

SUBJECT: ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

EFFECTIVE: FEBRUARY 1, 2017

SUPERSEDES: 8/2010

1. PURPOSE:

- A. The Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library (the Library) provides access to a wide range of electronic resources. This policy governs how these resources are to be utilized and managed.

2. POLICY:

A. Access to the Internet:

- 1) The Internet enables the Library to provide information beyond the confines of its own collection. The Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library Board (the Library Board) upholds and affirms the right of each individual to have access to constitutionally protected material. Users are encouraged to be good information consumers by carefully evaluating material accessed via the Internet. The Library subscribes to a variety of online databases. Identification, selection, and review of these databases are managed as outlined in the library's [Materials Selection Policy](#).
- 2) While the Library cannot control or monitor all material available on the Internet, the Library Board has determined to guard against providing access to visual depictions which are not constitutionally protected, to protect children from access to visual depictions which are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors as such terms have been defined in the [Children's Internet Protection Act](#) and approved by the courts.
- 3) Internet sessions shall be limited to one hour per session. Customers may have additional sessions if no other customers are waiting. Customers shall be granted a maximum of two (2) hours per day access on the Internet computers, which shall be strictly enforced. Customers will be given the option to extend a session for 15 additional minutes, only when no one else is waiting, for a total daily maximum of 2 hours and 30 minutes (See [LS 308: Time Management Software for Internet Computers](#)).

B. Responsibilities:

- 1) Customers are responsible for using the Library computers in accordance with this policy LS306 and the [Library Code of Conduct](#).
- 2) The Library Board has elected to use filtering software in conjunction with firewall technology to manage Internet access on all library computers.
- 3) Library customers may request that library staff review any Web site, either blocked by the filter or not. *Customer Request for Review of a Website* forms are made available to customers at all Public Service Desks. (See [LS307, Request for Review of a Website](#)).

- 4) Parents are responsible for monitoring their own children's use of library materials and electronic resources. In order to assist parents, the library offers an internet safety training program for children. The safety program teaches children how to safely navigate the Internet and to recognize dangers that may be encountered online. Completion of this training program is required before anyone under 17 years of age may access the Internet on library computers. This requirement will only be waived on the request of parents via a signed authorization form.
- 5) Confidentiality of library registration and circulation records are governed by [Florida Statutes Chapter 257.261](#). In accordance with this law, computer sign-in sheets are shredded as soon as all customers listed have been served or at the end of the day, whichever occurs first.
- 6) The Library is not responsible for the content found on other websites, for any failure in transmission of online applications or forms to other agencies, or for accurate submission of forms or information. The Library cannot guarantee that other agencies receive forms or information submitted from library computers or act on them appropriately. No agreement or contract is created between the customer and the Library or its staff.
- 7) The Library uses best efforts to ensure network security. Nevertheless, the customer assumes all responsibility for the use of the library's network and networked resources, including interference with the customer's data, laptop computer, or other devices.
- 8) The Library is not liable for the loss or compromise of any confidential or sensitive, or any other information, or for any and all damages resulting from that loss or compromise.
- 9) The Library computers are equipped with software that erases all customer entries and activities when the computer is restarted after each use.

C. State Law:

- 1) In accordance with Florida Statutes, [Chapters 847.011\(1\)a](#) and [847.0133\(1\)](#), displaying obscene materials to minors may be a violation of the law and could result in penalties up to and including imprisonment.
- 2) In accordance with Florida Statutes, [Chapter 815](#), damaging or altering a computer or computer system, network, program, or software may be a violation of law and could result in penalties up to and including imprisonment.

D. Access to Library Subscription Databases:

- 1) Inside a library facility, access to subscription-based resources are available without presenting a library card on computers designated for subscription database access.

- 2) On computers designated as Internet, or to access subscription-based resources remotely (i.e., outside of a library facility), customers must have a library card in good standing and have resolved delinquent fines exceeding \$10.

