

**General Statement of Policy**

The Northwest Regional Library System (NWRLS) provides computers with Microsoft Office software and Internet access to the public in order to support its mission of “connecting the people of our diverse community with the information they seek.” Computer, Internet, and Wireless Internet access is available in all Library locations and is provided to all Library users at no charge.

The NWRLS does not filter Internet sites and does not restrict access except in accordance with State and Federal laws. Patrons under 16 years of age must have the permission of a parent or legal guardian to use an Internet computer. Parents or guardians who allow minors to use the Library and Internet without their supervision are responsible for their children’s decisions.

Internet users should be aware that not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. The Library is not responsible for the accuracy, currency or appropriateness of material found online. Public Library computers are not private or secure. Users are strongly cautioned against providing personal information. The Library is not responsible for any online transactions submitted by public computer users.

Providing Internet access does not constitute any endorsement of Internet resources by the NWRLS or Bay County. The NWRLS or Bay County shall have no liability for any direct and/or indirect damages relating from the use of computers or information accessed on the Internet from Library computers.

**Regulations for Computer & Internet Use**

- a) Anyone age 16 or older may use a public Library computer when workstations are available.
- b) Patrons under 16 years of age must have the permission of a parent or legal guardian to use an Internet computer.
- c) Library staff can assist with computer use as time allows. Library staff cannot complete forms or applications for patrons.
- d) Due to high demand for computer access, the length of computer sessions is limited. Exceptions may be made for test-taking, job applications and research purposes.
- e) Patrons should see a staff member prior to the start of their session to request special accommodations.
- f) Most locations use an automated system to manage computer use. Time on these computers is monitored by software and a computer session will be ended automatically. Patrons must save their work on a USB or compatible storage device prior to the end of their session otherwise their work will be lost. The Library is not responsible for lost information because of computer shut down or for any malfunction that may occur in the use of a storage device.
- g) Printing is available from all public access computers. Printing costs vary by type of print. Black/white printouts are 10¢; color printouts are 20¢ where available. Patrons are responsible to pay for all printouts.
- h) The Libraries’ computers are designed for use by a single person. A maximum of two persons may sit/work together on one computer, except in special cases.

**Misuse**

Misuse of Library computers is prohibited and may result in loss of computer privileges, loss of Library privileges and/or prosecution. Misuse includes but is not limited to:

- a) Failing to follow Library procedures for computer use by refusing to comply with time limits, refusing to pay for printouts, or refusing to end a computer session when requested.
- b) Mishandling, damaging, attempting to damage, or tampering with computer equipment, software, or settings.
- c) Hacking into the Library computer system or any other computer system.
- d) Engaging in any activity that is deliberately disruptive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment.
- e) Viewing material that violates federal, state or local laws or regulations, including laws regarding accessing, viewing and distributing obscenity or child pornography. Obscenity is legally defined as material that predominantly appeals to the prurient interest in sex and depicts or describes, in a patently offensive manner, sexual conduct and that lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. WARNING: the Libraries of the Northwest Regional Library system are public places. Displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures may be a violation of State and Federal Obscenity laws (Florida Statutes 847.001, 847.0133, 847.0135; Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252).
- f) Violating copyright laws or the policies of the individual websites that you view. U.S. copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of "fair use." Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user, the Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

Any patron who feels another customer is in violation of this policy should notify a staff member immediately.

Adopted May 1, 2007; revised August 19, 2014