

Public PC, Internet, Wireless Use Policy



Policy Statement 1: As part of its mission “to welcome and support all people in their enjoyment of reading and pursuit of learning and information,” the Fort Worth Library provides computers and networks which allow the public to access the Internet and other electronic resources and to create personal electronic documents and files.

Regulations:

- 1.1 1.1 Any Library customer may use the Library’s public PCs and wireless network. A valid borrower’s card, computer card or guest pass is required.
- 1.2 All public PCs have the same suite of software applications, online catalog, and full Internet access.
- 1.3 The Library does not provide e-mail accounts. However, customers may access web-based e-mail accounts through the Library’s Internet and wireless network connections.
- 1.4 Customers may download media files onto their supported personal storage devices and use streaming audio and video.
- 1.5 Customer may not publicly play, perform, or listen to music or CDs or view any video device, including VHS tapes, DVDs, or other similar device on Library PCs.
- 1.6 PCs are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The Library employs an automated PC reservation system to manage public computer usage. A valid Fort Worth Library borrower’s card, computer card or guest pass is required to reserve public PCs.
- 1.7 Computer sessions last one hour. Computer card and borrower card holders may have unlimited one-hour sessions as long as no one is waiting for a computer.
- 1.8 Libraries may designate certain computers as express stations and/or library catalog stations, depending on available resources and demand. Any other programs or functions on those PCs will not be removed or disabled.
- 1.9 A branch or Central Library unit may reserve a specific computer to access CD-ROMs or online databases that are exclusive to that unit.
- 1.10 The Library designates some computers for use by special populations of users, such as children or people with disabilities. Computers in children’s areas have software programs especially suited to children. Only children ages 14 and under, or adults who are working with a child or staff of the Fort Worth Library, may use the computers in the Central Youth Center and the computers in children’s areas of branch libraries. In these areas, children have priority over all other users. Computers in Our Place, Central’s Teen area, are for teen’s use.
- 1.11 Libraries may limit the number of people who share the use of a Library computer at the same time.
- 1.12 Users may print Internet pages and documents created on Library computers. Users agree to pay \$0.15 cents per page for black and white pages, and \$0.50 per page for color pages printed. Printing is not currently available on the wireless network.
- 1.13 Users may not copy, download, or save personal files or software to the Library’s computers’ hard drives.
- 1.14 Customers may use their own USB memory sticks and writable CDs in Library PCs. The Library employs virus scanning software and updates it regularly. This software will prevent the Library’s PCs from opening files that contain viruses.
- 1.15 The Library is not liable for damages to personal data, disks, or equipment resulting from information copied from the Library’s computers or the Internet.
- 1.16 The Library respects the confidentiality of those using its services and collection, and endeavors to protect the



privacy of customers using Library computers:

- 1.16a Users are not required to provide identification to use the Library's PCs.
- 1.16b To maintain customer confidentiality, reservation and print queue records are purged every night.
- 1.16c All public PCs are configured to clean caches, cookies, temporary Internet files, Internet history files (URLs visited), and .DAT files upon start-up. The Library encourages customers to activate this function at the end of their session by rebooting the computer.
- 1.16d The Library releases records related to an individual's PC use only as required by law. See the Library's Customer Privacy and Confidentiality Policy for complete details.
- 1.16e Users are cautioned about the risks of displaying personal information on library PCs, and of the risks of providing personal information over the Internet or the library's wireless network. Parents should caution their children about sharing personal facts on the Internet.

