# SHREWSBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY INTERNET ACCESS & SAFETY POLICY

As part of its mission to serve the information needs of the community, the Shrewsbury Public Library provides free access to the internet through a number of hard-wired public computer stations and Wi-Fi service for users with portable computers or devices capable of receiving wireless signals.

The following guidelines govern use of both hardwired and Wi-Fi access:

LIBRARY-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES:

- A user must have a current CW MARS library card in good standing to use a library computer.  The library does provide guest access to temporary visitors, who will be required to present photo identification. Patrons may access the Wi-Fi without showing a library card or identification.
- To ensure equitable use of library computers, no advance or phone bookings will be accepted, and all bookings will be made for the next available time slot via the library's electronic booking system. The library's computer may be booked for 120-minute sessions, with two bookings allowed per day. There are no time limits on use of the Wi-Fi access. All public access computers shut down 15 minutes before closing each day.
- When accessing the library's Wi-Fi with personal equipment, the library cannot guarantee that personal equipment will be compatible with the library's network. Users are responsible for making sure their computer has the correct settings and necessary hardware, and should refer to their manufacturer's documentation or support services. If a user has problems accessing the Wi-Fi, the staff will verify that the library's service is up and running. Staff cannot assist in making changes to the user's computer. The library is not responsible for any personal information that is compromised, or for any damage caused to users' hardware or software due to security issues or consequences caused by viruses or hacking. All wireless access users should have up-to-date virus protection on their laptop computers or wireless devices.
- The library does not produce, monitor, or control content on the internet, and so the user must be an informed and responsible information consumer. Patrons are the ultimate judge of validity, appropriateness, and value of the information they find on the Internet. In the case of a minor, this responsibility rests with the child's parent or legal guardian. Parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding which library resources are appropriate for their children, should guide their children in use of the internet, and inform their children of the type of websites they may or may not use.
- Library staff will provide answers to basic questions. More in depth support or training can be gained through self-study. The library has books, online instructional tools, and scheduled classes from which patrons can learn about computer and internet usage.
- The library offers limited download capabilities at its internet stations, and all downloads must be made to a flash drive or cloud computing service, not to the hard drive of the computer. Flash drives are available to borrow or purchase at the Reference desk. The library utilizes software that purges all newly downloaded or saved data upon restart.
- Library internet access can never be considered completely secure and confidential. Although the library strives to secure the library computers on the network, it cannot offer any guarantee of privacy or confidentiality. Wi-Fi access has additional vulnerabilities. The Internet is a public communications network, and as is true with all public wireless hotspots, the library's wireless connection cannot ever be considered secure. Any information being sent or received could potentially be intercepted by another wireless user. Cautious and informed wireless users should

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not transmit credit card information, passwords, or any other sensitive personal information while using any wireless hotspot.
- All wireless access users should have up-to-date virus protection on their laptop computers or wireless devices. The library is not responsible for any personal information that is compromised, or for any damage caused to users' hardware or software due to security issues or consequences caused by viruses or hacking.
- Printing charges at the library are 15 cents per page for black and white printouts or 30 cents per page for color printouts, payable at the "print release station."
- Patrons may not use library internet access for inappropriate, unethical, or illegal purposes. The following actions are defined as unacceptable, unethical, and illegal uses:
  - To access, transmit, or receive threatening, obscene, offensive, or harassing materials
  - To alter or damage computer settings, programs, options, equipment, software, or data
  - To disrupt or monitor electronic communications through the library network
  - To duplicate copyright protected material
  - To distribute unsolicited advertising
  - To violate computer security systems, to avoid filtering systems, or to in any way secure unauthorized access or perform unlawful activities
  - To make unauthorized use of computer accounts, access codes, or network identification code/numbers assigned to others
  - To make unauthorized use, disclosure, or dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors
  - To impede the computing activities of others
  - To violate another's privacy
  - To act in violation of software license agreements

Patrons should follow general safety guidelines while accessing the internet by:

- Remembering that people online may not be who they say they are.
- Being wary of giving out personal information to others online.
- Being cautious about opening emails from people they don't know, and never doing so if there is no subject line explaining what the email is.
- Never responding to emails claiming to be from the patron's bank or an online vendor requesting the patron reply with a password, bank account information, credit card number, or other sensitive information.
- Being wary about accessing sensitive information when using public computers or Wi-Fi.

The Shrewsbury Public Library reserves the right to take appropriate action to ensure compliance with this policy, including suspension of library privileges and/or police contact.

Neither the Board of Library Trustees, library staff, nor the Town of Shrewsbury is liable for any negative consequences that may occur as a result of using the library's computers, Wi-Fi, or hotspots for internet access.

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