

## Q. Computer and Internet Usage Policy

**1. Introduction:** This constitutes a Library policy for the management of computer data networks and the resources they make available, as well as stand-alone computers that are owned and administered by the Central City Public Library. This policy indicates what privileges and responsibilities are characteristic of the Library computing environment.

**2. Access to Internet Resources:** Throughout its history, the Central City Public Library has made information available in a variety of formats, from print to audiovisual materials. Now, using computers as information resources, the Library is able to obtain information from beyond the confines of its own collection. In response to advances in technology and the changing needs of the community, the Central City Public Library endeavors to develop collections, resources, and services that meet the cultural, informational, recreational, and educational needs of Central City.

The Internet allows users access to information, ideas, and commentary from all around the world. Since the Internet is a global electronic network, there is no governmental control of its users or content. Currently, this is an unregulated medium. While it is true that it offers access to a wealth of material that may be personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enables access to some material that may be offensive and/or illegal. Briefly, illegal activity under the Nebraska Criminal Code includes viewing material legally defined as child pornography, obscenity, and materials harmful to minors. For a complete text of the Nebraska Criminal Code that pertains to Internet use in the Library, it could be found at <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/liblaws/28-800s.html#28-808>.

As a public access agency, the Central City Public Library's goal is to enhance its existing collection in size and depth, and to provide the opportunity to any patron, to access the Internet's resources.

- a. The Central City Public Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content.
- b. Due to the Child Protection Act, it is a requirement for library's who receive governmental funding for internet access to place filtering software on public computers to prevent patrons from illegally accessing visual depictions that are (1) obscene; (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors. However, under the federal Children's Internet Protection Act and Nebraska law patrons age 18 or older may request a library staff member to disable the filter during that patron's Internet session. Users need not give a reason for disabling the filters, but are responsible for their session at all times.
- c. Children under the age of 14 will use the computers in the Youth section.

d. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information. The patron needs to be a good information consumer, questioning the validity of the information you find.

**3. Staff assistance:** The library staff will be glad to assist you in accessing the Internet and attempt to assist you with questions you may have, or offering search suggestions.

**4. Conditions and terms of use in the Library:**

a. Use of the computers is normally available, subject to periodic maintenance, during regular library operating hours.

b. Use of the computers is offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Computers in the adult section have one hour timed sessions. If no one else is waiting for a computer, the patron may ask the librarian for a pin # to access another one hour session. This may be repeated as needed depending upon computer availability.

Youth must sign-in before using computers or gaming system in the youth section, by indicating name and starting time of session. Sign-in sheet is located on Library Aide's desk (behind front counter).

Computers in the youth section have 30 minute timed sessions. Once the 30 minute session is completed, the youth may become eligible for another 30 minute session (based upon computer availability). Maximum computer time for youth computers per day is 1 hour.

Game system playing will be limited to 60 minute sessions. Once a 60 minute session is completed, the youth may become eligible for another 60 minute session (if no one else is waiting to use the system). Maximum game playing time per youth/ per day is 2 hours. Anyone using the gaming system must be willing to end the game when requested by library staff. Gamers will be asked to respect others and keep the volume and noise level low and to treat the equipment gently. Gamers who do not treat equipment gently will be asked by library staff to stop for the day. Gamers who repeatedly abuse equipment will have his/her gaming system privileges revoked.

Computers and other gaming equipment may not be used by youth in the youth section while youth programs are in progress in the library. Exceptions may be granted by the library staff as needed (e.g. computers being used for homework purposes).

c. You may not use your own software programs on Library computers. This will help prevent computer viruses from being spread.

***\*\*Warning: There is a chance that software downloaded from the Internet may contain a virus and you may want to have virus-checking software on your computer before using it. The Central City Public Library is not responsible for damage to a patron's disk or computer, or for any loss of data, damage, or liability that may occur from patron usage of the Library's computers.***

5. You may not always be able to go to the places on the Internet you wish to visit. There are many reasons, among them:
  - a. There may be too many Internet visitors to a particular site, and the host computer has closed or limited access to "visitors".
  - b. The database or resource may be licensed to a particular institution, in which case you would need to be affiliated with the institution in order to obtain access.
  - c. The host computer has changed its address or has closed down.
  - d. The Library's Internet connection may be periodically and temporarily inoperable due to technical difficulties.
  - e. The filtering software blocked that site due to inappropriate content or spyware. Should your site be blocked, please inform the staff to disable the filtering software to allow you to that site.
6. Failure to use the computers or Internet access appropriately and responsibly, will result in the loss of your computer privileges.
7. The cost of printing items varies in price, please check printer for prices.
8. Patrons may use "public domain" e-mail providers (e.g. "Yahoo Mail", "MSN Hotmail", etc.). The Library in any way does not control these. If usage problems occur, contact the appropriate e-mail provider.
9. **Access to Skype**

Skype is an internet-based telephone and live video service. Skype is used to talk with friends or family members around the world with both video and audio. Skype can also be used to hold teleconference meetings with business associates.

The Central City Public Library has 6 Skype laptop(s) which include webcams and microphones. To minimize disruption to other library patrons, Skype may only be used in one of our three private study rooms.

To use the Library's Skype connection:

- Only registered internet users 14 and above may use Skype.
- Individuals must set up their own user id. Staff is available to help with this. Use of the computers is offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Computers in the adult section are limited to one hour sessions. If no one is waiting and the room is available the session can be repeated as needed, depending upon computer availability.
- The Library cannot guarantee that the hardware and software needed to run Skype will function smoothly but will make every effort to keep the system up and running.
- Skype is free to use, unless you wish to call directly to a telephone. In that case, you will have to have a valid credit card to complete the phone call.