

WINTERSET PUBLIC LIBRARY INTERNET & COMPUTER USE POLICY

G-1. Purpose

In order to provide a connection to information and social media, Internet access computers are available without charge to library customers. The Library provides public access to information of all types in a wide range of formats, and free Internet access is one component.

G-2. Responsibility of the Library

The availability of information does not constitute endorsement of the content by the Winterset Public Library. Winterset Public Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through the Internet, or any consequences thereof. The library has no means or statutory authority to assure that only constitutionally protected material is accessed by the public. The authority to determine what is obscene rests with the City attorney (Sec. 728.6, Code of Iowa) not with the staff of the Winterset Public Library. Public libraries are exempted under Sec. 728.7, Code of Iowa.

As stated in the American Library Association's Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software, "...the use of filtering software to block access to constitutionally protected speech violates the Library Bill of Rights." Winterset Public Library does not impose blocking or filtering software to limit access to Internet sites. However, library staff will provide assistance to children and parents by identifying web sites that provide age-appropriate searching.

G-3. Responsibility of Customers

Persons using the Internet access computers should be knowledgeable in basic computer operation. Only minimal instruction, as time permits, can be offered by the staff.

The library has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Individuals must accept responsibility for evaluating content. As with other library materials, the library affirms the right and responsibility of parents or guardians to guide, determine, and monitor their children's use of the Internet.

Customers are urged to respect the sensibilities of others when accessing information that may reasonably be offensive to someone else. However, absolute privacy in using the Internet in the library cannot be guaranteed. There exists a possibility of inadvertent viewing by others. Access, use, or dissemination of information via the Internet in the library is the responsibility of the customer.

The Code of Iowa, Section 716A prohibits damaging or destroying a Library computer or computer program, software or system. Also prohibited is unauthorized access. Persons attempting any such action will be prosecuted.

Illegal activities or activities that interfere with or disrupt the network, users, services, or equipment are prohibited. The library does not routinely monitor public computers, but reserves the right to do so when a violation of this policy or illegal activity is suspected. Staff-persons are authorized to take immediate action to protect the security of computers and the network and to enforce the following rules. This includes confiscating any removable storage device or media, requiring a user to leave a computer or the premises, and contacting law enforcement authorities.

G-4. Rules Governing the Use of Library Computers

1. The Winterset Public library cautions against giving personal information. Customers assume all risk/liability when divulging a credit card number or other personal information on the Internet. The library will not be responsible for charges, damages, or injuries resulting from such use.
2. Only one person can use the computer at a time, except for a child who may be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
3. Use will be on a first come first serve basis. Persons will be limited to 1 hour if others have made Envisionware reservations to use the computers.
4. Inappropriate use of a computer can be a felony. A copy of Iowa Code 716A is available for your review regarding the illegality of computer damage and theft and the penalties.
5. Persons using the internet must use the equipment provided by the library, or their own laptop computers connected to the wireless connection provided by the library. Lap top computers may not be physically connected to the Library Internet line.

G-5. Misuse includes but is not limited to:

1. Viewing and/or downloading materials that violate federal, state or local laws or regulations, including those regarding copyright, or accessing, viewing, and distributing obscenity or child pornography
2. Hacking into the library computer system or any other computer system
3. Mishandling, damaging or attempting to damage computer equipment or software; tampering with computer set-up
4. Interfering with system operations, integrity, or security
5. Attempting to gain or gaining access to another person's files or authorization codes
6. Displaying or printing materials that violate laws & policies on sexual harassment

7. Engaging in any activity that is offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment
8. Violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements or the policies of the individual websites that you view
9. Signing in on a computer using a card belonging to another library patron
10. Any other violation of library policies

G-6. Confidentiality

It is the library's practice not to maintain a history of our customers' computer use. This includes web sites visited, passwords, credit card numbers, and any other information a customer has entered. At the end of each use, the library software (currently Envisionware) erases all customer computer use and reservation records, and the automatically reboots the computer.

G-7. Internet Use Guidelines for Parents and Guardians

The public library does not serve in loco parentis (in place of a parent). Librarians cannot act in the place of parents in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. The Internet content read or viewed by minors is solely the responsibility of the parents or guardians. Parents and children should read *Child Safety on the Information Highway* (pdf), available online from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. ConnectSafely offers useful safety tips and advice for parents and teens. Monitoring a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

G-8. Wireless

The library provides free, unsecured, wireless Internet access (WiFi) for the public to use with their own personal notebooks, laptops and other mobile devices.

1. WiFi access provided by the library is unsecured. Anti-virus, security, and privacy protection are the responsibility of the customer. Customers should be aware that information sent wirelessly can be captured by anyone else with a wireless device and the appropriate software.
2. Personal use of the library's public wireless access must conform to policies regulating other types of public Internet access provided by the library.
3. Library staff are not able to provide technical support for privately owned personal wireless devices. Customers are responsible for having the proper hardware, software, and network settings on their wireless device to connect to the library-provided WiFi. There is no guarantee that you will be able to make a wireless connection.
4. Printing is not available via the library's WiFi service. If printing is desired, the customer may transfer documents to their own peripheral storage device or to a web-based personal email account and print from one of the library's public internet computers.

5. The library is not responsible for any theft, damage or misuse of customers' personal notebooks, laptops and other mobile devices while on the premises of the library.
6. The library assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment or for laptop configurations, security, or data files resulting from connection to the library's network.

G-9. Legal Considerations

1. Activities that violate local, state, or federal statutes are prohibited.
2. Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials. Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including electronic mail, text, images, programs or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the Winterset Public Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use. Copying some materials may be permitted by the principles of "fair use."
3. The Winterset Public Library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through its electronic information systems, or any consequences thereof.

G-10. Resources

1. Code of Iowa: containing all statutes of a general and permanent nature. Des Moines: State of Iowa, 1924-
2. "Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software," American Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee, July 1, 1997; Rev. November 17, 2000.