Peters Township Public Library Computer and Internet Usage Policy

Purpose

The role of the Peters Township Public library is that of a community information center. To meet this role, the library provides a constantly changing, broad range of informational resources including print, non-print, and electronic sources that meet the educational, informational, recreational and cultural enrichment needs of the Peters Township community.

The library has developed this Computer and Internet Usage policy to ensure responsible, ethical and appropriate use of its electronic resources and technology.

General Information

Computer resources are provided equally to all patrons with a valid Peters Township Public Library card. Patrons 16 years of age and younger need parent/guardian permission forms on file prior to using library computers. Children 11 years of age and younger must be accompanied by a parent/guardian when using computers located in the Adult Department.

Patrons access computers by entering their personal library card number and "agreeing" to the policy before access to the Internet or library software is enabled. Access to library computers is free of charge. For those wishing to print from library computers, a fee to cover library costs will be charged, per page, depending on whether printing is in color or black and white. Patrons wishing to print need to obtain a *printing charges form* from the library staff member on duty and advise staff of their plans to print. Fees are not waived for individuals planning to print from their own paper.

Internet Resources and Library Software including Microsoft Office Products

Access to both Internet and software programs is available during library hours with the exception of 10 minutes prior to closing. Library patrons may create Internet based e-mail accounts. Our staff is not responsible for patron e-mail accounts accessed from our library. As a public facility, there are no guarantees of security for persons using the public access computers. One-hour time limits are in effect only during library scheduled classes and if there are other patrons waiting to use a computer.

Food or drink are not permitted in the computer area (patrons may have food and drink in the first floor *Leisure Reading Area*). Patrons may not alter, modify, or make any changes to the settings, software, or hard drive of any library computer. Replacement cost for damaged computer equipment, software, or any other library property will be assessed to the person(s) causing the damage.

Trained staff is available to provide assistance in accessing library resources including available software and online resources. Because of the many varied resources offered at the library, our library staff is not trained to provide in-depth service to all of the computer based resources available. Patrons are requested to report technical problems occurring while working at the computer. Library computer classes are offered throughout the year to provide training to persons needing assistance in using either computer software or internet resources.

Filtering/Blocking Programs

Computers are equipped with filtering/blocking software that limits exposure to websites that are known to contain information that is "harmful to minors." However, this does not guarantee that objectionable materials will not be available at other websites. For this reason, the parent or guardian of the minor is responsible for the minor using library computer resources.
The Internet Policy Usage form for Minors (available at the Adult Reference Desk) must be signed and on file for all minors 16 years of age and younger who wish to use public access computers on the second floor.

Adults, young adults, and other youth who are accessing a site "offensive" to minors will be requested to close the site. No patron is permitted to view any material that is unlawful (child pornography, obscenity, harmful to minors). Accessing or displaying sexually explicit materials that are offensive to accepted standards of decency or modesty is prohibited by law (18 PA Constitute Stat. Sec 5903)

Violations

Unacceptable use includes, but is not limited to: harassment of other users, libeling or slandering other users, destruction, unauthorized change, alteration, modification of or damage to equipment, software or data belonging to the library or other users, disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications, violating copyright laws or software licensing agreements by the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted or licensed materials, or using any workstation for illegal or criminal purposes.

Any patron violating these guidelines will be advised of this library policy and will be asked to comply. Users who violate these guidelines a second time will be required to relinquish their workstation, be asked to leave the library, and/or have their library privileges suspended or revoked. The library reserves the right to prohibit violators from future access or use of electronic resources. Illegal acts may subject violators to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.