Bladen County Public Library

Computer and Internet Use Policy

The mission of the Bladen County Public Library is to provide opportunity, guidance, and stimulations for personal growth, to provide the individual with timely and accurate information, to improve the quality of life by providing material in a variety of formats for the productive use of leisure time, to serve as a meeting place for cultural activities and promote participation, enjoyment, and appreciation of the arts.

Essential to the mission of the Bladen County Public Library is ensuring that the people of Bladen County have the right and means to free and open access to ideas and information which are fundamental to a democracy. The library will protect intellectual freedom, promote literacy, encourage lifelong learning, and provide library materials and information services. In adopting this policy the Library Board of Trustees adopts the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association Statement on Internet Filtering and the American Library Association Access to Electronic Information, Services and Networks Statement.

Internet access is available to all registered patrons of the Bladen County Public Library. Users must present his/her valid library card when signing in to use Internet access computers. “Valid library card” is defined as an unexpired card with updated contact information. Users are allowed one 60 minute time slot per day. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the library staff based on reserve slots and level of use.

Visitors 18 & older to the Bladen County Public Library may use library computers by showing a photo id. A guest card will be checked out to the visitor for one hour with additional sessions available at the discretion of library staff based on if another patron is waiting and other factors. Library card holders are also allowed to use a guest if they do not have their library cards. At the discretion of library staff, library card holders may be asked to show a photo id in order to use a guest pass. Computers will be unavailable for use the last 30 minutes before closing.

All work must be saved to a flash drive or other external storage device. A limited number of headphones are available for use at library computers. Volume must be kept low enough to avoid disturbing neighboring users. Laptop users must also keep their volume low enough on their own equipment to avoid disturbing other users of the library.

\*\*Bladen County Public Library offers free wireless access to library patrons who have their own laptops and/or other mobile devices. These access points are unsecured and unfiltered. It is the responsibility of the user to comply with the approved Internet Use Policy of the Bladen County Public Library. Use of the wireless network is at the risk of the user. The library disclaims all liability for loss of or damages resulting from the loss of confidential information. Additionally, the library disclaims liability for damages caused to hardware or software due to electric surges, viruses, or hacking. The library cannot guarantee that your device will work with the Library’s wireless access points. The library will be held harmless for any illegal activity or information accessed whether appropriate or inappropriate while on the Internet via the public wireless connection. In the case of minors, responsibility rests with parents or legal guardian. Network printing is **not** available for wireless users. Information must be saved to a flash drive or external storage device to print. Bladen County Public Library is not responsible for personal equipment left in a public place.

Children under the age of 18 must have parental permission to use any Internet workstation. Parents can sign a form to allow children under the age of 18 to access the Internet when applying for the child’s library card or at a later date. The Bladen County Public Library and the County of Bladen do not assume any responsibility for the use of the Internet by minors.

Children under age 10 must be accompanied at the computer workstation by a parent or responsible caregiver over 18 when accessing the Internet. It is also acceptable for the parent or responsible caregiver to be close enough to the child’s computer to observe the child’s computer usage without being seated directly beside of the child. If a parent wishes for a child to have permission to access the Internet only when the parent is with the child (no matter what the child’s age), the parent only has to tell library staff that the child will not be allowed access when the parent is not present. A Children’s Computer with age-appropriate games is available for children ages 6 & up to use without parental supervision at the main library in Elizabethtown. Children under 6 should be supervised by a parent or responsible caregiver at the Children’s Computer.

Parents of minor children are responsible for their children’s use of the Internet through the library’s connection. Restriction of a child’s access is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian.

It is the responsibility of the user (or his/her parent or legal guardian) to determine what is appropriate on the Internet. Information on the Internet is unregulated and materials accessible through it may be inaccurate, incomplete, outdated, biased, inappropriate, or offensive. The Bladen County Public Library is not responsible for the accuracy of information taken from the public access Internet workstations.

\*The Bladen County Public Library uses filtering software to comply with the federal Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

A black and white printer is available at each location for printing information retrieved on the Internet, for a $.10 charge per page. Color copies are also available for a $ .20 charge per page.

Scanning is available free of charge, but the document must be scanned to a flash drive.

Computer users may reserve time on the computer up to one day in advance. Reservations may be made at the circulation desk or by calling the library branch where the patron wishes to reserve a computer.

The library staff will provide assistance for basic start up procedures, but cannot provide in-depth training concerning the Internet or personal computer use.

Internet use will be managed in a manner consistent with library policies and procedures. The following actions will not be allowed:

* sending, receiving, displaying text, files, or images of any type that are obscene, offensive or disruptive
* violating any laws or regulations regarding copyright and software license
* using obscene language or adding files to the network
* soliciting and advertising
* profiting from activities
* writing chain letters,
* harassing, insulting, or attacking others
* using Internet relay chats (IRC) for any form of conversation

Violators of the above provisions will receive two warnings. If a third offense is committed the violator’s privilege to access the Internet will be permanently revoked. If a child age 10 & up violates the above provisions, library staff reserve the right to require a parent or responsible caregiver to be seated at all times while the child accesses the Internet.

**DISCLAIMER**: In offering Internet access, the Bladen County Public Library System cannot guarantee that information found through the Internet is either accurate, authoritative, or factual. Nor can the library control access points which often change rapidly and unpredictably.

Individual users are reminded that they are responsible for the sites they choose to access. Parents of minor children are responsible for the children’s use of the Internet through the library’s connections. As with other library material, any restriction of a child’s access is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian.

If you feel the information you have obtained via the Internet is inaccurate or offensive, we suggest you contact the original producer/distributor of that information.

Provision of this networked information service does not constitute any endorsement of the content of that information by the Bladen County Public Library System.

Adopted: September 17, 1998 - Bladen County Public Library Board of Trustees

Adapted: October 19, 1998 - Bladen County Board of Commissioners\*Revised: March 18, 2004 - Bladen County Public Library Board of Trustees

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