1.17 Customers may not attempt to alter, damage, or monopolize Library computer hardware, software, or networks. Customers may not:

- 1.17a Attempt to modify, reconfigure, remove, or damage computer equipment, peripherals, software configurations, software programs, files or networks belonging to the Fort Worth Library, other users, or external networks.
- 1.17b Attempt to add hardware, software (including Internet downloads), plug-ins, or applications to any FWPL computer or Library network or City of Fort Worth network, except that customers may connect their personal laptops or other wireless-enabled devices to the Library's public wireless network. The Library blocks access to sites with automatic downloads that would change the basic configuration of the computer or browser.
- 1.17c Attempt to introduce viruses, worms, or other malicious programs into Library computers or over the Library's networks.
- 1.17d Attempt to crash the system or cause degradation of system performance.
- 1.17e Impede other customers' work through the monopolization or unreasonable consumption of system resources.

1.18 The Library's computers and networks may not be used for any purpose that violates U.S., state, or local laws. Customers may not use Library computers or networks, including the wireless network, to

- 1.18a "Hack" or otherwise attempt the unauthorized entry to Fort Worth Library's, the City of Fort Worth's, or other external networks.
- 1.18b Attempt to interfere with or disrupt network users, services, or equipment.
- 1.18c Attempt to evade security measures on any system.
- 1.18d Invade the privacy of others.
- 1.18e Access or use passwords, files, financial records or accounts, or other personal data belonging to others without their authorization.
- 1.18f Develop or intentionally disseminate computer viruses or other harmful programs.
- 1.18g Violate copyright laws (Title 17, U. S. Code) by copying, downloading, or distributing copyright-protected files, except as permitted by the principles of "fair use," without the explicit permission of the copyright holder.
- 1.18h Violate software license agreements.
- 1.18i Send harassing, threatening, or libelous messages or material.
- 1.18j Access, view, display, print, transmit, or distribute sites or material in violation of Texas laws regarding



obscenity, child pornography, and materials harmful to minors as specified in Texas Penal Code §§ 43.22, 43.23, §43.24, or §42.26. Texas Penal Code §§ 43.22, 43.23, 43.24, and 43.026 provide in pertinent part

Texas Penal Code §43.22: A person commits an offense if he intentionally or knowingly displays or distributes an obscene photograph, drawing, or similar visual representation or other obscene material and is reckless about whether a person is present who will be offended or alarmed by the display or distribution.

- Texas Penal Code §43.23: A person commits an offense if, knowing its content and character, he wholesale promotes or possesses with intent to wholesale promote any obscene material or obscene device.
- Texas Penal Code §43.24: A person commits an offense if, knowing that the material is harmful [to minors] he displays harmful material and is reckless about whether a minor is present who will be offended or alarmed by the display.
- Texas Penal Code §43.26: A person commits an offense if the person knowingly or intentionally possesses visual material that visually depicts a child younger than 18 years of age at the time the image of the child was made who is engaging in sexual conduct.

1.19 Customers are expected to use Library computers and networks in a responsible and courteous manner. Computer and network users should refrain from:

- 1.19a Using profanity or other language that may be offensive to another user.
- 1.19b Harassing other Library customers or staff.
- 1.19c Invading other users' privacy or commenting upon what others are viewing.
- 1.19d Intentionally displaying or drawing customers' attention to images, sounds, or messages in a way that would create a disturbing, intimidating, or hostile environment for Library customers and staff who might find them objectionable or offensive.
- 1.19e Distributing unsolicited advertising ("spamming").
- 1.20 Internet access on all FWL public computers, including laptops, is filtered. The Library's WiFi network is also filtered.
- 1.20a Library Internet access, including the WiFi network, is filtered for images and videos containing adult content that would generally be considered obscene or pornographic in nature.
- 1.20b Web sites related to health, sexuality, art, fashion, etc. should not be blocked.
- 1.20c Web sites containing other potentially objectionable or offensive material should not be blocked.
- 1.20d No Internet filter is 100% accurate. It is possible that sites that should not be blocked will be, and sites that should be blocked will not be.

1.21 The Library can monitor public computers electronically and reserves the right to do so when a violation of its policies or regulations is suspected.

1.22 Library staff are authorized to take immediate action to protect the security of the Library's computers and networks.

