

Lake Blackshear Regional Library System Internet Use Policy

Approved by the Board of Trustees February 15, 1996. Amended August 15, 2002.
Amended May 20, 2004. Amended May 5, 2005. Amended August 17, 2006. Amended
August 16, 2007.

DISCLAIMER: Because the Internet is a global system with information from various sources including corporations, foundations, organizations, and individuals, the library is not responsible for the content or accuracy of the information on the Internet or the statements, views, and opinions expressed there. Some materials may be offensive to some people and inappropriate for children.

POLICY STATEMENT: It is the policy of the Lake Blackshear Regional Library System to provide access to online databases to patrons. The purpose of online database access by patrons is to promote research, education, and economic and business development. Recreational use is allowed only as time and other policies and procedures allow. The Internet, as an information resource, enables the library to provide information beyond the confines of its own collection. It allows access to ideas, information, and commentary from around the globe. Currently, however, it is an unregulated medium. As such, while it offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enables access to some materials that may be offensive, disturbing and/or illegal. The Lake Blackshear Regional Library System has no responsibility for the content of the information accessed through online services or agencies. The library staff can and will provide guidance and instruction but cannot monitor.

It is the policy of the Lake Blackshear Regional Library System to protect the confidentiality of records, electronic or otherwise, that identify specific users and link them to search strategies, sites accessed, or other specific data about the information they retrieved or sought to retrieve.

The Board of Trustees of the Lake Blackshear Regional Library System believes that parents have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their children. Parents must work closely with their children in order to select materials that are consistent with personal and family boundaries. Therefore, by board policy, children under the age of 16 MUST have a parent or guardian present during use. Parents are encouraged to read "Child Safety on the Information Highway" produced jointly by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) and the Interactive Services Association (ISA), available at www.safekids.com/child_safety.htm or review the document "My Rules for Online Safety" by Lawrence J. Magid available at <http://www.safekids.com/myrules.htm>.

In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, the computers connected to the Internet at all member libraries of the Lake Blackshear Regional Library System have filters restricting access to sites containing materials with graphic depictions of scenes that are extremely violent, gory, or horrific in nature and may be related to sex, bodily functions, obscenity, or perverse activities, or contain, discuss, or show pornography, including pictures, videos, or text of sex acts, or sexually oriented material. Please note guidelines below for obtaining unfiltered computer use.

USER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Identify yourself properly when using any Internet services.

Be aware that use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct in the library or online using the library's online connections.

Respect copyright and licensing agreements on programs and data.

Respect the privacy of others.

Be considerate of others' needs for a quiet reading/studying environment.

Be aware of time and resource limitations.

Respect the computers and computer systems and do not interfere with or disrupt network users, services, programs, software, or equipment.

Do not transmit or access threatening, obscene (as defined by U.S., state or local laws) or harassing materials.

The Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act, OCG 16-9-90, establishes certain acts involving computer fraud or abuse as crimes punishable by fines or imprisonment or both. "Hacking" or otherwise tampering with the hardware, adding to or deleting information relating to the software, or other acts which obstruct, interrupt or cause the computer to malfunction or are intended to disrupt computer functioning elsewhere, are included in this act. The Lake Blackshear Regional Library System will prosecute both civilly and criminally. The Library reserves the right to prohibit the use of computers to anyone who demonstrates a lack of respect and care for the equipment and/or a refusal to follow the Library's rules and policies relating to their use. This prohibition can be for any length of time, including permanently, if the Library deems it necessary.

AMENDED:

The Lake Blackshear Regional Library System previously followed the intent of its Materials Selection Policy by providing unfiltered access to the Internet. However, the library will comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (see * below) and has researched, evaluated, and installed filtering software as federally mandated. The software is installed on all Internet capable machines as mandated.

The Regional Board notes that current filtering software does not completely or adequately prevent unwanted and objectionable materials, particularly graphics, from being accessed. Additionally, the requirements of the law mandate that safety and security measures be used to control minor use of electronic mail, chat rooms, direct electronic communications, "hacking" and other unlawful online activities, and disclosure of personal ID information. The library will require a parent/guardian to be present at the computer for a minor's use of the Internet.

The Regional Board notes that current filtering software has been proven to prevent access to certain materials needed for research as well as materials with subject headings that can be misunderstood or misconstrued. Therefore, within the guidelines of the law and this policy, the library will provide unfiltered access upon request of the patron and for research use by library staff. Georgia Code 16-12-100.2, the Computer Pornography and Child Exploitation Prevention Act of 1999, and its related codes, 16-6-2, 16-6-4, 16-6-5, 16-6-8 of the Criminal Code of Georgia are considered relevant and should be considered when requesting unfiltered access.

