

HURST PUBLIC LIBRARY
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR PUBLIC COMPUTING AND INTERNET ACCESS

Last Amended: March 15, 2016

PURPOSE

As part of its mission to act as a vital educational institution to all citizens by providing access to information, offering professional assistance, materials, and programs that support life-long learning, social needs, and cultural enrichment and leisure interests, the Hurst Public Library offers a dynamic collection of resources including access to public computing services and the Internet.

ACCESS

Public Access Computing (PAC) Stations maintained by the Hurst Public Library are available for connection to the Internet, the use of desktop publishing software, access to the Library's catalog and online resources, and the utilization of the Library's publicly accessible printers. Station availability is first-come, first-served, and based on location, purpose, and user access permissions. Access to computer stations providing open Internet access and desktop publishing software for public use requires a Hurst Library Card in good standing. Persons not eligible for a Hurst Library card may be eligible for a temporary guest card for Internet use.

The City of Hurst's **Public Access Wireless (WiFi)** provides Internet access to Library patrons using personal devices with wireless connectivity. WiFi Access Points provide filtered access to the Internet. The City of Hurst cannot guarantee a secure connection to the Internet. Users of this connection are advised to ensure that their equipment uses the latest anti-virus builds, spy ware and other standard protection software to protect against unauthorized access to their devices. Usage of this connection may be monitored and information may be given to local, state or federal authorities.

Library staff members are available to provide general guidance to patrons of all ages with information and technology literacy. Staff cannot provide information and technology literacy training on an in-depth, individual basis. Staff trained to advise patrons in the use of technology, computing and Internet access services may not be available at all times.

LAWS AND POLICIES DEFINING ACCEPTABLE USE

Patrons are prohibited from using the Library's network for illegal activity as defined in sections 43.22 and 43.24 of the Texas Penal Code:

§43.22 of the Texas Penal Code prohibits the intentional or knowing display of an obscene photograph, drawing, or visual representation, while being reckless about whether a person is present who will be offended or alarmed by the display.

§43.24 of the Texas Penal Code prohibits the display of harmful material, defined in the law similarly to indecent material under federal law, if the displayer is reckless about whether a minor is present who will be offended or alarmed by the display.

Library computers, equipment and networks may not be used for any purpose that violates federal, state, or local laws. Prohibited use includes, but is not limited to: "hacking" or otherwise attempting unauthorized use of the

Library, City or other networks; attempting to interfere with or disrupt other users; attempting to evade security measures; invading the privacy of other users; violating software license agreements or US Copyright Law; or sending harassing, threatening or libelous messages or material.

The Hurst Public Library seeks to protect the First Amendment rights of its patrons and their individual right to privacy. However, Internet users must be aware that the Library is a public place, open for use by all members of the community. Therefore, content on the screen is subject to view by a wide audience. Users are cautioned that the Internet is not a secure environment. Personal information included in all transactions, files and communications may be subject to unauthorized access by third parties. The Hurst Public Library respects the confidentiality of those using its electronic resources and will only release usage records as required by law or for the Library's operations.

Library staff may designate and restrict the use of computers, WiFi, and other Library equipment in effort to enforce this and other Library Board approved policies, ensure availability and access to all patrons, prohibit illegal activity on Library property, and uphold the Hurst Public Library's Mission.

Patrons may use external USB storage devices, but the Library cannot guarantee compatibility. As a measure to protect user privacy, abandoned storage devices found by or brought to the attention of Library staff will be formatted after 30 days.

In addition to the types of behavior mentioned in the *Hurst Public Library Acceptable Behavior Policy*, the following behavioral guidelines apply to computing and Internet use:

- Users will respect the privacy of other users, and will refrain from attempting to view or read material on screens of computers being used by others
- By mutual agreement, two persons may share one access session as long as their behavior or conversation does not disturb other users or Library staff
- Misuse or abuse of the Library's equipment or software is expressly prohibited
- Users may not install or download any software or equipment on Library-maintained computers without express permission from Library Computer Center staff

For the privilege of using City of Hurst and Hurst Public Library public access computing and Internet resources, including WiFi, printing, scanning, faxing, and copiers, you hereby release and hold harmless the City of Hurst, its officers, agents, servants or employees from any and all liability or responsibility for any and all claims or expenses arising directly or indirectly from the use of these resources, whether or not caused, in whole or in part, by alleged negligence of the City of Hurst, its officers, agents, servants, employees, volunteers, representatives or advisors.

Hurst Library cardholders agree to compliance with this and other Library policies when they create or renew their Hurst Public Library membership account.

Failure to comply with this and all other applicable City of Hurst and Hurst Public Library policies may result in consequences up to and including loss of computing and Internet access privileges, loss of library privileges, and possible criminal prosecution.

INTERNET FILTERING

The Internet is a massive and complex global entity with a highly diverse user population and information content. Not all of that content is accurate, complete, up-to-date or otherwise acceptable to all individuals. The Library is

not responsible for the content of the Internet, changes in content of the sources to which the Library home pages link or for the content of sources accessed through secondary links. Hurst Public Library does not monitor and has no control over the content accessed through the Internet. Patrons use it at their own risk.

Internet access on all Hurst Public Library computers and other devices, including WiFi, is filtered. No Internet filter is 100% effective, however, meaning that some content that should be blocked may not be, while some that should not be blocked by filters could be. Patrons who encounter content they believe should be blocked or who are unable to access content they believe should not be blocked may request that Library Administrators review and make a determination regarding the request.

CHILDREN'S INTERNET ACCESS AND SAFETY

It is the Library's policy that parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding what library resources are appropriate for their children. There will be some resources that parents may feel are inappropriate for their children. As stated above, all Library computers and devices are filtered, including those connected to the Library WiFi. However, since no filtering software can control access to all materials that an individual may deem inappropriate, parents should supervise their children's Internet sessions.

Public Access Computing Stations with Internet access are located in the Library's Youth Services Department. These stations are available for use by children under age 13 with active Hurst Library cards of their own in good standing. Youth Library cards must be given permission by a parent or legal guardian to access the Internet on Library PAC Stations.

The following access permissions/restrictions have been put in place regarding Children's Internet access and safety concerns:

- Children under age 13 are to use the computer stations in the Youth Services Department or Copy Center unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Teens/Young Adults ages 13-18 have access to the computer stations in the Teen Zone, Copy Center, and Computer Center if they have been given permission to access the Internet in their Library account.
- Persons above age 18 are to use the computer stations in the Copy Center or Computer Center unless accompanying a child.

Hurst Public Library administrators and staff do not have the right or responsibility to act in "loco parentis."

This policy was formerly known as Hurst Public Library Acceptable Use Policy for Public Access and Internet Computers

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