3. PROCEDURE:

A. Use of Internet Computers:

- 1) Workstations providing public access to the Internet are to be located in areas of the floor where activity can be easily monitored by staff.
- 2) Internet session lengths shall be limited to one hour per session. Customers may have additional sessions if no other customers are waiting or have placed a reservation for use of the Internet computer. Customers shall be granted a maximum of two (2) hours per day access on the Internet Computers, which shall be strictly enforced. Customers will be given the option to extend a session for 15 additional minutes, only when no one else is waiting, for a total daily maximum of 2 hours and 30 minutes (See [LS 308: Time Management Software for Internet Computers](#)).
- 3) When all Internet computers are in use, customers may use the Reservation Station to reserve an Internet computer for the next available time. Such reservation shall be honored only if the customer is present at the time requested to access the Internet computer. If the customer arrives after the reserved time and no Internet computer is available, the customer must wait for the next available Internet computer or make another reservation (See [LS308, Time Management Software for Internet Computers](#)).
- 4) Computer sessions are non-transferable. The customer who schedules the computer must be the one to use it.
- 5) Customers must use their personal library card number and enter their PIN to log on to an Internet computer, or place a reservation for the use of an Internet computer.
- 6) Customers who are not Hillsborough County residents and wish to use Internet computers must show valid photo ID with address (outside of Hillsborough County) in order to request a Guest Card. This also applies to customers who are residents, but do not have, or do not want to register for a library card.
- 7) Customers must update expired Library Cards and resolve delinquent fines exceeding \$10 before they can log on to an Internet computer or place a reservation for the use of an Internet computer.
- 8) No more than two people may work together on the same computer at the same time. A group of two users must abide by the same time limits as a single user.

B. Use of Other Library Computers:

- 1) Customers may be asked to comply with sign-in and time limitations for other Library computers based upon the number of available computers and demand for their use. Branch Supervisors should discuss proposed limitations with their Regional Manager before implementation. Any limitations imposed should be clearly posted and uniformly enforced.

C. Sign-In Sheets:

- 1) A library branch may choose to keep a daily log of guest pass distribution. Branch Supervisors should discuss this option with their Regional Manager before implementation. Staff will enter the name of customers on the sign-in sheet. The first name and initial of the last name is the maximum amount of information that should be listed. Library customers are not permitted to view the names of others on the sheet. Sign-in sheets are to be shredded as soon as they are full or at the end of each day, whichever occurs first.
- 2) If law enforcement authorities ask to see sign-in sheets or computer log files, library staff must call the Library Director's Office immediately. Library staff must set aside the sign-in sheets requested by law enforcement authorities while guidance is sought from the County Attorney's Office. If law enforcement officers provide a subpoena, it must be immediately faxed to the Library Director's Office and forwarded to the County Attorney's Office.

D. Customer Assistance and Education:

- 1) Public service staff should actively assist customers in effectively using electronic resources and in understanding the purpose and limitations of the Library's various computer configurations. Assistance may include, but is not limited to, one-on-one instruction and training classes.
- 2) A Library *Code of Conduct* brochure is made available for public distribution at all Library locations to inform customers of Library use guidelines.
- 3) To help customers learn to use the Internet safely and wisely, all public workstations provide links to selected sites for parents and children that promote safe use of the Web.
- 4) Library staff cannot give customers legal, financial or medical advice and are not case workers. Library staff may assist users in searching for online resources, but may not advise customers on specific forms, sign, complete or submit forms for customers.

E. Misuse of Library and Internet Computers:

- 1) General use of computers is managed in accordance with the Library Code of Conduct. Misuse includes but is not limited to:
 - a) damaging or altering computer equipment or software;
 - b) displaying, printing, sending, or storing obscene, libelous, threatening, or harassing material;

- c) downloading or installing any harmful program defined as, but not limited to: spyware, viruses, trojans, malware, proxy avoidance software, or any other illegal utility on the hard drive of any computer.
 - d) violating copyright or trademark laws, software license agreements or intellectual property rights.
 - e) using, installing, or attaching any device or software to library computers for the purpose of illicit data collection or access, or for identity theft or related purposes.
- F. Customers who willfully violate the Code of Conduct are subject to any or all of the following actions:
- 1) verbal warning,
 - 2) loss of computer privileges,
 - 3) removal from the Library, or
 - 4) notification of law enforcement authorities.
- G. Customers who violate these policies and procedures may be given one verbal warning before losing their computer privileges at the discretion of library staff. When dealing with a more serious offense such as the violation of a *Florida Statute*, the appropriate library personnel may immediately notify authorities.
- H. All library staff are empowered to enforce the Code of Conduct. Any staff member who witnesses and knowingly ignores behavior that violates the Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action.

4. AUTHORITY:

Pursuant to Section 5 of [Chapter 84-443](#), Laws of Florida, the Public Library Board (the Library Board) has the duty and the responsibility, among others, to serve in a recommending capacity to the Director of Library Services and to the County Administrator in respect to all matters pertaining to the Public Library System of Hillsborough County (the Library System) and library services.

Approved:

Andrew Breidenbaugh, Director