

Caroline County Library
COMPUTER USE POLICY

Policy Statement

The Caroline County Library provides computers and Internet access available for public use as a service to its patrons. These services support the library's role as a provider of current resources for lifelong learning, social exchange, and entertainment.

The Internet and online environment consists of information on a wide range of topics provided by millions of individuals and organizations around the world. Not all information found on the Internet is accurate, complete, up-to-date, legal or philosophically acceptable to all individuals. Library patrons are encouraged to be critical consumers and to evaluate the validity of information carefully. Patrons are responsible for the access points they reach. Parents and/or guardians of minor children are responsible for their children's use of the Internet.

Computer users are bound by local, state, and federal laws relating to copyright, security, obscenity, materials harmful to juveniles, and other laws regarding electronic media. Any use of Caroline County Library computers and/or Internet service that interferes with the activities of the library, its users, or its network is strictly prohibited. Any violations of law will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Accessing and/or viewing any graphic material considered obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors (US Code § 61-8A, VA Code § 18.2-374)
- Accessing interactive Internet games, FTP, or Telnet
- Harassing, bullying, libeling, or slandering
- Using the Internet for any other illegal or unethical purpose
- Damaging equipment
- Altering computer hardware or software, including screen settings
- Downloading files or installing software
- Disrupting electronic communications
- Violating copyright or software licensing
- Distributing unsolicited advertising
- Violating another user's privacy

The use of computers is monitored by library staff. Library staff reserves the right to end Internet sessions when unacceptable behaviors are observed. The library reserves the right to limit or revoke access to its computer and network resources. Misuse or unauthorized use of library computers and information resources may result in the revocation of library privileges.

The standards of intellectual freedom and confidentiality incorporated in Caroline County Library policies for traditional media shall apply to the use of electronic media, including the Internet.

Caroline County is not responsible for any damages that may occur as a result of conditions beyond our control, such as computer viruses, electrical malfunctions, power surges, data security, etc. The library cannot guarantee viewing privacy, nor the privacy of information sent or received over the Internet. The library also makes no guarantees, either expressed or implied, with respect to the computers or programs available, as to their quality, performance, or fitness for any particular purpose.

For more information regarding acceptable Internet use, please consult the library's *Internet Acceptable Use Policy*.

Guidelines for Acceptable Computer Use

Authorized Users

- In order to use library computers, patrons must present his/her own library card or photo ID. Patrons may not check out a computer pass for use by another person.
- Individuals who are visiting Caroline County for a short period of time may be allowed to check out a public computer for use by presenting a current photo ID.
- Users that have blocked accounts will not be allowed to use library computers.
- For minor children:
 - Children under the age of thirteen (13) must be under the direct supervision of a parent or guardian.
 - Children under the age of sixteen (16) may use a computer without direct supervision, but a parent or guardian must be inside the library.
 - All children under the age of eighteen (18) must have parental permission to use the Internet.
- Use of another person's library card or computer pass is prohibited. Computer privileges may be suspended, revoked, or denied to anyone who uses another person's library card or computer pass with or without their permission and to any patron that lends their library card or computer pass to another person in order to evade payment of fines or other fees.

Access

- Computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- To ensure fair access for all patrons, individual branches may enforce time limits of one (1) hour during peak usage.
- All public computers in the Caroline County Library will be turned off ten (10) minutes before closing. All staff computers will be turned off five (5) minutes before closing.
- The library cannot guarantee computer availability, including during adverse weather conditions, power outages, and periods of peak usage.

Wireless Access

- Wireless access is available for those who bring in their own laptop computers or telephone with internet capabilities.
- Like most public wireless networks, the library's network is not secure and appropriate precautions should be made.

- Users wishing to use the library's wireless Internet connections must ask the front desk for the current log-in and password. Library cards are not required to access the wireless network, but patrons will be required to accept this policy as well as the *Internet Acceptable Use Policy* upon connection.
- The library cannot guarantee that patrons will be able to make a wireless connection.
- Electrical outlets are available at study tables for powering laptops and other personal electronic devices.
- Caroline County Library is not responsible for any personal computers left unattended.

Printing and Downloading

- Users may print electronic files using library computers. Wireless printing is not available.
- Black and white printouts are twenty cents (\$.20) per page. Color printing is not available from library computers.
- Please ask for staff assistance before printing. Computer users are responsible for the cost of all pages printed.
- Certain exceptions or reductions in printing costs may be made, e.g. printing résumés, job applications, and homework for K-12 students. Please note: Caroline County government officials and staff may use printers for official business free of charge.
- Computer users may also save their work to a personal portable storage device. The library may have one available for use inside the library, but that is not guaranteed.
- Any data left on a computer's hard drive will be deleted. Patrons must use their own devices when saving information.
- USB access is only to be used to access information contained on portable thumb drives provided by the patrons. Any other use, e.g. charging cell phones or any other electronic device, may cause damage to the computers and can result in suspension of computer privileges.
- Users must adhere to copyright and software licensing when downloading files.
- The library is not responsible for loss of data that may occur when printing or saving items to a storage device.

Staff Assistance

- Library staff provides limited assistance for basic start-up procedures, but cannot offer in-depth personal instruction in the use of personal computer or software applications other than the library's own access catalog and electronic databases.
- Help with accessing the library's wireless network may be available, but the library cannot provide technical assistance with configurations or troubleshooting.
- Library staff will not physically handle personal electronic devices while providing assistance.
- Any patron who needs more than basic assistance and guidance is encouraged to attend scheduled library support classes and tutoring sessions.

Patron Responsibilities

- By registering for a library card, patrons agree to abide by the terms of this policy.
- Users assume complete financial responsibility for any damage they or their children may cause to computer hardware or software.

- To cut down on noise and crowding, no more than two (2) patrons may occupy a computer workstation. The library reserves the right to limit that number when necessary. Staff may make exceptions for special circumstances.
- Patrons are required to use headphones to listen to audio/video files while inside the library.
- Because of bandwidth limitations, patrons may be asked to avoid using nonessential audio/video files or opening multiple applications at the same time during periods of peak usage.

Adopted by Caroline Library, Inc. Board of Trustees July 1, 2013

Amended January 9, 2014; January 8, 2015

Amended and Adopted by Caroline County Board of Supervisors January 14, 2020