

LS 801 Access to Electronic Resources

Section: 800-Technology

Effective: August 2024

Purpose

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

Policy

The Internet enables the Library to provide information beyond the confines of its own collection. The Tampa-Hillsborough County 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.

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.

Customers are responsible for using the Library computers in accordance with this policy and LS501, the Library Code of Conduct. Filtering software in conjunction with firewall technology is used to manage Internet access on all library computers. Library customers may request that library staff review any website, either blocked by the filter or not. Customer Request for Review of a Website forms are available to customers at all Public Service Desks. (See LS802, Request for Review of a Website).

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 can be waived by a parent when completing a library card application for their child, or by visiting a local library and making a verbal request to the staff. The parent's request for waiver will be documented in the child's library card record.

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. 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.

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. The Library computers are equipped with software that erases all customer entries and activities when the computer is restarted after each use.

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. 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.

Customers who intentionally damage or alter the computers, including installing or removing computer cables, adapters, etc. will receive a warning and be asked to leave for the day after the first incident. A second incident will result in customers being formally prohibited from returning for the duration specified in the trespass notice.

Procedure

Workstations providing public access to the Internet are to be located in areas of the floor where activity can be easily monitored by staff. Customers are allotted a 1-hour session with up to 2 additional 1-hour extensions, allowing a total of 3 hours of Internet access per day on most computers. The exception is the special guest passes for the Genealogy

computers, which will grant the full 3 hours of access at the customer's first log in. Customers will be given the option to extend a session, only when no one else is waiting, with the exception of the Genealogy special guest pass users who receive the full 3 hours at their first login.

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 LS803, Time Management Software for Internet Computers).

Computer sessions are non-transferable. The customer who schedules the computer must be the one to use it. Customers must use their personal library card number or guest pass and enter their PIN to log on to an Internet computer or place a reservation for the use of an Internet computer. No more than two people can 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.

Guest passes are only for customers over 17 years of age. Children under 17 years old are to access computers under the supervision of a parent or guardian using their library card, parent or guardian's guest pass, or HAAL pass number.

Customers may be asked to comply with sign-in and time limitations for all 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.

Customers are responsible for using library laptops in accordance with this policy and the Library Code of Conduct. The Library is not responsible for any objectionable material that may be found on the Internet while using a laptop. It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to provide any monitoring or restriction of their child's access to the Internet while the device is checked out.

The Library assumes no responsibility for any loss and damage, direct or indirect, of personal and/or financial information incurred while the borrower is accessing the Internet from the laptop. No user files will be retained on the hard drive, and the Library is not responsible for the saving or security of personal information accessed or entered in the laptop.

Borrowers using a laptop-dispensing kiosk are required to agree electronically to the Laptop Borrowing Agreement at the time of checkout. Borrowers using a laptop-dispensing kiosk must agree to have their picture taken by the kiosk.

A borrower may only check out one laptop from the kiosk at a time. Laptops are checked out on a first-come, first served basis. Laptops are to be used in the Reading Room only and may not be taken from the building. Upon the expiration of the three-hour period, the borrower must return the laptop to the laptop-dispensing kiosk. The laptops are traceable and may be subject to retrieval via GPS tracking if taken offsite.

Refer to policy LS503, Requests for Protected Information in the event that law enforcement authorities ask to see computer log files, or if law enforcement officers provide a judicial order.