

To fulfill its mission of providing free and equal access to information, knowledge, independent learning and the joy of reading to our diverse community, the Holyoke Public Library provides access to computers and the Internet.

Computer Use and Public Internet Access Policy

Goals of Public Internet Access

The Holyoke Public Library is a community and information center that to provide to the citizens of Holyoke with the opportunity to improve themselves and their quality of life through the provision of equal access to library resources, services and programs that inform, educate and entertain while promoting literacy, the enjoyment of reading, and lifelong learning.

The Holyoke Public Library seeks to enhance its mission by providing computer and Internet access. The Library welcomes all users to the Internet computers for both research and entertainment. The Library staff will provide help and advice to the best of its ability. The Library staff cannot provide in-depth training on Internet operations or personal computer skills. The staff may, however, be able to offer searching suggestions and answer questions. The Library staff cannot control the availability of information links, which often change rapidly and unpredictably. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. We encourage users to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of information found on the Internet. The Holyoke Public Library has no control over Internet resources, nor does the Library have complete knowledge of what is on the Internet.

Access To The Internet By Minors

The Holyoke Public Library recognizes that minors* are among the most avid users of the Internet, and their safety while using Library computers is of utmost importance. The Holyoke Public Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their children's access to Library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet and has taken certain measures designed to assist in the safe and effective use of these resources by all minors. As such, parents and legal guardians must also assume responsibility for deciding which Library resources are appropriate for their own children. Parents or legal guardians should guide their children in use of the Internet and inform them about materials they should not use.

* "Minor" is defined as person seventeen years old or under.

a. To address the issue of access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet, including

material that is harmful to minors, the Holyoke Public Library:

- 1) Develops and maintains special web sites for children and teens;
- 2) Develops and provides training programs on safe and effective Internet use;
- 3) Installs software on branch library computers and on computers in the Central Library Children's Room to limit children's exposure to some web-sites. The software blocks some specific sites that could be offensive to some users. Filtering software may not block all material users might find offensive;
- 4) Encourages staff to guide minors away from materials that may be inappropriate; and
- 5) Distributes publication for children, teens, and parents on how to use the Internet safely.

b. To address the issue of the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, social networking sites, blogs, and other forms of direct electronic communications, as well as the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors, the Holyoke Public Library urges minors to keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

- 1) Never give out identifying information, such as your name, home address, school name, or telephone number.
- 2) Let parents or guardians decide whether personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information should be revealed.
- 3) Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone via the computer without parents' or guardians' approval.
- 4) Never respond to or post messages that are suggestive, obscene, threatening, or that make you or others uncomfortable.
- 5) Have parents or guardians report an incident to the national Center for Missing and Exploited Children (1-800-843-5678) if you become aware of the transmission of child pornography.
- 6) Remember that people online may not be who they say they are.
- 7) Remember that everything you read may not be true.

c. To address the issue of unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online, minors and all other Library users are reminded that use of the Holyoke Public Library's computers for hacking or any other unlawful activity is strictly prohibited.

Guidelines for Access to the Internet at the Holyoke Public Library

By using the public Internet workstations at the Holyoke Public Library, you agree to be bound by the following guidelines:

- **Time Limits.** Computer time may be reserved for specified periods which will include downloading and printing time. Reserved times will be held for ten minutes. Computers will then become available for walk-up users. At the Library, customers may sign up for 60-minute computer use sessions. Customers may reserve one computer session per day. Additional sessions may always be reserved if other people are not waiting to use available equipment.

At the Library, all computer reservations are handled through the Library's PC reservation software that is installed on designated computers.

