

# Eureka Public Library District

## Computer and Internet Use Policy

### Introduction

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The Eureka Public Library District recognizes that within the community there are groups and individuals with diverse interests, backgrounds and needs. The Library further recognizes and emphasizes that the public library is an institution of a democratic society and was established to serve all of the people in a community.

Throughout its history, the Eureka Public Library has made information available in a variety of formats, from print to audiovisual materials. In order to provide patrons with the best and most current information available, the Library includes on-line electronic materials as a part of the services provided to patrons.

### Disclaimer

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These resources contain a wealth of valuable information, however, users should be aware that some information may be inaccurate, outdated, or offensive. The Library does not endorse the viewpoints or vouch for the accuracy of information obtained online. In addition, the Library does not select or edit Internet content. Use of these resources carries a responsibility to evaluate the quality of the information accessed. Parents and guardians, not the Library, are responsible for the use of these resources by children in their custody. The Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from use of electronic resources.

### Ethical Use

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All users of electronic information resources such as the Internet are expected to use these resources in a responsible manner, consistent with the educational and informational purposes for which they are provided. To assure appropriate use of library resources, electronic access and library equipment may not be used for the following:

- Purposes which violate applicable U.S. or state laws
- Destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the Library
- Disruption or interference of network users or services. Such interference or disruption includes, but is not limited to: distribution of unsolicited advertising; harassment, libeling, or slandering of others; propagation of computer worms or viruses.
- Sending, receiving, or displaying text or graphics which may reasonably be construed as obscene by community standards.
- Violating licensing and payment agreements between EPLD and network/database providers.

- Game Playing; Internet Access is intended primarily for research and information sources only.

## Limitations

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The Library reserves the right to require all prospective users to attend an orientation session as a condition for access to the Library Internet stations. Orientation will include training in the use of software and hardware, and guidelines for the responsible care of library equipment.

The library staff will assist patrons with Internet use as time permits but cannot offer personal instruction unless prior arrangements have been made. Reference staff are always available to help patrons locate books, periodicals, and videos about the internet. It is recommended that patrons take the workshops offered at the library to increase their knowledge.

The Library does not directly provide electronic mail or access to news and discussion groups. However, free e-mail accounts are available on the Internet.

Sessions will be limited to 30 minutes if there is a waiting list for usage. A session may be of longer duration unless a staff member deems it necessary to limit usage based on availability of computers.

All patrons must sign in at the front desk before computer use and sign out when finished. The Library reserves the right to assign users to specific computers, and switching machines without approval from the front desk is not permitted. All Internet users must have on file a signed Internet Agreement before use.

## Clarifications

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The signature on an Internet Use Registration card is legally binding and indicates the party who signed has read the terms and conditions of this policy and understands their significance.

### Library Printer Fees

Page Type	Cost per page
Black and White	\$0.10
Color	\$0.25
Photographic Color	\$1.00

Users should ask for and pay for printouts at the front desk and are responsible for pages unintentionally printed from their machines. To reduce waste, patrons are encouraged to use the "Print Preview" and "Print Selection" features incorporated into almost all of the Library's software programs.

## Examples of Specific Acceptable and Unacceptable Computer Use

Acceptable	Unacceptable
<p><b>Instant Messaging</b> programs such as those provided by AOL, MSN, ICQ, and Yahoo that limit access to persons already known by the user.</p> <p>Downloading <b>Open Source, Freeware, Shareware, and Purchased Software</b> from online sites such as Shareware.com, Download.com, and commercial software vendors for personal use.</p> <p>Duplication and Transfer of <b>Unrestricted Media</b> such as home videos, public domain audio, scanned images, and personal documents and pictures</p> <p>Installing Freeware, Shareware, and Open Source <b>utilities</b> to facilitate computer use. Examples of permitted installations include programs such as Winzip, Acrobat Reader, and Instant Message Clients. <u>NO SUPPORT</u> is available from Library staff for user installed helper applications.</p>	<p><b>Web-based Chat</b> programs such as IRC, Yahoo! Chat, and Chatbox that allow real-time communications with persons previously unknown to the user.</p> <p>Use of <b>P2P Services</b> such as Kazaa, WinMX, eDonkey, I-Mesh, Limewire, OpenNap, Gnutella, and mIRC.</p> <p>Duplication of <b>Licensed and/or Copyrighted</b> resources such as Commercial Software Programs, DVDs, and Audio CDs.</p> <p>Installing ANY <b>commercial software</b> package or any other software that requires a computer restart to finish installation.</p>

## Violations of the Guidelines

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Internet use will be managed in a manner consistent with the Library's Rules of Conduct which is posted in the Library. Users violating these guidelines will be issued a warning, advised of applicable Library policy, and asked to comply. Users who continue to violate these guidelines after one warning will be restricted from using the Library's online services on that occasion. The Library reserves the right to prohibit violators from future access and use of online services. Illegal acts may subject users to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities.

## Library Patrons' Rights

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Library patrons have certain rights with respect to use of electronic information networks such as the Internet:

- Library patrons have the right to confidentiality and privacy in the use of electronic information networks to the extent possible given certain constraints such as proximity of other patrons and staff in public access settings.
- Library patrons have the right to equitable access to electronic resources.

- Library patrons have the right to access and read all library service policies and discuss questions with appropriate library staff.

## User Confidentiality Advisory

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Because library equipment to access electronic resources is located within plain sight and to assure the library's right to determine appropriateness of usage, patron confidentiality in accessing materials may be compromised. In addition, the Library uses electronic monitoring software to verify compliance with the terms of this agreement. If an infraction is suspect, a snapshot of the user's screen can be taken from the circulation terminal as grounds for access termination and/or to forward to the proper authorities.

## Children's Access to Electronic Information Networks

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The public library, unlike schools, does not serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent). Librarians cannot act in the place of parents in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. Parents are expected to monitor and supervise their children's use. Parents are also encouraged to discuss with their children issues of appropriate use and electronic information network safety. Children under the age of 14 must have a parent or guardian with them at the time of Internet use. (Library Grant participants exempt)

The following are recommended guidelines for parents and guardians to ensure that children have positive online experiences, whether at home or in the library.

- Use the Internet as a family. Join your children in Internet exploration.
- Explore the wide range of available information and tell your children about sites you consider inappropriate for them.
- Encourage children to use sites recommended on the Library's homepage and counsel them to avoid sites you consider unsuitable.
- Provide guidelines for your children on the amount of time they spend online, just as for television viewing.
- Instruct children NEVER to give out personal information (name, address, password, telephone number, credit card number) online.
- Teach children to be good online consumers. As with print information, consider the source, date, and accuracy of online information.

As it does with other library resources, the Library staff will provide limited training on electronic resources and are available to provide assistance and to help identify appropriate sites. It will also make information available to help parents and guardians in their efforts to exercise their rights and responsibilities regarding their own children's use of electronic resources.