Computer Use and Internet Policy for the Twin Falls Public Library

Purpose: This policy outlines the acceptable use of computers and the internet at the Twin Falls Public Library. It is intended to ensure the safe and responsible use of these resources, and to protect the rights and privacy of all library users.

Scope: This policy applies to all computers, internet-connected devices, and wireless networks owned or operated by the Twin Falls Public Library. This also applies to any devices brought onto library property by patrons.

Responsible Use: The library provides computers and internet access for the purpose of research, education, and communication. Library patrons are expected to use these resources in a responsible and respectful manner. Prohibited uses include, but are not limited to:

- Illegal activities, such as copyright infringement or unauthorized access to protected systems.
- Harassment, bullying, or other disruptive or inappropriate behavior.
- Viewing or distributing explicit or inappropriate content.
- Damaging or altering library computer hardware or software.

The library does not actively monitor patron computer or internet usage. However, library staff may observe patron behavior in the course of their duties, and may take action if they believe that a patron is violating this policy. If a patron is found to be in violation of this policy, the library reserves the right to terminate their internet access or to restrict their use of library computers.

The library allows patrons to listen to audio on computers, provided that they use headphones. This is to ensure that the library remains a quiet and respectful environment for all patrons. The library also provides headphones for checkout if needed. Patrons are expected to keep the volume at a reasonable level so as not to disturb others.

Computer Areas: The library has designated computers in areas for adults, teens, youth, and meeting rooms. These areas are intended to provide appropriate environments for patrons of different ages to access the internet and use computers.

- Adult Computer Area: The adult computer area is intended for use by patrons over the age of 18. It is located on the main floor of the library and is accessible to all patrons.
- Teen Computer Area: The teen computer area is intended for use by patrons aged 13-17. It is located in the Teen section on the lower floor of the library and is accessible to all patrons.
- Youth Computer Area: The youth computer area is intended for use by patrons aged 12 and under. It is located in the Youth Service area of the library and is accessible to all patrons.
- Media Stations: The Library provides multiple media station computers for various uses. All technology provided at these stations must abide by the Media Station Policy

Patrons under the age of 18 are encouraged to use the computer areas in the Youth and Teen sections of the library. These areas are designated specifically for the use of minors and are intended to provide a safe and appropriate environment for them to access the internet and use computers.

Parents and legal guardians are responsible for the actions of the minors they are in charge of while using the computers and internet at the library. Parents and legal guardians should ensure that the minors they are responsible for are using these resources in a responsible and respectful manner, and should monitor their computer and internet use to ensure they are not accessing inappropriate or harmful content.

Privacy: The library respects the privacy of its patrons and takes steps to protect their personal information. However, patrons should be aware that computer or internet use may not be completely private, and that personal information may be accessible to others. The library is not responsible for any consequences resulting from the release of personal information.

Public WiFi: The library provides free public wifi that is available 24 hours 7 days a week and reserves the right to deny access to its network for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to, violation of library policies, misuse of the wifi service, or illegal activities. There may be occasional periods of time when the wifi is not accessible due to system maintenance or service provider outages.

Computer Time Limits: Use of the computer is free with a valid library card or Computer Use only card. In order to ensure fair access to computers for all patrons, computers are available on a first come, first serve basis, and the library has implemented a time limit of 120 minutes per computer session. After a patron has used a computer for 120 minutes, they will be required to take a 30 minute break before they are allowed to use a computer again. Multiple sessions are allowed in a day.

Express Sessions are available to patrons who do not or cannot acquire a library card. Express sessions will have a 15-minute time limit. Express sessions are free.

Patrons are encouraged to plan their computer use accordingly, and to be mindful of the time they have remaining when using a library computer. The library staff will make every effort to inform patrons when their time is about to expire, but it is ultimately the responsibility of the patron to manage their own computer time.

Patrons who attempt to evade or bypass these time limits by using multiple library cards or any other means may be in violation of this policy and may face consequences such as loss of computer privileges.

The library reserves the right to implement additional time limits or restrictions during periods of high demand for computers.

Printing: The library provides printing services for patrons on a prepaid basis at a cost of $0.25 per page for color pages and $0.15 per page for black and white pages. Patrons are responsible for paying for their own printing. Patrons may store up to $25.00 on a prepaid account.

Filtering: The library follows the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and Idaho Code § 33-2741, which mandate the use of internet filters to block access to inappropriate or harmful content. These filters are intended to protect children from exposure to explicit or harmful material, and to prevent the unauthorized access of illegal activities.

These filters are applied to all library computers and networks, including public wifi. While the library makes every effort to block access to inappropriate content, patrons should be aware that these filters may not be perfect, and that they may encounter inappropriate content despite the library's efforts. If a patron encounters inappropriate content, they should report it to library staff immediately.

The library also recognizes that some patrons may have legitimate research needs that may require access to content that is otherwise blocked by the internet filters. In these cases, any patron, 18 years of age or older, may request that the filters be temporarily disabled by staff when use is for lawful purposes. Such requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and the library reserves the right to deny requests if it determines that they are not justified.

Software: The use of unauthorized third-party software is strictly prohibited on Library devices. This includes any software that has not been approved by the IT department. The installation of software on library computers is strictly prohibited. This includes downloading and installing software from the internet, as well as installing software from physical media such as CDs or USB drives. The library provides a variety of software and applications for patron use, and patrons are encouraged to use these resources rather than installing their own software. Any patron found to be installing software on library computers may have their library privileges suspended or permanently revoked.

Security: Users are cautioned that the security of digital environments such as the internet cannot be guaranteed. All transactions, files, and communication are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use, and should be considered public. The library is not responsible for any consequences resulting from the release of personal information or the unauthorized access or use of patron transactions, files, or communication. Patrons are encouraged to use caution when using the internet and to be aware of the potential risks. It is recommended that patrons use secure websites and networks when conducting sensitive transactions or handling personal information.

Disclaimer: The library is not responsible for the accuracy or reliability of the information found on the internet. It is the responsibility of the patron to critically evaluate the information they find online.

The same rules of conduct that govern the use of all Twin Falls Public Library facilities and collections apply to the use of the library computers.

Enforcement: The library reserves the right to terminate a patron's internet access or to restrict their use of library computers if they violate this policy. Repeat offenders may have their library privileges suspended or permanently revoked.