1.23 Violations of the Library's computer, Internet, and wireless network use policies and regulations may result in confiscation of disks, loss of computer privileges, and/or loss of Library privileges. Illegal activities are subject to prosecution by the appropriate authorities.

1.24 For security reasons, the Library does not share information about its network design, components, or security measures with members of the public.

Policy Statement 2: In order to provide consistent service on all public PCs, to optimize system



performance, and to promote the efficient use of resources, all public PCs have standardized hardware, peripheral, and software configurations.

Regulations:

2.1 Microsoft Office, Internet Explorer, Real Player, Shockwave, Media Player, Flash, QuickTime, Java, security and spyware detecting software, and Adobe Acrobat Reader are installed on all public PCs. All PCs have USB ports.

2.2 Requests for access to programs that load additional applets or plug-ins to the hard drive cannot be accommodated on demand. Staff members are not authorized to download or install software or install hardware for the public on demand. In order to assure standardization, new software and hardware will not normally be installed on just one or a few public PCs. Requests for additional plug-ins, applications, and hardware may be made by completing the Request for Additions or Changes to FWL Public PC Configuration. Additional plug-ins, applications, and/or hardware will only be added to public PCs if:

- It is appropriate to add them for system-wide use by the general public.
- They are compatible with the Library's standard operating systems, hardware platforms, and network configuration.
- They will not compromise system or PC performance.
- They will not require undue amounts of Computer Services staff time for installation and maintenance.
- They are not prohibitively expensive.
- They are not subject to copyright or licensing restrictions that make them inappropriate for public library use.

2.3 The Library will make every attempt to update PC configurations to accommodate upgrades to popular e-mail services.

2.4 In order to ensure that the public has access to up-to-date equipment and software, the Library leases its public PCs and replaces them with updated systems on a regular schedule. The Library does not normally purchase PCs for public use. The Library does not accept gift PCs or peripherals for the public that do not conform to its standard hardware and software configurations. The Library does not accept used PCs or peripherals.

Policy Statement 3: Library staff will assist customers in using all resources provided by the Library, including software applications, licensed electronic databases, and the Internet.

Regulations:

3.1 Staff will assist customers with:

- The basic use of PCs, such as using a mouse, navigating the keyboard, opening and closing Windows, and saving documents.
- Identifying appropriate electronic databases and/or suggesting search strategies.
- Recommending appropriate Internet sites, suggesting search strategies, and evaluating a site's reliability.
- Setting up personal e-mail accounts through Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.
- Downloading, e-mailing, copying and/or saving files and data from electronic databases and Internet sites.
- The basic use of software programs provided by the Library, such as Word and Excel.

3.2 Generally, staff are not able to conduct in-depth research for customers, or provide extensive one-on-one instruction on the use of hardware or software applications. The Library offers free classes in the use of these programs. The Library also offers a wide selection of books and other materials to assist users with these resources. We encourage customers



to take advantage of these classes and materials.

3.3 Because of the wide variety of personal computer systems, Library staff can provide only limited assistance to customers using the Library's wireless network. Such assistance may be limited to directing customers to information on the Library's Web site or published handouts.

Policy Statement 4: The Fort Worth Library is not responsible for any damage, loss, or liability that may occur as a result of use of the Library's public computers or networks or the disclosure of financial or other personal information over the Library's public computer services.

Regulations:

4.1 The Fort Worth Library is responsible only for data on those pages specifically about the Library found at www.fortworthlibrary.org. Fort Worth Library is not responsible for the content, accuracy or availability of any external sites linked to these pages.

4.2 The Library employs software on its public PCs that clears caches and history files at reboot. Users may clear such files by rebooting the PC at the end of their session.

4.3 Users should be aware that they are using public computers in a public environment, and that their activities and any information, including personal and private information, may be observed by others. Users are responsible for rebooting the PC when they have completed their sessions to ensure that personal and private information is removed from the PC's screen, cache, and history files.

