

## **Computer and Internet Usage Policy**

### **Mid-MS Regional Library System**

#### **Policy Statement**

The Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System (MMRLS) is committed to providing equitable access to technology resources for all community members, fostering digital literacy, and ensuring a welcoming environment for learning and exploration. The library provides access to the internet and computers as a service to the community. The internet contains a wide variety of material and opinions from various points of view. Not all sources provide accurate, complete, or current information; some may be considered offensive or inappropriate to users. The library is not capable of monitoring or controlling information accessible from the internet and does not accept responsibility for content viewed on library equipment or over library internet connections. Library customers are responsible for their use of the internet in the library. The library assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment or configurations, security, or data files resulting from connection to the library's network. Customers using the library's internet access or equipment do so at their own risk.

#### **Customer Responsibilities**

Customers are responsible for the following:

- Complying with the MMRLS Computer Use Policy and other applicable library policies, including but not limited to the MMRLS Customer Conduct Policy.
- Observing all local, state, and federal computer use laws and regulations.
- Any and all access, use, or dissemination of information by means of the internet. In the case of a minor, the parent, guardian, or caregiver are responsible for monitoring use and accept responsibility for any damages or illegal activity committed by the minor during use.
- Resolving problems related to their computer use, including, but not limited to, access, loss, or damage of data, invasion of privacy, electronic transactions, or damage to equipment.
- Being aware of computer viruses and other destructive computer programs to avoid being a victim or distributor of these processes.
- Paying for any printouts resulting from their computer use and applicable charges upon completion of such use (see "Printing Services").
- Possessing basic personal knowledge of computer use, software applications, and some knowledge of the internet. Library staff can provide limited and reasonable assistance as time permits, but cannot handle, view, or enter private and personal identifying information for a patron.
- Saving work to the cloud or removable storage devices. Storage devices are available for purchase at the circulation desk. Documents or other information saved to library computers will not be retained or maintained by the library.
- Configuring personal wireless devices. Library staff can provide reasonable and general information about the wireless network and applicable device settings as necessary.

#### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

MMRLS respects the privacy of its patrons. Staff may monitor computer use to ensure policy compliance. Web browsers keep a record of which sites a person views, and may also save email, username, and password information. While this information is periodically deleted from library

computers, it is the responsibility of the patron to ensure that all personal information is removed from the computer following every session. The library will not be held responsible for inadvertent disclosure of a patron's viewing history.

### **Acceptable/Unacceptable Uses**

Computer Customers:

Must use their MMRLS library card and PIN or request a guest pass (after presenting staff with a current government-issued picture ID) to access the computer and agree to the computer use policy.

- Must not owe more than \$5.00 in library fines and fees or have other blocks on their library account.
- Must use library computers only for educational, informational, and recreational purposes.
- Must never access pornographic materials or websites.
- Ensure that any child under ten is accompanied and supervised by their responsible adult or an authorized caregiver (16 years old or older) while they access the internet or use a library computer. Children under ten must use a guest pass to log on to a library computer after staff verifies that a responsible adult is present.
- May not damage or alter library equipment, software, or data, including, but not limited to, changing existing computer settings, configurations, or software.
- May not download software onto library computers.
- Must respect all library customers' rights and property, and refrain from activities that disrupt, disturb, or prevent others from using the library and its resources or violate another customer's privacy.
- Should use earbuds or headphones when accessing websites or other content with sound. Earbuds are available for purchase at the circulation desk.
- Are prohibited from using library computers for illegal or unlawful activities.
- Must not attempt to gain unauthorized access to library computers using another person's library card account.
- Must respect intellectual property rights by making only authorized copies of copyrighted, licensed, or otherwise controlled material.

### **Internet Filters**

MMRLS complies with state and federal laws mandating the use of filtering software in public libraries. Both internet computers and wireless access are filtered for obscene or harmful websites in accordance with the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA); Mississippi Intercommunications/Internet Policy (February 19, 1997); and Mississippi law 97-5-29. Users should be aware that filtering software is inherently imprecise and may not block all information that some individuals may find offensive, inaccurate, or inappropriate. Patrons who believe a website has been blocked or unblocked by the library filter in error should notify library staff, who will contact the IT Coordinator or Executive Director for a determination and further action, as necessary.

## **Wi-Fi Usage Policy**

Patrons using the library's wireless network must:

- Agree to this Computer and Internet Usage Policy.
- Ensure their devices are compatible with the MMRLS network and secured against viruses, malware, and unauthorized access.
- Avoid engaging in any illegal or prohibited activities while connected to the library's Wi-Fi.

## **Printing Services**

The library offers printing services for a fee to meet the needs of our patrons. Patrons may print directly from library computers, use the library's wireless printing service to print documents from their personal devices, or email documents to staff for printing. To use wireless printing, patrons may need to download a designated app, driver, or access a specific printer service on their mobile device or laptop. Library staff are available to assist with accessing wireless printing, but it is the patron's responsibility to ensure their device is compatible.

Current fees for library technology services can be viewed by visiting:

<https://midmisslib.com/policies/>.

## **Compliance**

Failure to comply with this policy or library staff directions may result in restriction or termination of the customer's library privileges or, if applicable, require compensation to the library. Illegal acts involving library resources may be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

## **Penalties**

Anyone who willfully violates the computer use policy will be subject to forfeiture of computer privileges as follows:

1. First offense: three months.
2. Second offense: six months.
3. Third offense: twelve months.
4. Fourth offense: permanent service loss.

Potential policy violations must be documented by staff in an incident report as soon as possible after the incident to relevant headquarter staff for a final determination. Severe violations may result in more serious penalties, up to and including a permanent library ban, as determined by the Executive Director or Administrative Board of Trustees. Appeals to these penalties must be submitted in writing to the MMRLS Administrative Board of Trustees for consideration at its next scheduled meeting. The decision of the board is final.

## **Digital Literacy Support**

The library provides resources to help patrons develop digital literacy skills, including:

- Access to online tutorials and guides.
- Periodic workshops covering safe internet practices and basic computer skills.
- One-on-one assistance as staff time and system policy allows.