Lafayette Public Library
Computer Use Policy

I.   MISSION

The mission of Lafayette Public Library is to enhance the quality of life of our community by providing free and equal access to high-quality, cost-effective library services that meet the needs and expectations of our diverse community for information, life-long learning, recreation, and cultural enrichment.

The policy addresses the use of the Library's computers, including hardware, software, and access to the Internet, databases, and other resources provided to users both inside the library and remotely.

II.   RESPONSIBLITIES OF USERS

All users who qualify for a full-service library card or a Bayouland full-service reciprocal borrower card are required to have one in order to access the public computers. Guests are required to obtain either a computer use only card or a temporary borrower card in order to use a library computer. Users will need their library card and PIN number to sign up for a computer and log in.

Internet access computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis. To provide equal access for all library patrons, the Library reserves the right to limit the amount of time a user can devote to a single computer session. Users should adhere to any posted time limitations. All Internet work sessions must be finished 15 minutes before closing time.

Online resources contain a wealth of information. Users should be aware that the Internet is an unregulated and rapidly changing medium. Some information on the Internet may be inaccurate, outdated, incomplete, or offensive or disturbing to some users. Because the Lafayette Public Library receives federal funds for Internet access, all public and staff computers with Internet access are equipped with software that is designed to block access to sites that contain visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography, or materials "harmful to minors" as currently defined by law. However, filtering software is not infallible and despite these provisions, patrons may still find materials that contain obscenity, child pornography or materials "harmful to minors." For this reason, patrons must assume responsibility for their own use of the Internet. Parents who are concerned about the contents of the Internet are strongly advised to closely supervise their children's use of this service. This includes but is not limited to the safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms and other social sites and forums, blogs,

instant messaging, texting, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

The Library will, upon written request of the parent, disable a child's library card from electronic privileges. The Library cannot constantly monitor activities of users and cannot guarantee a parent that the child will not find other ways to circumvent this prohibition. Parents wishing to prevent their minor child from accessing the library's electronic resources are strongly advised to supervise and monitor their child's visits to the library.

Filtering software may also block constitutionally protected material on the Internet. At the request of a patron 17 years of age or older, the library will temporarily disable the blocking software without significant delay for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

The library staff has the right to monitor and determine the appropriateness of workstation use and can require a patron to leave the workstation. Misuse of library computers or violation of this policy will result in the loss of computer privileges, potential loss of library privileges, and possible criminal prosecution. Illegal activity will be reported to the authorities.

III.   PROHIBITED USES

1.   Internet computers shall not be used for illegal activities, to access illegal materials, or to access materials that are obscene or contain child pornography. Viewing, downloading, or printing from inappropriate sites in violation of local, state, or federal laws is prohibited.
2. Transmitting and/or receiving of obscene materials and/or child pornography are a violation of law and are not permitted under any circumstances.
3. Minors, whether or not accompanied by a parent or guardian, shall not use computers for illegal activities, to access illegal materials or to access materials that are obscene or contain child pornography, or materials "harmful to minors" as currently defined by law.
4. Turning off or rebooting computers is not allowed. Deliberately altering computer settings, hacking or manipulation of computer hardware or software is prohibited. Patrons may not use their own software on library computers.
5. Files cannot be permanently saved to a computer's hard drive. However, users may download files onto a flash drive or other external storage device. The Library is not responsible for any damages or corruption or for any liability that may arise from saving or downloading files onto a users' storage device.
6. Users shall respect all copyright laws and licensing agreements.

7. Public library computers are neither private nor secure. Users shall respect the privacy of other users and shall refrain from attempting to view or read materials being used by others.
8. Cyberstalking, cyberbullying, or sending harassing messages to other computer users is not permitted. Users shall refrain from using inappropriate language in chat rooms. Messages containing sexual acts or sexual contacts (real or imagined) are not allowed.
9. Unauthorized use, hacking, or other illegal means of accessing websites, information portals, computer systems, networks, and other electronic resources for profit, criminal mischief, or any other reason is not permitted. This includes unauthorized use of a credit card, debit card, and other cards and accounts.
10. Remote use of the library's electronic databases, reserving a library computer in-house, printing from library computers, and accessing certain in-house and remote services require users to enter their library card and PIN number for authentication. Unauthorized use of a library card to access these services is considered unauthorized use under this policy.

IV.   WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS

Free wireless Internet access is available to users who are on the premises at any library location. The wireless Internet access that the Library offers is filtered. By choosing to use this free service, all users agree to abide by this electronic resources policy. The library's wireless network is not secure. The Library assumes no responsibility for the safety of wireless device configurations, security, or data files resulting from connection to the library's wireless access.

V.   SAFETY

The Library claims no responsibility when users disclose, use, and disseminate personal information (i.e., social security numbers, credit card numbers, checking account numbers, PINs) over the Internet. For this reason, adults are strongly urged to give serious consideration before disclosing personal information, and parents are strongly advised to closely supervise their children's use of this service.

VI.   COSTS

There is no charge for the use of the online workstations or to access the information therein; however, patrons shall assume printing costs at the posted rate.

Definitions:

A user or patron is described by the Library as an adult or minor who uses the library's facilities, resources, and/or materials, including both cardholders and non-cardholders.

"Child pornography" as defined in 18 U.S.C. 2256.
"Minor" is a person under the age of 17. 47 U.S.C.A. 254(h)(7)(D).
"Harmful to minors" as defined in 47 U.S.C.A. 254(h)(7)(D).
"Obscenity" as defined by the federal obscenity statute, 18 U.S.C. 2256.
"Sexual act" and "Sexual contact" as defined in 18 U.S.C. 2246.

Original policy approved by Lafayette Public Board of Control
August 25, 1998

Revisions approved by Lafayette Public Board of Control
April 19, 2004, December 18, 2006, January 22, 2007, April 17, 2017