PRINTING & DOWNLOADING

If patrons wish to save a copy of their work, they may bring a flash drive for downloading. Information can be saved to the hard drive temporarily, but will be deleted when the patron logs-off.

Patrons are responsible for logging off properly by using the "end session" button. Failure to do so may result in the temporary retention of personal information. Patrons should ask staff if they are unsure how to properly sign out of a session. To protect privacy, anything saved on the PCs will be deleted once the session ends. This includes files, passwords or website history. The software the library uses does not track internet activity.

Black and white printing cost $.10 per page. Color printing is $.50 per page. All printing may be paid at the reference desk.

The library cannot be held responsible for any damage incurred to a patron's disk or any virus contracted through computer use.

If a patron experiences difficulty in using a computer they should notify staff immediately. They should not attempt to shut-off or reboot the computer; the PC will automatically reboot when a patron logs-off or their time expires.

Personal email accounts are not offered by the library. Patrons can register on-line for a free account if they wish.

Duration of Usage

Library cardholders and Internet-Only cardholders will be allowed a standard allotment of 120 minutes of PC time per day. Patrons can use their allotted time all in one session, or in any increments the patron wishes, but patrons must have a minimum of 10 minutes of time remaining in order to log-on.

Guest Use. For individuals who are visiting the library to use our PC or internet stations for a one-time visit, guest passes are available for a standard allotment of 60 minutes of PC time per day.

ENVISIONWARE REGISTRATION SOFTWARE

- EnvisionWare software is a PC and internet registration software product that runs on public access computers in academic and public libraries.

- For each computer session, the software prompts the user to type in their library barcode number to uniquely identify themselves. The software validates the barcode number against a database of authorized users.

Internet users will need one of three cards to access the internet:

- A Mercer County Library System Library Card issued in the patron's name.

- Internet-Only Card: Patrons not eligible for a traditional library card, but who would like to purchase an internet-only card may do so for a fee of $2.00. This card will only allow use of PC stations; internet-only cardholders will not be able to check out library materials. Internet-only cards are valid for one year from date of issuance, and renewable with a valid ID with current address.

- Guest Pass: Patrons visiting from out of the area who need access to the internet during a brief stay are issued a guest pass. Valid ID with a current address is required.

Patron Confidentiality

The library system takes seriously its obligation to provide an environment that is amenable to the information needs of many types of patrons, as well as their confidentiality. Patrons may request the use of a privacy screen at any time, and a screen will be provided by staff contingent upon the availability of a screen. If a staff member, at any time, believes that material displayed on a screen may distract or interfere with other patrons, the staff member may, in his or her sole discretion, direct the patron viewing such material to place a privacy screen on the computer screen.

Failure to comply with such a directive may result in termination of a patron's computer session.

MERCER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY

Brian M. Hughes
County Executive

Ellen Brown
Library Director

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INTRODUCTION

The Mercer County Library System offers internet access as a part of its mission to be the gateway to the growing universe of information by developing and providing open access to services and resources, which are responsive to, and representative of, the diverse recreational, cultural and educational interests of the community. The Mercer County Library System takes pride in offering state of the art information retrieval from all types of media to its patrons.

The internet is a global electronic network. Resources available on the internet supplement and complement the collections of the Mercer County Library System.

Accuracy & Availability of Information

The Internet and its available resources may contain controversial material. The Mercer County Library System has no control over the information accessed through the internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Library users access the internet at their own discretion and are individually and totally responsible for any access points they reach.

The library staff cannot control the availability of information links, which often change rapidly and unpredictably. Not all sources on the internet provide accurate, complete or current information. Users need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of the information they find on the internet. Users may seek help from professional librarians to verify information.

As time permits, a brief introduction to the use of the terminal will be provided. Library staff is not available to offer extensive hands-on assistance to each internet user, but will attempt to give limited assistance when possible. The library offers classes and special programs, including one-on-one tutorials, as well as offering an online contact form, for patrons requiring more in- depth help. Patrons may find these classes listed on the library's website, www.mcl.org or in the printed branch calendars.

CHILD SAFETY ON THE INTERNET

Parents or guardians are responsible for the internet information selected and/or accessed by their children. Children who use the internet unsupervised may be exposed to inappropriate or disturbing information and images. Parents are encouraged to discuss the use of the internet in relation to family values and boundaries with their children and to monitor their children's use of the internet. To assist parents, the library has available online and in print the pamphlet, Child Safety on the Internet Information Highway, published by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. The website for additionally updated information is http://www.safekids.com/child-safety-on-the-information-highway . Also, parents may find information on the website of the American Library Association, http://gws.ala.org/ Great Websites for Kids.

Internet stations are filtered based on the location of the PC. PCs located in the designated Children's sections are filtered using a CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act) compliant filter.

Rights & Responsibilities of Users

- Many library computers on which the public can access the internet are located in public areas that must be shared by library users of all ages, backgrounds and sensibilities. Individuals are asked to consider this point when accessing potentially controversial information and images.

- Patrons may request, or be asked to use, privacy screens, or may have their sessions terminated if the content they are viewing is of a private or controversial nature.

- Library personnel do not monitor or supervise internet access except for length of time of use. If internet searching results in disruption of library services, or if patron behavior when using internet resources becomes inappropriate for a library setting, the library reserves the right to end the session.

- Viewing illegal materials, such as child pornography, or using the internet so as to cause harm to others and/or engage in illegal activity are considered inappropriate uses of our resources. Library patrons observed using the internet and PCs inappropriately will have their internet session terminated. The library reserves the right to revoke or suspend the library privileges or seek legal prosecution of patrons viewing illegal or inappropriate materials.

INAPPROPRIATE USE OF THE PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTERS

Inappropriate use of the public access computers of the Mercer County Library System includes, but is not limited to:

- Interfering, altering or damaging any library computer program, including disabling electronic filters.

- Use of the internet workstations to gain unauthorized access to the library's computer system or any other network or computer system.

- Violating the security system of the library's computers or any other network computer system.

- Using any library workstation for illegal or criminal purposes.

- Violating copyright laws or software licenses or agreements.

- Employing the library's computers for libel, slander, forgery, and fraud or to transmit threatening or harassing material.

- Displaying, sending, receiving or printing text, images or graphics of obscene material or materials harmful to minors.

- Displaying, sending, receiving or printing text, images or graphics that violate laws relating to child pornography.

- Engaging in activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment for library staff and patrons.

Patrons must use their own barcode to log-on. The use of a barcode other than their own will result in a suspension of PC privileges, and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

The library reserves the right to terminate an internet session at any time. Staff can only provide limited assistance with internet searching and word processing.