

*Southern Lehigh Public Library*  
**COMPUTER & INTERNET ACCESS POLICY**  
**(Revised December 20, 2010)**

Welcome to Southern Lehigh Public Library's computer workstations. In an effort to keep pace with changes in technology, abide by the law, fulfill our mission, and provide excellent library service to our patrons, we offer access to our Online Catalog, Microsoft Office software, various subscription databases, and filtered access to the Internet during our regular operating hours. Time management software is also installed on all public computers with access to the Internet to insure maximum and fair accessibility.

**PATRONS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING AND FOLLOWING THE RULES AND PROCEDURES LISTED BELOW.**

**ACCEPTABLE USE**

1. Information available through the Internet may be protected by copyrights or trademarks. Transmission of copyrighted material in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited.
2. Patrons should be aware that the Internet contains material that some may find offensive. In compliance with the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (Public Law 106-554, 114 Stat. 2763A-335) and in order to remain eligible for federal and state funding, our library has implemented "Bess" filtering on its entire network. This filtering software protects against access to visual depictions of obscenity, pornography, and materials that are harmful to minors as well as access to websites that would prevent the library's network from operating at peak efficiency. However, no filtering software is perfect and may result in a degree of both "underblocking" (i.e. permitting access to certain material that falls within the aforementioned categories), and "overblocking" (i.e. denying access to certain material that does not fall within the aforementioned categories). The use of "Bess" filtering service attempts to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act while providing library users with the broadest possible access to information resources.
3. The library has blocked the following types of websites through Secure Computing's "Bess SmartFilter" filtering service: anonymizers, anonymizing utilities, blogs/wiki, criminal skills, dating/social, drugs, games/cartoon violence, games/high bandwidth, gruesome content, hate speech, hacking, illegal software, incidental nudity, instant messaging, malicious sites, media sharing, nudity, P2P/file sharing, personal pages, phishing, pornography, profanity, provocative attire, school cheating info, sexual materials, spam email URLs, spyware, violence. (See Appendix) Patrons who experience difficulty in accessing a particular website and feel that it has been incorrectly blocked should speak with a staff person. Your request will be reviewed by the Director within two business days and you will be contacted. Staff may not be able to disable the filter immediately. Photo ID and proof of age may be required before filtering is disabled. Filtering will not be disabled for any reason for persons 17 years and younger without accompaniment of a parent or legal guardian.
4. **The Internet is a vast worldwide network with very few limitations. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information. Southern Lehigh Public Library is not responsible for any information obtained on the Internet. Use is at the patron's risk.**
5. Any attempt to harm or destroy data is prohibited. This includes the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Users may not turn equipment on and off, change any settings, or load personal programs into computers. Any damage done is the financial responsibility of the patron. If difficulties are experienced in the use of the computer, please ask staff for assistance.
6. The library's computers are not available for commercial or business use.
7. Southern Lehigh Public Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from use of the Internet. This includes any viruses that may be transmitted via downloaded files.
8. The computer workstations may be used to access information via the online catalog, subscription databases or World Wide Web, access E-mail accounts, and create documents using Microsoft Office software.

**PATRON RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Users are responsible for reading Southern Lehigh Public Library's Computer & Internet Access Policy (posted near computers, on the library's website at [www.solehipl.org](http://www.solehipl.org), or available at the Circulation Desk) and abiding by the policy each time they use the computer workstations.
2. Patrons aged 18 years and older should use the stations located in the main adult section of the library. Patrons 17 years and younger are encouraged to use computer stations in the Children's Center or Young Adult Room. Patrons under the age of 9 years must remain in the parent or guardian's line of sight at all times (see Unattended Children Policy, available at Circulation Desk) and must exhibit appropriate use of the computers and other equipment as determined by the library staff. Parents/guardians of children exhibiting inappropriate use of the computers and other equipment are required to sit with the child at the computer workstation to insure proper use.
3. **Parents or guardians, not the library staff, are responsible for the Internet information accessed by their children. Parents and guardians may restrict their children from Internet resources.**

