

Samuels Public Library Internet Use Policy

Mission

Samuels Public Library is a community resource which enhances the quality of life for residents of Warren County/Front Royal by fulfilling their personal, occupational and recreational needs through services, programs and a collection of materials that is current, balanced and responsive. The Library strives to stimulate and broaden community interests in literature, reading and learning.

Internet Philosophy

Providing Internet access, as an information resource is a logical continuation of the Library's role of formal learning support and reference service. The Internet enables the Library to provide information and commentary from around the globe to users who may not otherwise have access to this resource. This resource enhances the Library's existing collection in depth and in currency. However, the Library cannot control the information available over the Internet and is not responsible for its content. Some sources provide information that is inaccurate, incomplete or dated; some sources may be offensive, disturbing, and/or illegal.

Access and Use

Library computers are available on a first come, first served basis. Advanced reservations are not accepted. Use of the Public Access Computers is available to Library Patrons in good standing by use of their Library Card. Patrons under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian's signed permission on file to use the Internet. Visitors who are not eligible for a Samuels Public Library Patron Card may obtain a Visitor Pass at the Reference Desk. There will be a time limit of 60 minutes per session. At the end of the session a user may request an additional 60 minute session unless others are waiting. Users are limited to three 60 minute sessions per day. Headphones are required whenever there is an audio feature. Headphones may be purchased from the Library at a low cost or users may provide their own headphones.

The Library applies a filtering system to their computers to protect against access to visual depictions that are obscene, contain child pornography, or are harmful to minors. Adult patrons (18 years and older) may request from Library staff unfiltered

access to the Internet to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Because the Library provides Internet access as an informational and educational resource, the Library provides no support for chat and games. The Library periodically offers introductory classes to familiarize patrons with the basics of Internet searching and other computer applications.

Patrons may print electronic files at the cost of 20 cents per page for black and white copies, and 50 cents per page for color copies. Users may use their own storage device to download or save files. Users may also attach their own zip drives, digital cameras, flash drives, hand scanners, iPods, etc. into the USB ports of public machines. Users are not permitted to install software that may be needed to run this equipment, as any software installation may compromise the safety of our network. Only the software packages provided by the Library are available for public use. The Library does not permit the uploading of files onto its equipment.

Unacceptable use

Computing resources may only be used for legal purposes by the public and staff in accordance with the ethical standards of the Library. Examples of unacceptable use include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Uses for any purposes that violate applicable federal, state, or local laws including copyright laws.
2. Interfering with or disrupting other computer users, services, or equipment.
3. Attempting to gain or gaining unauthorized entry to other computing, information, or communications sources or devices (hacking).
4. Malicious threatening, harassing, or obscene behavior or language.
5. Obscene behavior including public display of obscene materials on computer screens or in hard copy.
6. Misrepresentation of oneself to the Library.
7. Activities that could cause congestion and disruption of networks and systems.
8. Unsolicited advertising.
9. To access, upload, download, transmit or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit language or material.
10. Failure to respect the privacy of others.

11. Failure to comply with copyright law and licensing for individual data and programs.
12. Failure to consider the security and functioning of computers, computer networks and systems.

Cautions

1. Parents are responsible for monitoring their minor children's use of the Internet.
2. Users are cautioned to guard closely the security of personal information, credit card numbers, computer accounts, passwords, and other types of authorization.
3. Users are cautioned that the Library cannot guarantee that files downloaded from public access computers are safe for uploading to the person's personal device.
4. Electronic files should not be considered confidential. When required by law, the Library must disclose all files to the extent required by law.
5. The 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 of the system.

Patrons should be aware that public computers are being used in a public place and screens are visible to staff and other patrons. For any content on a computer screen that the Library, in its sole discretion, subject to constitutional limitations, and in consideration of the best interests of the public, determines to be an unacceptable purpose, a staff member may request the patron using the computer to cease viewing the offending computer site.

Samuels Public Library reserves the right to limit, restrict or extend computer privileges and access to its information resources as deemed appropriate and consistent with Library policies, at the discretion of the director and designees.

Users who violate this policy will be warned. A second warning will result in being denied use of the Library's Public Access Computers for four (4) weeks. A user may be permanently banned at the Library Director's discretion for serious or repeated offenses, and law enforcement authorities may be called.

Approved – March 2009