The document "Rules and Procedures" for public computer use will be considered a part of this policy and will be posted at all public Internet access computers.

* The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Neighborhood Internet Protection Act (NCIPA) went into effect on April 20, 2001. These new laws place restrictions on the use of funding that is available through the Library Services and Technology Act, Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and on the Universal Service discount program known as the E-rate (Public Law 106-554). These restrictions take the form of requirements for Internet safety policies and technology that blocks or filters certain material from being accessed through the Internet. The library system must be in total compliance by July 1, 2004.

Rules & Procedures for Public Computer Use

1. All Internet computer users who are 16 years of age or older must sign in and out using the appropriate library computer procedure. By signing in, the patron agrees to follow these policies and procedures. A current photo ID may be required to verify the age of a patron before signing in.
2. Internet computers users under 16 years of age must have a parent, or legal guardian, present at the computer with the minor.
3. The library reserves the right to prohibit the use of computers to anyone who demonstrates a lack of respect and care for the equipment and/or a refusal to follow the library's rules and policies relating to their use. This prohibition can be for any length of time, including permanently, if the library deems it necessary.
4. Transmitting, viewing or downloading materials, which may be considered obscene, offensive or illegal, is prohibited. Patrons are reminded that computer screens are visible by children and appropriate local, state and federal laws concerning the display of materials harmful to minors are in effect.
5. Electronic mail may be accessed through the library's computers. The patron is responsible for any virus/worm or similar disturbance the patron downloads into library equipment and may be charged time and other expenses for control and repair. The library's security equipment may prevent the downloading of files with graphics or sound.
6. A patron may use the computer for no more than the publicized amount of time, per day, unless extended time is previously approved by the library, or on certain selected machines marked for longer, extended use. A sign-up sheet will be used to determine the time and order of a waiting list. There will be no reserving of time slots; the list will be made on a first come, first served basis. However, it is understood that reference and research purposes hold priority on computer usage.

7. In order to maintain patron privacy and control noise and disturbances, the library reserves the right to limit the number of persons per computer. The library cannot provide the facilities or space for personal or private computer use lessons, training or tutoring. Patrons needing reference and research assistance are encouraged to work with a library staff member.
8. In compliance with CIPA, effective July 1, 2002, and in accordance with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling, June 23, 2003, the library has filtering software installed on all computers. This software is designed to block access to those websites that contain visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, harmful to minors or inappropriate for minors, including sites containing materials with graphic depictions of scenes that are extremely violent, gory, or horrific in nature and may be related to sex, bodily functions, obscenity, or perverse activities, or contain, discuss, or show pornography, including pictures, videos, or text of sex acts, or sexually oriented material. Patrons may request these filters to be turned off for the purposes of bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
9. Under no circumstances may the public use personal programs or disks in these machines, except in those machines specifically approved.
10. Non-Internet computers may be available for use by all ages. However, any user under the age of seven (7) must be accompanied, and assisted, by a parent or other adult guardian. (See the Unattended Children and Youth Policy.)
11. Articles and files may be printed out using the accompanying printer. There will be a charge per page. Patron is responsible for all pages printed. Files may be downloaded from online sources. Disks are available for purchase. Patron-owned disks may be used only on certain identified machines. The copyright laws of the U.S. apply to both printing and downloading; the patron is responsible for his/her violations of the law.
12. The Lake Blackshear Regional Library System has agreed to all license agreements, applied U.S. copyrights and related international treaty provisions for the use of the software and/or installed programs. Other than back-up copies, obtained according to fair use practices for library purposes, these programs may not be copied under any circumstances. Copies of articles from the encyclopedia and other copyrighted reference tools may not be copied, saved or downloaded onto a patron's personal disk.
13. All library rules and policies relating to the proper care and correct use of library materials will apply to the computer and its peripherals and programs. The patron assumes financial responsibility for breakage or damage occurring during his/her use unless such damage occurred from natural causes or due to continued, reasonable use.
14. The Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act, OCG 16-9-90, establishes certain acts involving computer fraud or abuse as crimes punishable by fines or imprisonment or both. "Hacking" or otherwise tampering with the hardware, adding to or deleting information relating to the software, or other acts which obstruct, interrupt or cause the computer to malfunction or are intended to disrupt computer functioning elsewhere, are included in this act. The Lake Blackshear Regional Library System will prosecute both civilly and criminally.