

Acceptable Use of Internet and Public Computers Policy

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Library Mission: The mission of Manitowoc Public Library (the Library) is to promote a culture of reading and to provide access to information. Through services, we strive to foster an environment that meets the educational, recreational, and cultural needs of the community.

Purpose: This policy provides a framework for appropriate use of the Library's public computers stations and internet services, which offer patrons access to digital tools and educational, recreational, and cultural information outside of the Library's collections.

General Principles

The Library provides free public access to computer stations with the Internet as an informational, educational, and recreational resource for library customers of all ages. The Library expects that all use of public internet computers and the public Wi-Fi network will be responsible and ethical, consistent with the purpose for which these resources are provided. Public computer stations are also equipped with a collection of commonly used software/programs for patrons of varied ages and levels of skill in computer use.

Content and Privacy

Patrons accept sole responsibility for viewing and vetting online content accessible from the Library's public internet computers and public Wi-Fi network. Parents and guardians of minor children are solely responsible for monitoring and guiding their child's internet use on public internet computers and the public Wi-Fi network regardless of whether the parents or guardians are present (see Lost/Unattended Child policy).

The Library reserves the right to monitor use of public internet computers and the public Wi-Fi network. Staff may ask users to discontinue using library equipment or Wi-Fi services if they observe any activity that qualifies as misuse (see below).

Public Computers with Internet

Public internet computers are available for library patrons of all ages and are designed for short-term use. Computers, related software/programs, and internet access are provided with the understanding that they are primarily self-service; library staff will provide minimal assistance in their use. Public internet computers in the Youth Services Department are intended for minor children and their accompanying caregivers. Patrons may access public internet computers with a valid library card OR a guest pass issued by staff. Public internet computer users must abide by time limits for computer use dictated either by computer management software OR by staff direction. Electronic storage devices must be provided by the patron or purchased from the Library, as computer management software prevents retention of any passwords, files, or documents. Patrons also assume the cost of any printouts.

Wi-Fi Internet

Public Wi-Fi internet access is available at the Library. Patrons with personal electronic devices with wireless internet capabilities may be able to access a wireless connection from inside or around the perimeter of the building.

- The Library cannot guarantee internet speed or quality of the connection.
- Virus, security, and privacy protection are not provided by the Library and are the responsibility of the patron.
- The Library disclaims all responsibility for damage, theft, or loss of personal equipment, software, data, files, or other personal property used in or around the Library facility or connected to the public Wi-Fi internet network.

Damage and Misuse

Patrons are responsible for the proper use of hardware and software while using the public internet computer stations or Wi-Fi network and will be held responsible should they, their data files, their storage devices, or other equipment damage the Library's computers in any way. The Library explicitly disclaims all responsibility for any damage to a patron's equipment or loss of their data due to equipment malfunction or any other reason.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in loss of public internet computer and Wi-Fi network privileges and/or loss of any and all other library privileges. Misuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Sending, receiving, or displaying text or graphics that violate federal, state, or local laws or regulations or which may reasonably be construed by library staff as offensive to the public.
- Altering, damaging, or tampering with computer equipment, software, or settings.
- Violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements.
- Installing or downloading software.
- Circumventing filtering software or other security measures in place.
- Misrepresenting oneself as another user.
- Overusing Wi-Fi network bandwidth to the detriment of overall network performance.
- Refusing or ignoring staff direction about computer use.