- **Downloading.** You may download to a pre-formatted disk , CD, or flash drive. As a convenience to our users, the Library provides disks and CDs for sale. The Library is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal disks when downloading.
- **Printing Limits.** A per page fee is required for all printing done from Library computers.
- **No Installation of Software.** No software may be installed into Library computers, and no settings on Library-installed software may be changed.
- **No Hardware Modification.** Users may not alter or attach equipment to the Library's hardware. Please leave all equipment turned on. If a problem develops, notify a staff member. Please do not attempt to make adjustments yourself.
- **Group Use Limit .** Only one person may participate in a session at one computer at any one time, unless prior permission to hold a group session has been obtained.
- **E-Mail.** The Library does not provide electronic mail accounts, nor does it support any type of individual or personal account. Users may access e-mail accounts through the World Wide Web at Internet computers in any Library facility.

Please note: Guidelines at individual libraries may vary. Check with a librarian if you have questions.

Unacceptable Use of Library Computers and the Internet Includes, but is Not Limited to, the Following:

- Using the Library's workstations as a staging ground to gain unauthorized access to the Library network or computer system or any other network or computer system.
- Obstructing the work of others by consuming a large amount of system resources or by deliberately crashing any

Library computer system.

- Making any attempt to damage computer equipment or software.
- Making any attempt to alter software configurations.
- Making any attempt to cause degradation of system performance.
- Using a Library workstation for illegal or criminal purposes.
- Engaging in any activity which is deliberately or maliciously offensive, libelous or slanderous.
- Representing yourself as another person for the purpose of fraud or other illegal activity.
- Using the Library Internet system to upload, transmit, or post copyrighted or protected material and/or software to the Internet without the permission of the owner or person owning the copyright or other intellectual property rights in the transmitted materials. Downloading from the Internet copyrighted or other protected materials must be done with the express permission of the owner or otherwise authorized persons regarding copying, redistribution, modification, or publication. Information downloaded for educational purposes may be permitted.
- Harassing other users or Library staff.
- Distributing advertising, junk mail, or chain letters.

Be aware that computers in public areas are shared by people of all ages and sensibilities. The Holyoke Public Library reserves the right to ask users to refrain from displaying computer images that are inappropriate for public viewing.

Accessing the Library's Wireless Network

The Holyoke Public Library is pleased to provide wireless access to the Internet for visitors utilizing their own laptop computers at the Library. The Library's wireless network supports a specified number of users through an 801.11 b/g/n connection.

To use the wireless network, laptops must be equipped with wireless capability. Most recently produced computers will have such capability. The manufacturer or vendor of your equipment will be able to tell you. Library staff are unable to configure or troubleshoot an individual's computer, however, librarians will advise on the connection procedure.

Visitors wishing to print from the wireless network may save to a disk and then log on to one of the Library's hardwired workstations.

With the exception of those sections that apply to the user's own hardware and software, individuals who utilize the Library's wireless network are expected to comply with the Library's Computer Use and Public Internet Access Policy.

Use of the Holyoke Public Library's wireless network is at the user's own risk, as the Library's network is neither secure nor encrypted. It is recommended that personal information, such as social security, bank account, and credit card numbers, among other such information, not be transmitted using the wireless network. The Library accepts no responsibility for damage resulting from identity theft, viruses, spy-ware, plug-ins, etc.

In an effort to maximize use of its online resources, the Library is pleased to provide a limited number of laptop computers for in-house loan in certain branch libraries where space to add computer workstations is limited. Laptop borrowers must have a signed Laptop Borrower Agreement on file before equipment can be checked out. For minors, this agreement must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.

Disclaimer

The Holyoke Public Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from use of the computers or Internet access through its network or through its Internet provider. Visitors use the Internet and the computer systems at their own risk. The Holyoke Public Library assumes no responsibility for any actions of its visitors, directly or indirectly, relative to use of the computer system and/or the Internet. The Holyoke Public Library makes no representations as to the content of any website visited by any individual, nor to the effectiveness of any filtering software. Illegal acts involving Library resources may be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal officials.

The Library reserves the right to terminate a computer and/or Internet session at any time and/or to disallow a patron Internet access.

Approved by Holyoke Public Library Board of Directors.

Adopted 5/2003