

## MCMLS INTERNET USE POLICY

The Montgomery County Memorial Library System is committed to promoting lifelong learning, assisting in economic development, and enriching the entire community by providing access to cultural, intellectual, recreational, and informational resources, including those available through the Internet. To that end, the following policy applies to all users of MCMLS computers or networks

1. The Internet is a global electronic network, there is no editorial control of its use or content. Internet resources contain a wide variety of material and opinions from diverse points of view. Montgomery County Commissioners' Court has directed that filtering software be installed to deny access to Internet sites which contain sexually explicit materials deemed unsuitable for viewing by minors. However, no filtering mechanism is fool-proof.

While the Library's policy prohibits acquisition of inappropriate materials, access to materials that may be offensive, disturbing and/or potentially illegal may still occur.

2. Library Staff will identify starting points for searches on the Library's home page which are appropriate to the Library's goal of providing information. Even though these links are periodically reviewed, the Library cannot control the availability of information links which often change rapidly and unpredictably.
3. Users need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of information. The Library cannot control or monitor other material which may be accessible from Internet sources. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. Patrons are here by notified that they are responsible for the access points they reach.

Texas Penal Code, sections [43.21](#), [43.22](#), and [43.24](#) are the statutes which make display of obscene material a criminal offense.

4. The Library supports the right and responsibility of parents to determine and monitor their children's use of Library materials and resources. The Library does not have the right or responsibility to act in *loco parentis*. No age restrictions are applied to Internet use. However, all children 12 years of age or younger must be accompanied by a parent or guardian while in the Library (see [Unattended Child Policy](#)). Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their child's use of the Internet through the Library's connection. Parents and children are encouraged to read [Kids' Rules For Online Safety](#) and [Child Safety On the Information Highway](#). Both documents are available in print at the reference desk and as a link on the Montgomery County Memorial Library System home page.

5. Use of the Internet at Library workstations:
  - a. Provisions of the Library's [Computer Services Policy](#) apply to Internet use.
  - b. All Internet use will begin on a filtered computer.
  - c. Any patron who thinks a site has been blocked in error may submit the site for review by Library staff.
  - d. Individuals who are 18 years of age or older may request that a blocked site should be unfiltered for the duration of their session up to a 30 minute maximum. Proof of age is required. Unfiltered access will not be available on workstations that are located in children's service areas or where use is predominately by juveniles.
  - e. Failure to exit the Internet browser at the end of the patron's session may result in Internet privileges being revoked.
6. The library reserves the right to update and change this policy at any time without notice. It is the responsibility of the patron to read and accept the current version of the policy.

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**LIABILITY DISCLAIMER:** In consideration for the privilege of using the system and for having access to the information contained within it, the user hereby releases and holds harmless Montgomery County, their officers, agents, servants, or employees, and the Montgomery County Memorial Library System, its staff, volunteers, representatives or advisors, from any and all liability or responsibility for any and all claims, damages, losses, costs or expenses, including attorney fees arising either directly or indirectly from the use of this system, whether or not caused, in whole or in part, by alleged negligence. Use of the Library's Internet connection is entirely at the user's risk.

### *COMPUTER SERVICES*

1. Library Staff can often help with basic computer use or assist in locating resources on or about the Internet but do not provide in-depth instruction.

Circulating books, videos, and reference books are available for patrons who have limited computer experience. Formal training is available on a scheduled basis at the library or from other community resources.

2. The Library uses virus scanning software but cannot guarantee complete protection. Patrons using Library computers assume the risk of virus infection or damage to data.
3. The Library is not a full service Internet provider. Services not provided through the Library's Internet connection include, but are not limited to, personal email accounts, newsgroups and some chatlines.
4. Guidelines for the use of computers are as follows:
  - a. There is a one-hour limit on each computer session when others are waiting. An individual's computer use is limited to two hours per day. In addition, during periods of high demand the one-hour limit may be reduced.
  - b. All computer use is provided on a first come, first served basis. Some locations may offer computer reservations. Contact the nearest branch library to see if this service is available.
  - c. The Library will make every effort to provide equipment in good working order. However, equipment failures do occur. Users should notify library staff when problems occur so that a work order for repair can be generated. The Library assumes no liability for any loss or damage to the user's data or any damage or injury from invasion of privacy. Use of the Library's equipment is entirely at the user's risk.
  - d. Printing is available at \$0.15 per page. Before printing, patrons are encouraged to use "Print Preview" functions to determine the total number of pages that will print out. Patrons are responsible for payment for all pages printed.
  - e. Patrons should bring disks if they wish to save files. Unclaimed lost disks will be disposed of after 30 days.
  - f. Printing and downloading are allowed only within the allotted time. The time limit is an aspect of software that is used to administer access. There are 5-minute and 1-minute warnings before access is terminated.
  - g. Patrons may use only one computer at a time.
  - h. No more than two persons to a computer.
  - i. All computer use must be completed 15 minutes before Library closing.
5. Computer users **may not**:
  - a. Make any attempt to damage computer equipment or software, alter software configurations, or cause degradation of system performance.

- b. Use or install software programs that are not provided by the Library.
- c. Alter Library workstations or attach personal equipment to the Library's hardware.
- d. Use any Library workstation for illegal activities. Evidence of such activities will be turned over to local law enforcement.
- e. Violate copyright laws or software license agreements using Library workstations.
- f. Obstruct other people's work by consuming gratuitously large amounts of system resources or by deliberately crashing the Library's computer system.

**Violation of the above may result in loss of access to computing resources. An initial warning will be issued. Should a second violation occur, the patron will be denied access to computer services at all locations.**

Approved by the Montgomery County Commissioners' Court, July 24, 2000