4.4 Users are responsible for verifying the security and privacy policies of sites with which they conduct business or to which they provide personal information.

4.5 The Library assumes no liability for damage to any user's disk or computer or any loss of data that may occur from the use of Library computers or networks. Data downloaded from the Internet may contain viruses or other malicious programs. While the Library employs virus-checking software on all public PCs, users are still responsible for maintaining up-to-date virus-protection software on their personal computers and other devices.

4.6 Library staff restart all public PCs each morning before opening to ensure that the latest updates are installed.

Policy Statement 5. Children's Internet Safety Policy : ** ** In order to address the special concerns raised by children's access to the Internet, the Library establishes this ** ** Children's Internet Safety Policy ** ** for children's use of Library PCs.****

Regulations:

5.1 The Library respects parents' and guardians' right and responsibility to guide their children's development by monitoring their own children's use of Library materials and resources, including the Internet, and determining what is appropriate for them.

5.2 The Fort Worth Library helps children have safe online experiences and avoids exposing them to harmful or inappropriate material by:

- Filtering Internet access for images and videos containing adult content that would generally be considered obscene or pornographic in nature.
- Encouraging parents to monitor and supervise their own children's use of the Library's PCs.
- Providing specially-designed web pages for children and young adults, with links to age-appropriate Internet sites.
- Promoting recommended child-friendly search engines on the Youth page.



- Promoting Links to other filtered search engines.
- Promoting links to sites that help children learn Internet safety.
- Providing staff who are trained to help children and parents find appropriate sites.
- Providing Internet safety classes for children and adults.
- Enforcing its Public PC, Internet, and Wireless Use Policy.
- Posting the Texas Penal Code §§ 43.22, 43.23, 43.24, and 43.26 regarding distribution, promotion or display of materials harmful to minors prominently near all Internet PCs.

5.3 The Library promotes the safety and security of minors who use e-mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication by:

- 5.3a Encouraging parents to monitor and supervise their own children's use of the Library's PCs.
- 5.3b Encouraging parents to discuss these Internet Safety Tips with their children :

Always ask your parents' permission before using your full name, address, telephone number, or school name anywhere on the Internet.

Always tell your parents or other adults you trust if you see something online that is scary or that makes you feel uncomfortable.

Don't respond to messages that make you feel uncomfortable or uneasy.

Never give out a credit card number or password online.

Never arrange to meet in person someone you've met online unless you discuss it with your parents and an adult goes with you.

5.4 The Library discourages minors' unauthorized access and other unlawful online activities by:

- 5.4a Encouraging parents to monitor and supervise their own children's use of the Library's PCs.
- 5.4b Enforcing Regulation 1.19 of this Public PC, Internet, and Wireless Use Policy, which prohibits anyone using Library PCs or networks, including minors, from engaging in unlawful activities such as hacking, damaging equipment, disrupting systems or networks, accessing or using others' personal information, harassing, and viewing or transmitting obscenity or child pornography.

5.5 The Library helps prevent unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of minors' personal identification information by:

- 5.5a Encouraging parents to monitor and supervise their own children's use of Library PCs.
- 5.5b Enforcing its Privacy and Confidentiality Policy, which details the types of personal identification information the Library collects, and the conditions under which it releases that information.
- 5.5c Promoting the Library's Internet Safety Tips, which caution minors against disclosing any personal identification information such as full name, address, school, or parents' names.

Request for Additions or Changes to FWL Public PC Configuration

The Library will add software applications and/or hardware to its public PC configuration if:

- It is appropriate to add them for system-wide use by the general public. Special software or hardware is normally not added to just one or a few public PCs.
- They are compatible with the Library's standard operating systems, hardware platforms, and network configuration.



- They will not compromise system or PC performance.
- They will not require undue amounts of Computer Services staff time for installation and maintenance.
- They are not prohibitively expensive.
- They are not subject to copyright or licensing restrictions that make them inappropriate for public library use.