4. The library has installed PC Reservation time management software on all of its public computer workstations with access to the Internet. To use these computers, patrons 5 years and up, residing within the library's service area (i.e. Lower Milford Township, Upper Saucon Township, or Coopersburg Borough), must have a valid SLPL library card with them at the time of use and be a patron in good standing. A patron in good standing is defined as follows: 1) overdue fines, replacement fees, or any other charges may not exceed \$1.99 on the patron's account or on a child's account for whom the patron is the responsible party; 2) library card may not be expired; 3) items listed on the patron's account or on a child's account for whom the patron is the responsible party may not be more than two weeks overdue. Children 4 years and younger may obtain a guest pass when accompanied by a parent/guardian that has a valid SLPL library card with them at the time of use and is a patron in good standing (as defined above). Permission to use the computers is not transferrable between patrons. Patrons who have forgotten to bring their SLPL library card with them may request their library card number from the Circulation Desk to use the computer workstations provided the following conditions are met: 1) patron must present a valid photo ID, i.e. school ID, driver's license, PA photo ID, employer ID badge, 2) library card is not expired, 3) no items checked out on their account that are more than 2 weeks overdue, 4) no fines or charges of any kind on their account, 5) no blocks or restrictions on the account including blocked family members for whom they are the responsible party. Patrons living outside the library's service area should obtain a home library card and become an Access PA patron at SLPL before using the computer workstations. Persons visiting from out of state or just "passing through" may obtain a guest pass for one-time use of the computers with valid photo ID. Computer use will be denied to those persons not meeting the guidelines listed above.
5. It is a felony offense in the state of Pennsylvania "to display or cause to display any explicit sexual material...on any...viewing screen in such a manner that the display is visible...in any establishment where minors, as part of the general public, may be exposed to view all or any part of such materials." (Title 18 Penna. Crime Code - sect. 5903). Sexually explicit material may be offensive to patrons of any age and access will not be permitted by Southern Lehigh Public Library.
6. It is recommended that for users' own security, personal information such as addresses, telephone numbers, credit card numbers, etc., not be placed on the Internet. Southern Lehigh Public Library cannot guarantee personal security.
7. Patrons may access the Internet on their personal laptop computers through the wireless network installed in the library. The library does not provide wireless network cards or any other peripheral equipment, nor can staff provide assistance in connecting to the network. **The library is not responsible for the security and/or privacy of any information transmitted through the use of the wireless network. Use of the wireless network is at the patron's risk.**
8. In fairness to all our patrons, the library has set time limits on the use of the computers. Patrons may use the computer stations for up to one hour. If no one is waiting, extra time will be allotted through PC Reservation software.
9. Patrons may not use or install their own software. If patrons should wish to download information blank disks and flash drives are sold at the Circulation Desk or patrons may bring in their own disks, USB drives, zip drives, or portable players to upload or download information. Patrons should check information at home for viruses that may have been transferred. The library cannot be held responsible for damage to a patron's computer equipment or digital devices, or for any loss of data, damage, or liability that may occur from a patron's use of the library's computers. Copyrighted material may be used, copied, or downloaded only in accordance with copyright laws.
10. Computers are muted by default. Patrons wishing to listen to audio portions from websites or CDs must purchase headphones at the Circulation Desk or bring their own. Please ask staff for assistance with adjusting the volume.
11. The library's computers are equipped with print control software. Patrons may send documents to both the black/white printer and color printer. Patrons should follow the onscreen prompts and go to the Circulation Desk to claim their print jobs. Payment is required at the time of printing.

## LIMITATIONS

1. The Southern Lehigh Public Library's computer workstation use will be managed by the library staff in a manner consistent with the rules of conduct that have been adopted and posted in the library.
2. There may be times when the library's computers and/or network is unavailable due to maintenance issues or upgrades to hardware or software. The library apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause and will make every attempt to solve problems in a timely manner.
3. The library staff will try to be available to assist patrons in their use of the computers. However, not all staff members are completely familiar with every technical aspect or every computer application and cannot provide extensive instruction or technical support.
4. Southern Lehigh Public Library reserves the right to deny computer privileges if a patron's behavior is deemed inappropriate or they fail to comply with the library's Computer & Internet Access Policy. Staff reserves the right to contact law enforcement officials as needed.
5. Southern Lehigh Public Library reserves the right to vary these policies or to establish additional policies if it is found necessary to regulate access or prevent misuse.
6. Although capped and/or lidded drinks are permitted in the library, they are forbidden at the computer workstations.

This revised policy was adopted by the Southern Lehigh Public Library Board of Directors at its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2010.