

# LINCOLNWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

4000 WEST PRATT AVENUE - LINCOLNWOOD, IL 60712-3531

Telephone: 847/677-5277 • FAX: 847/677-1937

Website: [www.lincolnwoodlibrary.org](http://www.lincolnwoodlibrary.org)

## POLICIES GOVERNING USE OF PUBLIC COMPUTERS, THE INTERNET, AND OTHER ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN THE LIBRARY

### 1. Primary Service Goals

The Lincolnwood Public Library District provides access to public computers, the Internet, and other electronic resources in order to further its mission of offering Lincolnwood residents an expansive and welcoming gateway to knowledge, discovery, and self-fulfillment. In providing such access, the Library Board considers the following goals to be of primary importance:

- To support residents' efforts to find the information, resources, and services they need to lead more successful, productive, and satisfying lives as individuals and citizens;
- To offer Lincolnwood students timely access to the supplementary information, resources, and support they need to succeed in school; and
- To offer Lincolnwood parents and caregivers the opportunity to use computers and age-appropriate electronic learning games and other resources to advance the skills and intellectual capacities of their young children.

### 2. Eligibility

Although all individuals who meet the requirements articulated in this policy statement are eligible to use the library's public computers, this equipment is provided primarily for the use of Lincolnwood residents, whose property taxes make library service in Lincolnwood—including access to public computers and electronic resources—possible.

### 3. Access and Availability

- a. **Internet Express and Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) Computers.** Individuals are not required to register or provide proof of identity and address to gain access to these standing height computer stations, which may be used on a *first-come-first served basis* for brief periods of time. Users are required to execute an electronic *User Agreement* each time they log-on to use an Internet Express station. If a patron is waiting to use an Internet Express Station, staff will ask the user to vacate that station when the current 15 minute session ends.

Internet Express Stations located in the Youth and Teen Services Department are reserved for the use of children, younger teens, and parents or caregivers who have children with them and, therefore, find it necessary to remain in the Youth Services area. Conversely, the Internet Express Stations in the Adult areas are reserved for the use of adults and high school aged teens.

- b. ***Other Public Computer Stations.*** Sit-down computer work stations for the public are located in the Adult Computer Room and the Youth and Teen Services areas. These computers may be used for longer periods of time than the Internet Express and OPAC computers described above. With the exception of computers that offer learning games for young children, all of these work stations provide access to the Internet.
- i. ***Authentication.*** Individuals who wish to use any of these work stations must be entered into the database of authorized users. To become authorized users, all individuals—residents and non-residents—must:
1. Have a currently valid library borrower’s card, in good standing, from the Lincolnwood Public Library or another public library that is a member of the CCS (Cooperative Computer Services) consortium, or, alternately, a current library borrower’s card, in good standing, from another library that has been registered with the Lincolnwood Public Library or another CCS library and thereby entered into the CCS user database. (Acceptable proof of identity and address must be provided to obtain a library card or to register one for entry into the CCS database.)
  2. Review and execute an electronic ***User Agreement*** governing the use of these computers and the Internet in the library each time they log-on to have a session on any station. A parent or legal guardian must also sign a written ***User Agreement*** for any applicant who is under fifteen (15) years old. (This must be done in the library with the parent-guardian also presenting acceptable proof of identity and address.)
- ii. ***User Time Limits.*** In order to provide equitable access to as many users as possible and to better meet the needs of Lincolnwood residents, the library shall place limits on the maximum amount of time that individuals may use these computers—collectively—each day. Maximum time limits, which are subject to computer availability, will be set significantly higher for Lincolnwood residents than for non residents. (Current time limits are described in the Electronic User Agreements that patrons must execute.)
- iii. ***Adult Computer Room Work Stations.*** Work stations in the Adult Computer Room are reserved for the use of adults and high school aged teens who can work quietly at their respective computers.
- iv. ***Youth and Teen Services Area Work Stations.*** Work stations located in the Youth and Teen Services Department are reserved for the use of children, younger teens, and parents or caregivers who have children with them and, therefore, find it necessary to remain in the Youth Services area. In order to better meet the needs of Lincolnwood students, use of computers in the Youth and Teen areas may be restricted to homework and other school-related activities during certain hours.

#### **4 Fees**

Although there is no charge to use work stations and to access the Internet or other electronic resources, users must pay for computer printouts. Users may also purchase flash drives to download and store information from library computers. A refund for a flash drive purchased from the library will only be given if testing proves it to be faulty.

