

## **Palmer Public Library Computer Use and Internet Access Policy**

**The use of any Internet access computer or the wireless network in the Palmer Public Library constitutes an acceptance of its *Computer Use and Internet Access Policy*. Patrons reaffirm this agreement each time they access the Internet in the library.**

### **I. Internet Access**

In conjunction with its mission to provide a gateway to the arena of ideas, the Palmer Public Library offers Internet access to library patrons. The person accessing the Internet is liable for any infringement of United States or international copyright laws. As a largely unregulated electronic domain, neither the library staff, the Board of Directors, nor the Town of Palmer have control over the information accessed on the Internet; as such, the library cannot be held responsible for its content.

While the Internet provides a vast array of information, users should be aware that it may contain controversial materials, sexually explicit and/or pornographic content, inaccurate or incomplete data, or activities considered illegal by local, state, and federal governments. As such, Internet users must employ good judgment and discretion in their use of it. For privacy and security reasons, Internet users at the Palmer Public Library should exercise caution when providing personal or privileged information via the public access computers or the wireless network.

All Internet resources accessible through the library are provided equally to all users, regardless of age. Parents (including legal guardians) of children and teenagers younger than age 18, not the library or its staff, are responsible for the information selected or accessed by children.

Children and teenagers younger than 18 are encouraged to use the Internet workstations located in the Youth Services Department. Parents and guardians of children and teenagers younger than 18 should provide guidance for their children about safety while browsing the Internet. It is also the responsibility of parents or guardians to advise their children concerning the danger of providing names, addresses, and phone numbers to strangers via email or social media.

### **II. Staff Assistance**

Library staff will offer assistance and instruction with library technology and the Internet as time and workload permit. In the process of providing assistance, staff cannot input or interact with a patron's personal information, nor can they provide advice outside the scope of their expertise (e.g., advice related to tax filing, financial transactions, job applications, or medical diagnosis).

### **III. Procedures for Use of Internet Access Computers**

Select a vacant computer workstation and create a username for your session. To begin, you will need to read and accept the *Computer Use and Internet Access Policy*. By accepting this policy, you agree to adhere to all rules and regulations detailed within. Library computers are available from opening until 15 minutes before closing, and computer use is on a first-come, first-served basis. Computer users are guaranteed a session of at least two hours (or until 15 minutes before the library closes), though no time limit will be enforced unless there are patrons waiting for access to a computer.

#### **IV. Wireless (Wi-Fi) Internet Access**

The Palmer Public Library's *Computer Use and Internet Access Policy* also governs the use of its wireless network. Wireless Internet access is free and is available for patrons without time limit throughout the library. As with most public wireless networks, Internet access via our wireless connection is not secure and the use of it is entirely at the risk of the user. Antivirus and security protection of personal devices are the responsibility of the owner.

Library staff are available to provide assistance and troubleshooting, but due to the wide variety of wireless devices available, the Palmer Public Library cannot guarantee that a user's device will work with the library's Wi-Fi access points. Please note that library staff are not allowed to handle a patron's device without the patron present.

#### **V. Printing and Capturing Information from the Internet**

Documents, photos, and content from the Internet can be printed from any workstation for a fee. Please ask the staff for assistance with any computer or printer problem. Printing via the wireless network is available through the PrinterOn link on the library's homepage.

To ensure privacy and security of personal information, files saved to the hard drives of library computers will be erased daily. Patrons are encouraged to save documents to an external storage method of their choice, including flash drives or cloud storage. Flash drives are available for purchase at the Circulation Desk.

#### **VI. Prohibited Use**

A patron using the library's computers or wireless network is limited to the existing hardware, software, and system configuration. Prohibited use includes:

- Using the Internet computers for any illegal or criminal purpose.
- Using the Internet in violation of the Massachusetts General Law 272 Section 31, the Harmful to Minors statute.
- Viewing pornographic materials and other graphic images that may reasonably be considered obscene in a public setting.
- Vandalizing computers in any way.
- Installing software without prior approval from a librarian.
- Modifying computer or network settings that are currently in place.
- Unauthorized copying of copyright-protected material in any format.
- Transmitting threatening, harassing, defamatory, or obscene materials.

#### **VII. Enforcement and Consequences**

The Palmer Public Library's *Computer Use and Internet Access Policy* applies to all patrons using the Internet. The policy also enables the staff to enforce the rules and procedures as stated in a fair and reasonable manner. Library staff will intervene to stop prohibited use of computers, electronic equipment, or the wireless network and has the right to tell the patron to leave the library effective immediately. Any violation of this library policy will result in suspension of computer or Wi-Fi use privileges, or both.

The *Computer Use and Internet Access Policy* was approved by the Palmer Public Library Board of Directors on February 13, 1997.

Amended: February 21, 2008

Amended: March 21, 2013

Amended: December 5, 2019