



## WHARTON COUNTY LIBRARY INTERNET and ELECTRONIC RESOURCE USE POLICIES

### PURPOSE

To fulfill our mission, Wharton County Library provides access to a broad range of information resources, including those available through the Internet. In offering the Internet as an information resource, Wharton County Library's goal is to enhance its existing collection and as a public access agency give opportunity to any citizen who wishes to participate in navigating the Internet.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF USERS

The Internet, as an information resource, enables the Library to provide information beyond the confines of its own collection. It offers access to many valuable local, national, and international sources of information. Not all sources on the internet provide accurate, complete or current information. While it offers access to a wealth of material that is enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enables access to some material that may be offensive, disturbing and/or illegal.

Wharton County Library cannot control or monitor information accessed through the Internet. It is not possible to apply the same selection criteria which are used for other materials. The Library cannot protect users from information that is offensive or inaccurate. Users need to evaluate the validity of the information found. Library staff will assist patrons with internet use as time permits but cannot leave their posts to offer in-depth training or technical support.

All users of Internet are expected to use it in a responsible manner, consistent with educational and informational purposes for which they are provided. Responsibility for damages, direct or indirect, arising from the use of the Wharton County Library's computers or from its connections to the Internet services must be assumed by the user.

### Supervising Children's Use

The Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents to determine and monitor their children's use of Library materials and resources. Parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding what library resources are appropriate for their children. They are encouraged to work closely with their children and supervise their child's Internet sessions.



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### USE TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURES

The Library filters all Internet access computers as a means to comply with specific federal legislation. Compliance includes the installation and enforcement of a technology protection measure to prohibit access by ANY user to graphic depictions of illegal materials as defined by U.S. Code Title 18. The legislation also includes specific language prohibiting access by minors to materials considered to be “harmful to minors.” The filter may restrict access to sites that could be deemed objectionable, but may also limit access to sites that have legitimate research value. No filtering system is completely effective or efficient. Users are warned that objectionable and/or illegal materials may still be accessible through the filtering software. Users are reminded that they are responsible for acting in accordance with “The Rules Governing Use.”

### CONDITIONS AND TERMS OF USE IN THE LIBRARY

- A. All Internet workstations will be located where they can be monitored by staff for assistance and security.
- B. Internet users must have a current Wharton County Library card in good standing with the Library. However, those who reside outside the state of Texas may use the Internet workstation as a temporary user. All other rules apply.
- C. Youth under 16 years of age will be required to have parental or guardian permission to access the Internet on their own; a parental permission form must be signed. However, they may work with a staff member (if available) or other responsible adult such as a teacher without parental permission.
- D. Failure to use the Internet workstations appropriately and responsibly, as defined in the policies, may result in revocation of Internet use privileges.

### RULES GOVERNING USE

Patrons may not make any attempt to damage computer equipment or software.

Patrons may not disconnect or render library computers inoperable by disconnecting electrical connections, network connections, or any accessory plugged in to the computer.

Library workstations may not be used in any activity that is deliberately and maliciously offensive or libelous.

The library’s electronic resources may not be used for illegal or criminal purposes, or to violate copyright laws.



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Patrons may bring their own CD/DVDs or USB drives to use at computer workstations, but the library is not responsible for damage to a patron's media, or for any loss of data, damage, or liability that may occur from patron use of the library's computers.

Patrons printing to library printers are responsible for any printing fees.

Patrons are responsible for following any additional computer guidelines found displayed in the library.

Violations of policies may result in loss of access. Unlawful activities will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Library staff reserves the right to limit internet use by any adult whose children are inadequately supervised.

Violations may result in loss of access. Unlawful activities will be dealt with in a serious and appropriate manner.

### WIRELESS ACCESS POLICIES

Wireless connectivity is available at Wharton County Library at no charge.

Library staff is not authorized or trained to configure personal computers for patrons.

The Library assumes no responsibility for any alterations or interference with a laptop's configuration, operation, or data files resulting from connection to the wireless network.

The library wireless connection does not use encryption, so it is not responsible for the security of information sent or received while using the library connection.

Patrons using the library's wireless access are governed by the same policies as those using the library's workstations.