

## HCLS INTERNET USE POLICY

**Mission:** As part of its mission to provide a broad range of information in a variety of formats, the Henry County Library System provides free access to the Internet. Staff will conduct Internet searches on behalf of patrons when warranted as part of the library's reference and information services. Computers are also available for patrons who wish to conduct their own searches or use other Internet resources.

**Responsibility:** The library is responsible only for the information provided on its own Web site. Access points and links to information resources on the library's home page are selected by library staff and are checked regularly to ensure that they remain valid and consistent with the roles of the library. The library cannot monitor or control information accessed via the Internet. The library cannot guarantee that information on the Internet is accurate. If requested and if staff time permits, staff will assist patrons in conducting searches and offer guidance on evaluating sources and verifying information.

**Usage:** Library staff will assist patrons with searches and suggest search strategies, but can provide limited assistance in teaching patrons how to use the Internet. Videotapes, DVDs, books, and other learning resources are also available for patron use. The Library Director will determine the Internet functions that are enabled. Adults (age 18 and over) who need unfiltered access for any lawful purpose may request access from a staff member. When it is technically possible to do so, files may be downloaded to portable storage devices or printed to designated printers. Patrons who download files are responsible for verifying that the files are free of computer viruses. Charges for printing will be established on a cost-recovery basis by the Library Board of Trustees. Sometimes far more will print than you might expect. Be careful. If we print it, you pay for it. Use print preview or ask for help if you are unsure. By logging on to the Internet, patrons agree to abide by the library policy on public use of computers.

**Access:** A valid PINES library card is required for Internet access. Patrons are required to use their own PINES cards to access computers. Using someone else's library card will result in the suspension of computer privileges for both parties with a note indicating such on both patrons' records. Depending on demand, you will be allowed up to two hours of PC usage per day.

**Juveniles:** Parents or guardians are responsible for Internet use by their children. In accordance with federal CIPA regulations, all library public workstations use filtering software. Although juveniles will not be granted unfiltered access, parents are reminded that filtering software can be circumvented by experienced computer users; therefore, they should monitor their child's use of the Internet. Children under 18 may use the Internet if a parent has signed a waiver or the child is being directly supervised by a responsible adult.

**Prohibited actions:**

- Do not try to save, change, or delete files to the hard drive or to the network. Patrons may purchase USB drives at the circulation desk for saving files.
- Patrons, including minors, who access the Internet in the library, may not display text or graphics defined by federal or state law as obscenity or pornography. In addition, minors are prohibited from accessing materials considered to be “harmful to minors.” Library employees are authorized to take appropriate actions to enforce the rules of conduct and to prohibit use of computers by individuals who fail to comply with the Internet Use Policy.
- Deliberate and continued display of some materials that are not obscene or pornographic may still constitute sexual harassment. Actions that violate federal, state, or local laws will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. Abuse of Internet access will result in the loss of computer privileges. Users sending or receiving inappropriate materials, for example, obscene or harassing messages or images, pornography, race-hate or violence advocacy will be disconnected from the Internet and barred from the library for 30 days. Repeated abuse will result in permanent loss of Internet privileges. Illegal use may result in criminal prosecution.
- U.S. copyright law governs unauthorized use or distribution of copyrighted materials. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials, except as permitted by the fair-use regulation without permission of the copyright owner.

**Warning:** While the use of chat rooms, social networking sites, wikis, blogs, and other Internet functions are not prohibited, the Library neither encourages nor offers technical support for their use. Patrons should be aware that the anonymity of some functions might also provide cover for individuals with criminal intentions. Users, including minors, are warned that other individuals may obtain unauthorized access to personal information and/or may misrepresent themselves. Users, including minors, are advised not to share personal identification information to unknown or otherwise unverified sources via electronic communication.

**Privilege:** Use of the Library's Internet service is a privilege, not a right. The Library's rules and procedures that implement this policy must be followed by all patrons.