

# Computer and Internet Use Policy

## Introduction:

The Belmont Literary and Historical Society Free Library provides computer and internet access to support research, education, and informational needs. The internet is an evolving and largely unregulated resource, and the library does not assume responsibility for the accuracy, reliability, or appropriateness of information found online. Users are responsible for evaluating the content they access.

## User Rights and Privacy:

The library respects users' rights to privacy and confidentiality. However, users should be aware that the internet is not a secure medium, and online transactions or communications may be accessed by third parties. The library will not release information about individual usage except as required by law. Library computers are equipped with a content filter that blocks access to materials deemed obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors as mandated by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Users seeking unfiltered access may request assistance from library staff where permissible by law.

## Access by Minors:

The library affirms the responsibility of parents and guardians in guiding their children's internet use. While the library provides filtering and educational resources, it does not monitor or control children's internet activity. Parents are encouraged to discuss online safety with their children, including:

- Avoiding the disclosure of personal information such as addresses, phone numbers, and school details.
- Not engaging in online conversations or meetings with strangers.
- Reporting any inappropriate or threatening online communications to a parent, guardian, or library staff member.
- Recognizing that not all online information is accurate or reliable.

## Prohibited Activities:

All users must adhere to legal and ethical standards when using library computers and the internet. The following activities are strictly prohibited:

- Viewing or distributing pornography, child exploitation materials, or obscene content.
- Engaging in illegal activities, including fraud, hacking, and unauthorized system access.
- Harassing, stalking, or invading the privacy of others.
- Violating copyright laws, including unauthorized downloading or distribution of copyrighted materials.
- Using the library's network for commercial, political, or personal business purposes.
- Sending spam, phishing attempts, or unsolicited advertising.

## Usage Guidelines:

- Computer usage is free to the public and does not require a library card
- Users under the age of 12 must have a parent or guardian present while using the computers.
- Computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis and sessions are limited to 60 minutes with a maximum of two sessions per 24-hour period. Users can request an extension of time if no other user is waiting.
- Users who wish to use audio content on library computers must wear headphones or earbuds.
- No food or drink is allowed near the computers
- Users may not load programs onto the library computer hard drives or download/run unapproved programs from any device.
- Downloads should be saved to personal storage devices, as all saved files are erased from public computers at the end of each day.
- The library is not responsible for damage, loss of data, or any liability that may occur from a user use of library computers or internet.
- Library staff can provide limited technical support but cannot offer extensive computer training or troubleshooting beyond basic assistance. For liability reasons staff cannot answer questions of a financial, legal, or medical nature. Staff may not fill out online forms on a user's behalf.
- Users must agree to the library's internet use terms before accessing the wireless network. Unauthorized network use or security violations will result in suspension of access.

#### Fees:

- Black and white prints: \$0.25 per page
- Color prints: \$1.00 per page
- Fax: \$2.00 per fax

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the suspension or termination of computer and internet privileges. Violations involving illegal activities may be reported to law enforcement. Parents of minors will be notified of infractions. Users are responsible for any damage resulting from misuse of library computers or networks.

By using the library's computers and internet services, patrons agree to abide by these policies and procedures. The library reserves the right to update this policy as needed to ensure a safe and effective computing environment for all users.

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