

SLPL - Computer & Internet Use

Revised: November 3, 2025

This policy supersedes all previous editions

Board Adopted: December 5, 2000

Purpose

Spirit Lake Public Library provides access to a broad range of information resources including those available through the internet. Internet computers offer a full range of software for searching the internet, displaying files, and viewing multimedia content. No station provides support for all file types, browser plug-ins, or internet technologies.

Scope

This policy applies to both the library-owned computers and wireless access available at the library. Library staff are available to assist with the use of library resources, but because of the many different internet applications available, and the variety of devices users may bring into the library, the library cannot provide complete technical support.

Precautions

The internet provides access to a wide range of educational, reference, and recreational resources; some information may be controversial, illegal, erroneous, etc. The internet is an unmoderated medium and, as such, it is the responsibility of the user to select or reject online information based on good judgement and discretion. The library employs minimal, basic filtering software. Wireless access is unsecured.

The library is not responsible for any data loss or loss of privacy that may be incurred as a result of accessing any online resource through library equipment. Nor does the library make any guarantee, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of any website or any content posted on the internet. Users may ask for assistance from library staff to determine the quality, authority, or validity of information retrieved.

Library staff cannot monitor or control the content on the Internet. In no event shall the Spirit Lake Public Library have any liability for damages of any kind arising from its connection to the

Internet. Users (in the case of minors, their parents, or guardians) of the Library's computers and Internet access agree to assume full liability for actions using Library equipment.

Acceptable Use

Patrons who use either Library computers or their own personal laptops are expected to use them in a quiet, responsible, and courteous manner, to respect the privacy of other users, and to follow all of the Library's policies, guidelines, and procedures.

All Internet users shall comply with the Library's Patron Behavior Policy as well as relevant local, state, and federal laws. Violations may result in loss of computer privileges and/or Library privileges.

All electronic traffic originating from the Library computers will be under acceptable use standards. Failure to abide by these standards may result in the loss of Internet, computer, or other privileges:

- Respect the privacy of others.
- Comply with copyright law and licensing for individual data, programs, and resources.
- Patrons must use the Library's computer workstations responsibly, respecting the integrity of the Library's hardware and software.
- Patrons must use the programs as installed by the Library. Additional software downloads are not permitted.

Unacceptable Use

Computing resources may only be used for legal purposes per this Policy. Examples of unacceptable use include, but are not limited to the following:

- Uses for any purposes that violate applicable federal, state, or local laws including, but not limited to copyright law and licensing agreements.
- Attempting to or gaining unauthorized entry to other computing, information, or communications sources or devices (hacking).
- Malicious, threatening, harassing, or obscene behavior or language. Obscene behavior includes the public display of obscene materials on computer screens or in hard copy.

- Misrepresentation of oneself or the Library.
- Activities that could cause congestion and disruption of networks and systems.
- To access, upload, download, transmit, or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit language or material.
- Installation or downloading of any software onto the computer network or its components.
- Destruction or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the Library or other users.

Privacy

- Users are cautioned to guard the security of personal information, credit card numbers, computer accounts, passwords, and other types of authorizations when using the Internet.
- Electronic files should not be considered confidential.
- The Spirit Lake Public Library is not liable for any direct or indirect and/or punitive damages (including lost data or information) sustained or incurred in connection with the use or unavailability of the system.

Responsibilities of Library Staff and Users

- Library staff will not monitor a user's computer or Internet use except to ensure compliance with this Policy. The user, or the parent or guardian of a minor, is responsible for their Internet session at all times.
- Library staff will assist users with the Library's electronic resources including the online databases and the Internet, and will also provide limited assistance in the use of library-installed software. Staff are not able to provide extensive tutoring or assistance in the creation of documents such as letters or resumes. Staff are prohibited from filling out online forms or entering any patron's private information onto any website. Nor are staff able to type, edit, or interpret documents or emails for Library patrons.

Use of Library Computer Workstations

Use of the Library's public computers is on a first-come, first-served basis and may not be reserved in advance.

- For statistical purposes, users are asked to record a name on the sign in sheet. This record keeping is for statistical purposes only and the sign in sheet is destroyed at the end of the day for privacy reasons.
- The library's computers are set up for use by a single individual. A maximum of two persons may sit/work together at any one computer, except in special cases, such as when a parent/guardian is with children.
- Users must use headphones/earbuds when listening to audio content. Headphones are available at the desk.
- Leave all equipment on. If a hardware or software problem develops, please contact the Library staff. Do not attempt to make adjustments yourself.
- All computers will automatically shut down ten (10) minutes before the Library closes. Be sure you save all your work to a flash drive before the computers shut down.

Printing and Saving

- Printed copies may be made on library-supplied paper only, for a fee (a schedule of fees is available on the Library's website and at the desk).
- The Library is not responsible for loss of data which may occur when saving documents to flash drives or other media.
- Patrons are responsible for all printing fees.

Misuse of the computer by not complying with these procedures and policies will result in loss of privileges