Computer and Internet Policy

Western Allegheny Community Library is committed to providing access to informational, educational, recreational and cultural resources for library users of all ages and backgrounds. Throughout its history, the Western Allegheny Community Library has made information available in a variety of formats, from print materials and audiovisual materials to presentations. The library's computer system provides the opportunity to integrate electronic resources from information networks around the world with the library's other resources. The library strives to balance the rights of users to access information resources with the rights of users to work in a public environment free from sounds and images intended to harass other library users or library staff.

The library's goal in providing Internet access is to enhance its existing collection in size and depth and, as a public access agency, to give anyone who wishes to use the Internet the chance to do so.

Computer Use

Any patron with a current library card and fines under $20.00 may use a computer. School cards are also available for students who do not have a library card but looking to use the computers for schoolwork.

When logging in to a computer, the system will request the patron's library card number. If the patron does not have a library card, guest passes are available at the Circulation Desk.

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Computer sessions are limited to one-hour intervals. If no one is waiting to use a computer, an extension may be granted. Extension requests should be made while there are at least 5 minutes remaining in the original session. If the extension is made after the system has already closed, all material will be lost.

Use of the computers will be on a first come, first served basis. Reservations are not accepted.

Printing is available on all terminals. Patrons will be prompted to select what pages and copies they want printed. Staff is not able to alter print jobs once they are sent. The system will ask for the patron's name and inform them of the payment amount required to release the print job. Patrons are responsible to pay for all pages printed. Copies are 25¢ per page for black and white and 50¢ per page for color.

Saving to the computer's C: (hard) drive is not permitted. When computers restart, all information, files, and settings are erased. Compact discs (CDs), flash drives, and memory cards (SD cards) may be used to save work.

Library staff are happy to provide assistance to patrons using the internet and computer software.

The library is not responsible for the loss of personal data or damage to personal property.

Internet Use

In response to advances in technology and the changing informational needs of our community, WACL endeavors to develop collections, resources, and services that meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of our diverse community. It is within this context that WACL offers access to the Internet. The Internet is a global communication network and information resource. WACL does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through this resource. The library cannot assume responsibility for the accuracy, quality, or current nature of Internet information. The Internet may contain information of a

controversial or offensive nature. The determination of viability and usefulness of Internet information falls upon the patron.

The Pennsylvania Legislature has expressly exempted public libraries from persecution for displaying or permitting the display of obscene materials to minors. While the Library has been exempt from the obscenity statute and prosecution, we will assume practices that fully regard the issue of what is harmful to minors, and restrict access of obscene and explicit sexual materials as defined in 18PA C.S. 5903 of the Criminal Code.

Internet resources throughout the Library are provided equally to all patrons, no matter the age. Parents are fully responsible for the activities of their children at the Library. WACL does not act "in loco parentis" and acknowledges the exclusive responsibility of parents and guardians to guide their children's reading and computer use.

Adults may be advised that while accessing and viewing sexual materials is within the law for an adult, the risk of exposure to minors and the consequence of being "harmful to minors" is significant. When children are in proximity or even if another adult is expressly offended, the patron viewing such materials may be asked to close a web site and select a more appropriate resource or location outside of the library.

Children or adults who continuously disregard the library policies and the requests of the staff may be asked to leave the building.

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