#### **5. Staff Assistance**

Library staff will help individuals locate sources of information about how to use computers, computer software, the Internet, and other electronic resources. In-depth, personal instruction or training cannot be provided. Time permitting, some brief and very basic assistance may be offered. Although library reference staff are available to assist users in judging the reliability or currency of certain websites and other information sources, they cannot provide definitive analyses and determinations about such resources.

## **6. Internet Content**

The library has no control over the content, accuracy, or currency of resources accessed on the Internet, nor does it have complete knowledge of what is available there. Users access the Internet at their own discretion. The library encourages users to evaluate information they obtain from the Internet carefully. Although there are many highly dependable and extremely useful sites, others may contain unreliable, inaccurate, or out-of-date information, and some may include risky or fraudulent proposals. There are Internet sites containing information or images that may be controversial or offensive to some. The library reserves the right to ask users to

refrain from displaying computer images that are deemed to be inappropriate in a public setting, tantamount to sexual harassment, or otherwise incompatible with the goals articulated in Section 1 above.

## **7. Children's Use of Computers and the Internet**

Consistent with principles articulated in the library's *Policies and Guidelines Governing Collection Development and the Selection of Library Resources*, the library supports the right of all individuals to access electronic resources and will not deny access on the basis of age. Parents and guardians must assume responsibility for deciding which library resources, including Internet sites, are appropriate for their children, and for monitoring their children's use of the library and the resources it makes available. Library staff assumes that children and teens left unattended in the library have parental permission to use all available resources, including the library's Internet Express and OPAC computer stations. (As indicated in Section 3(b)(i) above, a parent or legal guardian, as well as the child, must review and sign a written *User Agreement* for minors who are under fifteen (15) years of age to be able to use other library computer stations.)

## **8. Inappropriate and Unacceptable Uses**

Any use that is illegal, endangers library property, or intrudes upon or disregards the rights of other users is unacceptable and will result in loss of privileges and possible legal action. Users will be held financially responsible for any damage caused by vandalism to or willful destruction of the library's computer network or any component thereof. Examples of unacceptable use include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting illegal activity or accessing illegal materials.
- Harassing another user, or violating another user's privacy.
- Attempting to install or run outside software or equipment on or through library computers or through the library's cabled internet connection.
- Violating computer system security.
- Tampering with computer hardware or software.

- Storing data to anything other than an external storage device.
- Using another individual's identity and authorization to gain access to a computer, or knowingly enabling someone else to do so.

It is the responsibility of the user to respect copyright laws and licensing agreements. All users are expected to comply with the **Library Board's Policies and Guidelines Governing Behavior in the Library**, which states: *"Any behavior by a patron which, in the opinion of staff, unreasonably infringes on the quiet use and enjoyment of the library by others, interferes with library operations and the ability of staff to do their work, or endangers library property, is prohibited."*

## 9. Confidentiality and Security of Information

User registration records and information about specific computer sessions are considered to be confidential and will not be released to or shared with third parties except as required by law or as absolutely needed to repair, maintain, or gather statistics about the library's computer system. Individuals should be aware, however, that the Internet and other electronic resources are not secure, and that others may be able to obtain information from users' computer sessions. The "histories" of all user sessions are automatically purged from the system each day after the library closes. Users should nonetheless exercise caution about entering personal information, such as credit card and Social Security numbers, on library computers.

## 10. Policy Evaluation

The Library Director will continually monitor and evaluate this policy statement's effectiveness in addressing the needs of Lincolnwood residents for access to electronic resources and will inform the Library Board about necessary or desirable changes. The Board will review and reevaluate the entire policy at least every two years.

## 11. Policy Availability

This policy statement is a public document. It shall be posted on the library's website. Copies will also be made available at the Adult Services and the Youth and Teen Services desks.

## 12. User Agreements

As indicated in Section (3)(b)(i) above, individuals who wish to use any library computers other than OPAC stations or the Early Literacy Stations in the youth area must execute the electronic **User Agreement** each time they log-on to use a public computer. A parent or legal guardian must also come to the library and sign a written **User Agreement** for any applicant who is under fifteen (15) years old. These **User Agreements** are to be considered an integral part of this policy statement. Conversely, the policy statement itself is to be considered an integral component of the *User Agreement*.