

SAN MARCOS PUBLIC LIBRARY INTERNET & COMPUTER USE POLICY

The following Internet and Computer Use Policy has been adopted by the San Marcos Public Library Board as authorized by Section 2.298 of the City of San Marcos Code of Ordinances. This policy is to be considered the official position of the library and is to be followed by all concerned with governing and using library computer resources.

INTRODUCTION:

The San Marcos Public Library provides free computer access, including access to the Internet, word processing, and selected software applications. The library also provides wireless access to the Internet for patrons who have their own computers and equipment with wireless connections.

Patrons who use library computers or their own personal computers in the library or on the library's grounds, are required to abide by the following policy as well as any additional rules and/or time limits which are posted in the library or on the library's web site.

Users who fail to comply with the library's Internet and Computer Use Policy will be asked to terminate their use of the computer. Users who repeatedly violate these policies will be prohibited from using the library's computers or wireless network for a period of up to one year.

GENERAL RULES FOR USING COMPUTERS AT THE LIBRARY:

The following rules apply to patrons who are using a library-owned computer or their own computer in the library or on the library grounds:

Patrons may not use computers at the library for any illegal purpose, including viewing or printing child pornography, obscene material, or material that is harmful to minors. If a member of the library staff notices a user accessing content that could reasonably be considered to be in violation of this policy they will request the user to stop accessing this material. Failure to comply with this request may result in loss of computer privileges for a period of up to one year.

Computers at the library may not be used to make unauthorized entry to other computer systems or databases accessible via the Internet.

Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials without the explicit permission of the copyright holder, except as permitted by the principles of fair use. Responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the users. The library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

Patrons may not cluster around computers in a manner that creates an obstruction or creates noise that distracts others.

Patrons must use headphones when listening to audio content on computers, and must keep the volume low enough to not disturb others.

RULES FOR USE OF LIBRARY-OWNED COMPUTER WORKSTATIONS:

The following rules apply to patrons who are using library owned computers:

Library computers are available on a first come, first served basis. When all computers are in use, reservations may be made for the next available computer.

To ensure fair access for all patrons, the library has installed software to manage computer reservations and time limits. This system requires patrons to enter a valid library card number to access a computer. If access is denied, patrons must update and clear any outstanding balances on their account before using a library computer. Patrons may use only their own library card to access library computers. Violations may result in loss of computer privileges.

The library provides a limited number of computers for short-term use by patrons without library cards.

Patrons may not unplug, remove, modify or damage computer equipment or software in any way. Users may not attempt to reconfigure the system or interfere with the current system set-up. Patrons may not install or run their own software from the disk drives on the library's computers.

Users will be held financially responsible for any damage they do to library computer equipment or software.

The library's computers do not allow users to retain documents or personal files on the hard drive. Patrons should save documents to disks or other personal storage media. The library is not responsible for loss of data that may occur when the computers shut down.

It is possible that patrons who download files from our computers for use on other computers may transfer computer viruses to those computers. The library is not responsible for any damage, which may result from this activity.

Library staff cannot provide extensive instructions or assistance to individual computer users. Patrons whose behavior suggests that they are unable to effectively and responsibly utilize the library's computers without significant staff assistance will be asked to terminate their use of the computer.

INFORMATION REGARDING INTERNET ACCESS:

The library provides both filtered and unfiltered Internet access on library workstations. The library's wireless network provides unfiltered access to the Internet.

Users should be aware that the Internet may contain material which is controversial, offensive, obscene, inaccurate, or illegal. The library cannot monitor Internet use nor does it control the content of material which patrons find on the Internet.

The library's filtered Internet stations have a program installed on them which is designed to block access to broad categories of Internet sites. The library selects categories for filtering in order to facilitate use of the computers by different types of users. Categories filtered in some areas and not others include social networking sites and games.

The filtering system is also designed to block materials considered inappropriate for children. Parents should be aware that a child may encounter an objectionable Internet site even though we provide a filtering program. Parents who wish to control the material their children view on the Internet should provide sufficient supervision of their children to accomplish this.

The library also provides access to unfiltered Internet. In order to use the library's unfiltered Internet stations, patrons must be able to verify that they are at least eighteen years of age. Children under the age of eighteen may use the unfiltered Internet stations if they are accompanied by their parent or legal guardian.

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