

Alamance County Public Libraries Internet Access Policy

Library Internet Access Policy (pdf format)

The Internet is an information resource that enables public library patrons to access a diverse variety of information beyond that contained in the library's own collection. However, the Internet is a constantly changing, unregulated information source with little quality control over content. The Alamance County Public Libraries staff would like to remind our users of the following constraints:

1. Library Internet use is limited to library cardholders in good standing with ACPL. **A valid library card must be presented at the time of use.** Individuals aged 17 years and older are required to sign a statement that they have read and agreed to follow the rules outlined in the Library Internet Access Policy.
2. Alamance County Public Libraries cannot guarantee that information found on the Internet is accurate, authoritative, or factual. ACPL does not monitor and has no control over materials on the Internet, and cannot be held responsible for its content. The library cannot control access to materials or protect patrons from materials they may find offensive.
3. While every effort will be made to provide its electronic resources during all scheduled hours of operation, ACPL cannot guarantee that service will run uninterrupted or trouble-free. The ACPL network does not support chat rooms and services such as AOL Instant Messenger. Free e-mail services such as HotMail and Yahoo may not always be accessible due to technical problems beyond ACPL's control.
4. ACPL staff have varying levels of Internet experience. We do not guarantee Internet assistance during all hours of library operation. If you have never used the Internet, are unfamiliar with World Wide Web searching, or anticipate needing an introduction to our computer equipment, please contact the library staff for availability of orientation sessions. The library reserves the right to require any or all prospective users to attend an orientation session as a condition for access to the library equipment.
5. Internet users are expected to exercise appropriate discretion in viewing materials that may be offensive to others, especially children. Users may not allow minors to view, peruse, or review any material that is harmful to minors. Intentionally displaying or receiving inappropriate materials in either text or graphic format that may be reasonably construed as obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors is prohibited. (NCGS 14-190.13).
6. **It is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian, not the library, to determine what material accessed is appropriate for the children in their care.** ACPL staff recommends that children notify their parents of any online communication or Internet site that makes them uncomfortable. The library also takes measures designed to assist minors in the safe and effective use of these resources. Alamance County Public Libraries provides access to StartSquad.org, a new Web portal developed by North Carolina librarians that provides children with more than 200 links to age-appropriate Internet sites. Pending the availability of funds, Alamance County Public Libraries will make available in each location at least one workstation which uses software to assist with restricting access to sites that may be considered harmful to minors, with a clear acknowledgement that use of such software does not guarantee protection. The following rules pertain to Internet use by minors:
 - A. Children aged 12 and under require the permission and supervision of a parent or legal guardian while using the library Internet computers. Supervision by a caregiver or other designated adult is permissible if the parent has indicated a designee on the permission slip.
 - B. Youth aged 13 through 16 years require a permission agreement signed by the parent or legal guardian to be kept on file at the library. Young people in this age group will be required to present their validated library card as proof that parental permission has been obtained if a parent is not present.
7. Library patrons who damage computer equipment or who engage in disruptive or illegal behavior using the library computers will be subject to loss of library Internet access privileges or of library privileges as a whole. Prohibited activities include:
 - Intentionally displaying, receiving or printing inappropriate materials in either text or graphic format that may be reasonably construed as obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors (NCGS 14-190.13)
 - Harassing others
 - Attempting to access unauthorized files or systems ("hacking")
 - Falsely identifying oneself in online communication such as chat rooms, e-mail, etc.
 - Disclosing personal identification information of minors

- Misrepresenting oneself to gain access to the library's computers
 - Using sound or visuals that might be disruptive to others
 - Propagating computer viruses
 - Sharing of a computer by more than 2 authorized users
 - Sharing of a computer with unauthorized individuals
 - Infringing copyright or copying licensed materials
 - Failing to pay for computer printouts
 - Overstaying your scheduled time slot without permission
 - Saving or changing files on the library's hardware or attempting to access programs not related to the computer's intended use
8. Library patrons should be aware that downloading files from the Internet is a possible source of computer viruses. The library will not assume responsibility for damage to non-library computer equipment caused by viruses unwittingly copied to your personal disk.
9. The ACPL staff reserves the right to limit or deny access to Internet workstations for noncompliance with any aspect of the ACPL Internet Access Policy.

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