth Department staff. Department heads may use their discretion to limit use at other times due to such circumstances as extremely heavy traffic in the building.

User Identification

Users of the hourly and short-term use computers are expected to comply with the daily use limits of two
(2) hours. This limit applies to each patron, not to each borrower's card. In order to use the public use computers, patrons must have a library borrower's card in their own name that is in good standing from the Manitowoc Public Library or any of the other five libraries in the Manitowoc-Calumet Library System (MCLS). It is preferred that the computer user utilizes his or her own borrower's card. However, it is acceptable if the

computer user has a borrower's card in good standing but chooses to use another person's borrower's card. When requested by Library staff, patrons must produce the borrower's card they are using, and if it is not their own, must otherwise identify themselves to staff. Patrons who cannot produce their borrower's cards will be asked to conclude their computer use session for the day. Again, whether a patron is using his or her own borrower's card or has permission to use another person's borrower's card, the two (2) hour time limit applies to the patron, not to each borrower's card.

Out-of-town visitors may be logged onto the public use computers by staff after presenting identification, such as a valid driver's license, valid state ID, student picture ID, passport, or a current borrower's card issued by a Wisconsin library. Semi-resident visitors (those who will be in the MCLS area for more than two months) must obtain a local borrower's card in order to use the computers.

Other Use Limitations

Computers, related software, and Internet access are provided with the understanding that they are primarily self-service and that most learning will occur through self-instruction instead of librarian intervention. Staff at the Reference and Youth Desks will provide assistance in turning on the Library's equipment, booting up software, copying to disk, and printing. Patrons who plan to use their own equipment are responsible for troubleshooting it themselves.

Computers and software are non-circulating and must be used in the department where housed; i.e., a patron may not use Youth software on a Reference computer or vice versa.

Because of concerns about viruses, etc., patrons may not supply their own software or use any storage devices that contain executable (exe) files.

Patron must supply their own disks when copying. The Library will not provide data storage on hard disk. Disks are available for purchase from the Friends of the Library and are sold at the Circulation Desk.

Patrons may copy shareware and copyright-free software to their own disks. The Library is not responsible for violations of copyright law committed by patrons using the Library's computers. Copyright protection of licensed software will be maintained, with abusers subject to loss of computer privileges and/or prosecution. Additionally, the library will not be held responsible should copied software result in damage to patrons' computers.

Printouts will be charged at the same rate per page as photocopies. The charges will be waived in the event of printer malfunction only.

Lost or Damaged Hardware or Software

Users are responsible for proper use of hardware and software during their scheduled time blocks. Patrons will be held responsible should they, their data files, their storage devices, or their other equipment damage the Library's computers in any way. In the event that negligent use or deliberate abuse leads to damage of hardware and/or software, scheduled users will be assessed repair and/or replacement costs. The resulting fee will be determined by the extent of the damage, and may go as high as repair and/or replacement costs plus a service charge. Extensive damage may result in revocation of library privileges, particularly public computer use privileges.

The Library will not be held responsible should there be damage to patron's equipment or loss of patron's data due to equipment malfunction or any other reason.

User Privacy and Crowd Control

Patrons will be asked to afford privacy to others who are using computers. Generally, no more than two patrons may be seated at each computer at a time. However, a parent may choose to supervise several children using a computer at one time. Depending on conditions at the time, staff may choose to limit use to only one person per computer.

Failure to comply may result in loss of computer time and/or revocation of other Library privileges.