

**North Valley Public Library
Computer and Internet Use Policy**

Approved by Library Board 7/19/06

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The North Valley Public Library provides free, unfiltered access to the internet for the purpose of research, communication, and recreation. Public access PCs also provide word processing and other software selections. No station provides support for all file types, browser plug-ins or internet technologies.

Confidentiality and Patron Responsibility

The North Valley Public Library upholds the right of confidentiality and privacy for all library users. The library strives to balance the rights of users to access information resources with the rights of staff and patrons to work in a public environment free from offensive sounds and images. Users are expected to respect the sensibilities of others when accessing information.

Computer and Internet Use Guidelines

Please respect others' privacy by not attempting to observe or comment on what others are viewing. Remain sensitive to the fact that you are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages.

Do not gather around search stations when doing so may obstruct others or create noise that distracts others.

When using public access computers, please avoid loud or boisterous conversation that may disturb others.

As a courtesy to others, log off completely when you are finished with your session.

Desktop Computers

Patrons may use their library card to log onto library-provided desktop computers to access the internet. A limited number of guest passes are available from the check out desk for people without a library card.

There are three computer workstations available for people with low vision, blindness or low dexterity. There is one adjustable-height computer workstation for people in wheelchairs. Patrons requiring these accommodations will be given priority to use these workstations. Patrons who do not require accommodations may be asked to give up an accessible workstation for someone who does.

Each individual is limited to 60 minutes per day of desktop computer use or at the discretion of library staff. A maximum of two persons may sit/work together on one computer.

There is a per page charge for printing from public computers. Please pay at the checkout desk.

Laptop Computers

Free wireless internet service is available within the library to anyone who brings his/her own laptop and network card.

Laptop computers are available for use inside the library. Patrons must have a library card and a driver's license, which they will leave at the checkout desk in order to use a laptop. Patrons age 18 or older may substitute a state-issued identification card in lieu of a driver's license.

The library may occasionally host events wherein the driver's license requirement for laptop use will be waived.

A parent or guardian with a driver's license and library card may check out one laptop for a child in their care, provided there are no desktop computers available for the child to use *and* the parent or guardian stays in the library to supervise the child's use of the laptop for the duration of the checkout period.

Each individual is limited to 60 minutes per day of laptop computer use or at the discretion of library staff.

Patrons who do not return the laptop to the checkout desk in the allotted time will be assessed a late fee of \$1.00 per hour. There will be a 15-minute grace period for late fees.

Misuse of Library Computers

Illegal activities or activities that interfere with or disrupt the network, users, services or equipment are prohibited and not protected by the library's privacy policy. 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 is 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 media, requiring a user to leave a computer or the premises, and contacting law enforcement authorities.

Internet users are responsible for complying with copyright law, licensing agreements and the policies of individual web sites that they view.

Misuse of computer equipment or software may result in loss of computer privileges, loss of library privileges and prosecution.

Misuse includes but is not limited to:

- Viewing material that violates federal, state or local laws or regulations, including those regarding accessing, viewing, printing and distributing obscenity or child pornography
- Hacking into the library computer system or any other computer system
- Mishandling, damaging or attempting to damage computer equipment or software
- Tampering with computer settings
- Interfering with system operations, integrity or security
- Attempting to gain or gaining access to another person's files
- Engaging in any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment
- Violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements or the policies of the individual Web sites that you view
- Failing to pay for printing
- Failing to comply with time limits or refusing or ignoring a staff person's request to give up a computer
- Any other violation of the Computer and Internet Use Policy

Caveats

The internet is a global entity with a wide variety of content. Though it can provide access to excellent information, it also contains information that may be inaccurate, outdated, or offensive to individuals. Library patrons use it at their own risk. The use of Internet resources carries with it the responsibility to evaluate the quality of information accessed. The availability of information on the internet does not constitute endorsement of the content by the North Valley Public Library.

The library does not select the material on the internet and has no means or statutory authority to assure that only constitutionally protected material is available on the internet. The authority to determine what illegal (obscene) content rests with the Ravalli County Attorney and the Montana Attorney General.

Files may be downloaded using supported media. Software and other files downloaded from the internet may contain viruses or spyware that may infect other computers. The library is not responsible for damage to media or

corruption of data, including that caused by mechanical malfunction caused by virus or spyware infection while using library computers.

Supervising Children's Use

The public library, unlike schools, 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 or other library resources. The responsibility for what minors read or view rests with parents or guardians.

The following are recommended guidelines for parents and guardians to ensure that children have positive online experiences, whether at home or in the library.

- Use the internet as a family. Join your children in internet exploration.
- Explore the wide range of available information and tell your children about sites you consider inappropriate for them.
- Encourage children to use sites you recommend and counsel them to avoid sites you consider unsuitable.
- Provide guidelines for your children on the amount of time they spend online, just as for television viewing.
- Instruct children NEVER to give out personal information (name, address, password, telephone number, credit card number) online.
- Teach children to be good online consumers. As with print information, consider the source, date, and accuracy of online information.

As it does with other library resources, the library will provide training on electronic resources. It will also make information available to help parents and guardians in their efforts to exercise their rights and responsibilities regarding their own children's use of electronic resources.